Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre Ltd. Parent Handbook

South Location

Business Information

Hours of Operation: 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Monday - Friday

Address: 2803 6 Avenue South Lethbridge T1J 1E3

Phone Number: (587) 425-4855

Website: www.wherethewildthingsgrow.ca

Email: wherethewildthingsgrow@hotmail.ca

Facebook Page: Where Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre

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2803 6 Avenue South, Lethbridge AB, T1J 1E3
(587) 425-4855

What You Need Prior To Starting:

|  |
| --- |
| Checklist  |
| [ ]  | $250 deposit  | This can be paid by E-Transfer, cheque, or cash  |
| [ ]  | $50 Non-Refundable Administration Fee  | This can be paid by E-Transfer, cheque, or cash |
| [ ]  | Complete Registration Form  | Emergency Contact must have a different address then your child. It CANNOT be a PO Box, it must be a street or rural address or land location  |
| [ ]  | Fees or Parent Portion if Subsidized  | Fees are due the first of each month  |

What Your Child Needs Their First Day:

|  |
| --- |
| Checklist  |
| [ ]  | Diapers, Wipes, Diaper Cream | If using cloth diapers please send them assembled and a bag for the used diapers to be sent home in to be laundered.  |
| [ ]  | Proper Outdoor Gear  | Winter* Winter Jacket
* Snow Boots
* Snow Pants
* Waterproof Mittens/Gloves
* Toque

Summer * Hat
* Sunscreen
* Water Bottle
 |
| [ ]  | Milk and Water Bottle  | If your child is an infant we request both milk and water bottles. For older children (2+) we request only a water bottle.  |
| [ ]  | Indoor Shoes  | Please make sure that these are not crocs or strapless sandals, children like to climb and these shoes do not provide enough support and cause injury.  |
| [ ]  | Naptime Blanket  | We do provide these if your child naps but does not bring a special one |
| [ ]  | Minimum of Two Extra Pairs of Clothing | We request this for ALL children. Even older children have accidents or spill cups of milk on themselves and need a change. We do not have extra clothing that fits all children.  |

**Welcome**Welcome to Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre! Thank you for giving us the opportunity to care for and educate your child. Here at Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre we offer a play based educational program designed to enhance children's growth and development. Our curriculum focuses on teaching children required skills in a fun supportive way. We believe children need opportunities to be independent and self-sufficient. We do this by giving the children multiple opportunities throughout the day to explore a variety of different curriculum areas. We believe that providing a well-planned environment with children's developmental needs in mind is essential to a positive learning environment. This is why we employ only qualified competent staff. Instead of meeting basic standards we believe it is important to go above and beyond. We believe staff should have a thorough understanding of child development and plan meaningful experiences based on the children's interests. There is a centre owner on the premises each day to ensure that our standards are always being met. Please feel free to talk to us at any time!

**Our Philosophy**At Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre we believe that children learn and grow through play. Through play children develop socially, physically, intellectually, creatively, and emotionally. We believe that each child is unique and develops at a different pace and in a different way. We provide a wide variety of developmentally appropriate activities to stimulate children’s interests, and expand their understanding of the world around them. We believe that children learn independence through making choices in a safe environment. Children have a wide variety of curriculum areas to choose from at all times these include: Art, Blocks, House, Dramatic Play, Manipulatives, Playdough, Sand, Water, Gross Motor, Music, Math, Science, Language Arts, and Outdoor Play. We also try to provide regular experiences with cooking, woodworking, field trips and community visitors. The materials and experiences are planned based on staff observations of the children’s interests. We feel that it is very important for educators and families to have a strong relationship and open communication. This helps both parents and educators to better understand and meet the needs of the child. Our center values the importance of family in each child’s life and has an open door policy so families can visit the center at any time. We also schedule planned activities and invite parents to participate. We believe that it is very important to learn as much as possible about each families’ culture, values and beliefs, and incorporate them into our program. This makes children feel valued and accepted, as well as helping the other children to value, respect, and celebrate diversity. We also believe that it is very important for children to understand and accept people with Special Needs. This helps them understand that everyone has different abilities and limitations and everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Our discipline policy is designed to teach children to express their feelings in socially appropriate ways. We believe that children learn through role modeling so it is important for staff to express their feelings and opinions in an appropriate way at all times. It is also very important for staff to be engaged in play with the children to enhance their development and promote healthy positive relationships. We feel that it is important to provide healthy nutritious snacks and meals for children which follow the Canada Food Guides guidelines and meet 2/3 of the children’s daily nutritional needs.

**Curriculum**We teach children the building blocks of their education in a fun way that caters to their interests. We plan based on their interests to maximize their learning. We do this by planning developmentally appropriate activities for their age group. We complete a toy change once every two weeks to ensure the children are experiencing new materials and concepts. This encourages them to try new activities and challenges them to tackle new learning experiences. We believe in going above and beyond and do weekly cooking, science and art activities with the children. We also do writing activities when developmentally appropriate. On a daily basis children have experiences in Art, Dramatic Play, Blocks, Math, Science, Music, Manipulatives, Puzzles, Water, Sand, Literature, Sensory, Gross Motor, and have an opportunity to help feed our pets each day as well as water plants and garden in the summer. We also take the children to the park during the summer. We go outside every day weather permitting. We do a Circle Time where we sing songs in English and French, do creative movement, read books, talk about the weather and calendar and other important topics. By participating in these activities the children learn necessary communication and problem solving skills to help them work with their peers and navigate the world around them. Each day we send a daily report with photos and videos of your child throughout the day.

**Daily Reports/Observations**We use a program called Tadpoles to complete daily reports on each child. This allows us to send you pictures and videos throughout the day. We use this app to communicate supplies the child needs such as diapers or wipes and also to notify parents of upcoming events. This app allows us to upload how much they ate, how long their nap was, diaper changes and pictures of your child that day. This is where all of the planning for your child’s room is located. It changes every two weeks. If you choose to download the app on your smartphone you can also send us updates regarding your child. Ex. If they didn’t sleep well the night before and you forgot to notify their educator at drop off. You can also mark your child in as sick or excused to avoid calling or emailing. You can download the app on your phone or receive the report by email. Parents are automatically added to the system, if there is someone else you would like to receive your child’s daily report (grandparents, aunts or uncles) please notify us and we can add their email.Observations are recordings completed by the Child Educator in your child’s room daily, they are either written or pictorial. They are descriptions of your child’s activities and the development associated with that activity; which will be sent with your child’s daily report via the Tadpoles App. If you have any comments, questions, or concerns please direct them to the author of the observation.

**Sick Day or Day Off (Child)**If your child is sick and unable to attend please call, email or mark it in Tadpoles as soon as possible. This helps us plan our day as well as lets us know that we need to clean your child’s room thoroughly to prevent the illness from spreading. It also helps us to send staff to the Library or for outside resources if we have a better idea of the number of children attending that day.

**Newsletters**
Newsletters are written and emailed out every month. These will give updates on upcoming field trips and activities at the centre as well as keep you up to date on what's going on. We notify parents of upcoming events such as parent teacher interviews, special events, opportunities to volunteer and centre closures. They will also remind parents of procedures such as file updating time.

**Parent Orientation (Stay and Plays)**Parents and children are invited to spend time at the centre before their child starts full time to get acquainted and comfortable with the routines and staff of the centre. This helps ease separation anxiety for both children and parents. This can be the week before your child is scheduled to start and there is no charge. The amount of time it takes to get used to the centre varies from child to child and so do the lengths of stay and plays. We generally adhere to this time line, it has proved to be the most successful in developing a relationship between parents, children, and educators.
Our Stay and Plays run from 8:45 - 10:45am and they generally go like this:
Day 1: Parents to come for the full time on the first day to play with their child and meet their child's Educator.
Day 2: Parents come for the full time, but leave during the two hours for a short time to get their child acquainted with them leaving and returning.
Day 3: Parents come for one hour, then leave for the other hour, to play and bond with the Educator.
Day 4: Parents leave their child for the two hours.

**Open Door Policy/ Parental Involvement**All parents are welcome at the centre anytime. Parents and family members are encouraged to spend time with their children at the centre and learn about their educators and friends. Families are also encouraged to speak to the children about their experiences and expertise. We feel that it is very important for educators and families to have a strong relationship and open communication. This helps both parents and educators to better understand and meet the needs of the child. Our center values the importance of family in each child’s life and has an open door policy so families can visit the center at any time. We also schedule planned activities and invite parents to participate. We believe that it is very important to learn as much as possible about each family’s culture, values and beliefs, and incorporate them into our program. This makes children feel valued and accepted, as well as helping the other children to value, respect, and celebrate diversity. If you would like to do something special with the children let us know and we will schedule you in!

**Child Guidance Policy**Children need guidance to help them make appropriate behavioral choices. This teaches children to behave in a respectful manner increasing their chances of positive relationships with others and developing into a positive member of society. Childcare staff have a responsibility to use positive child guidance strategies that encourage self-control, self-respect and respect for others. Child guidance is more than just solving conflicts, it is also about prevention. Staff will use observation techniques and identify any issues that are causing conflict and change the environment to alleviate any future conflicts from this cause. Play spaces will be arranged to meet the needs of the children and staff will provide engaging and stimulating materials that will fully engross the children to explore, this will include physical activities. Child guidance also includes modeling physical activity and positive interactions with others. The staff will foster relationships with each child in their care and learn about their behaviours and what they need to calm themselves down to fully participate in problem solving (where developmentally appropriate). The staff will value each child’s right to be heard and validate the feelings of all parties involved in the dispute. The staff will model appropriate responses and interactions with others to demonstrate problem solving skills. Staff will be sure when addressing issues they are respectful of the children and what their personal boundaries are (from cultural background expectations to not liking to hug others). Staff will also plan and participate in physical activity with others to guide the children away from a sedentary lifestyle. Staff will guide the children in group activities and support the development of their social skills according to their ages and developmental levels. To assist with child guidance staff will communicate with parents to demonstrate respect for them as their child’s primary educator. The staff can assist parents in developing strategies to facilitate positive and respectful relationships. Staff will have constant communication with parents about their children and the development. When it is appropriate staff will suggest materials to parents that will help them to guide their child’s development appropriately, resources are available in the parent area for the parents to utilize. All child guidance policies will be posted in each room of the center for the parents to read. All staff, students and volunteers will read the Child Guidance Policy during their orientation. Children will receive a verbal warning from staff before child guidance procedures are applied. Staff will use the child guidance techniques listed below to effectively deal with conflict.

Simple rules are easier for children to understand the three rules that we will teach children are:

1. Be Safe (This involves both the safety of the individual child and others around them)

2. Be Kind (This teaches children to behave in a socially acceptable, empathetic manner)

3. Be Neat (This teaches the children self-help skills such as cleaning up as well as respect for other people's property).

Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre will only use redirection and ‘time-away’ as forms of child guidance. Time away will only be used when the child is at risk for harming themselves, others, or property.

* It is very important when dealing with a conflict with a child to help them find the vocabulary for what they are feeling. Especially at a young age children may not recognize emotions such as jealousy, or frustration and it is very helpful for them to have that language to use in the future.
* Time away is a form of discipline where a child who is out of control is removed from a situation in order to calm down and accompanied by one of their primary educators to calm down and discuss effective ways to deal with their emotions; after the child chooses a center the educator closely monitors their behavior until they feel the child is calm. The child is allowed to return to any activity that they choose after a time away.
* Time-away and redirection will be used with children ages 3-6
* Only redirection will be used with infants and toddlers
* All child guidance procedures will be appropriate for the child’s level of development
* Any child guidance procedures taken must be reasonable under the circumstances, followed consistently by staff and must be according to government regulations
* At no time will staff use physical punishment, verbal or physical degradation or emotional deprivation as child guidance
* Staff will not deny or threaten to deny any basic necessity and will not use or permit use of any form of physical restraint, confinement or isolation as child guidance
* Any form of child guidance not listed in the Child Guidance Policy will not be used at Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre

Child guidance is more than just solving conflicts, it is also about prevention. Staff will use observation techniques and identify any issues that are causing conflict and change the environment to alleviate any future conflicts from this cause. Play spaces will be arranged to meet the needs of the children and staff will provide engaging and stimulating materials that will fully engross the children to explore, this will include physical literacy. Child guidance also includes modeling physical activity and positive interactions with others. The staff will foster relationships with each child in their care and learn about their behaviours and what they need to calm themselves down to fully participate in problem solving (where developmentally appropriate). The staff will value each child’s right to be heard and validate the feelings of all parties involved in the dispute. The staff will model appropriate responses and interactions with others to demonstrate problem solving skills. Staff will be sure when addressing issues they are respectful of the children and what their personal boundaries are (from cultural background expectations to not liking to hug others). Staff will also plan and participate in physical activity with others to guide the children away from a sedentary lifestyle. Staff will guide the children in group activities and support the development of their social skills according to their ages and developmental levels. To assist with child guidance staff will communicate with parents to demonstrate respect for them as their child’s primary caregiver. The staff can assist parents in developing strategies to facilitate positive and respectful relationships. Staff will have constant communication with parents about their children and the development. When it is appropriate staff will suggest materials to parents that will help them to guide their child’s development appropriately, resources are available in the parent area for the parents to utilize.

**Deposit**We require a $250 deposit per child to hold your spot. The deposit is held for the duration of your child’s stay. If for any reason notice must be given (ex: moving or your child is going to kindergarten) a full 30 days’ notice must be given on or prior to the 1st of the month. Once proper notice is given the deposit goes towards the last month’s fees. This is to ensure that we are partly covered if proper notice isn’t given to terminate care. If you give appropriate notice then your deposit can either be used as part of your fees for your last month or refunded by cheque. If you pay a deposit but choose to go a different route with childcare the deposit is not refunded if you have not given us 30 days’ notice.

**Registration Fee**We charge a $50.00 non-refundable fee as there is a lot of extra paperwork and preparation for a new child to start at the program.

**Signing In and Out**It is required that you sign your child in and out when entering or exiting the centre. The sign in binder is located at the front desk in the parent area. It is categorized alphabetically by last name. This is a legal document that must be filled in accurately each day. We ask that if you have someone else on your authorized pick up list drop off or pick up your child that you remind them of this requirement. This attendance record is in place in case an emergency evacuation occurs. This ensures we have accurate attendance records and can account for all children.

**Change of Information**If any of your information changes such as phone number, address, workplace etc it is your responsibility to let us know immediately. It is crucial that we be able to reach you at all times. Files are updated once every six months, however if anything changes in that time please notify us in writing.

**Drop Off and Pick Up Times**Children are to be dropped off between the times of 7:00am and 10:00am, unless previously arranged. This is due to interruptions of lunch and nap time routines for the children, and staff using this time to take their breaks. If your child is in morning kindergarten every day or comes at a specific later time every day that has been pre-arranged with supervisors they are excluded from this. We base planning time, breaks, toy cleaning and time off requests based on the number of children. We understand sometimes children have appointments or different schedules but we do need to be aware of how many children will be coming. Children can be picked up at any time during the operating hours of the centre.

**Drop Off and Pick Up Locations**Parents are to park in the designated 15 minute loading zones on the West side of the building along 28th Street South. There is to be no parking in front of the building along 6th Avenue South, since this is a No-Parking Zone. Parents are also free to utilize the paving stone part of driveway if there is an available spot that will not block the sidewalk or traffic. Staff parking is on the wings (concrete) sections of the driveway and we ask that parents do not park here, it can cause our staff to be late for work if they have to wait for parents to move or park down the street. Please be respectful of our neighbours and follow traffic and parking laws. Do not park behind other parents’ vehicles as they could be in hurry and you will block the sidewalk. If you notice staff shoveling, or snow blowing please park in the loading zone. It takes much longer to shovel once snow is packed down.

**Photo Identification for Pickup**All individuals picking up children must have government issued photo identification. This is to ensure that children are being picked up by authorized individuals. It is important for parents to have their ID’s on them as well in case a new staff member is working when your child is being picked up. If an alternate person is picking up your child please give us a heads up by calling or introducing them beforehand. An individual given authorization to pick up your child must be an adult. Remind your authorized pickups to bring photo identification every time they pick up. If one staff has met the authorized pickup it does mean another staff won’t ID them the next time they arrive. Failure to produce ID upon request will result a denial in pickup until provided.

**Phone Security**We may call you back a few minutes after you have called us to ensure that it was you that we spoke to on the phone. For example, if someone calls and says that someone not on your pickup list will be coming to get your child we need to be able to verify that it's you, this may happen if we cannot recognize your voice.

**Custody/Guardianship Issues**If there is any change to your custody or guardianship arrangement please let us know as soon as possible. Paperwork from the court must be provided in order for us to deny pick up to a parent. We cannot legally deny access to anyone’s child without a court order under any circumstances. Please get any court orders to us before your child starts at the program.

**Holidays/PD Days**New Year’s Day – January Canada Day - July
Family Day – February Civic Holiday – August
PD Day – March (ECE Conference) Labour Day – September
Good Friday – March or April Thanksgiving – October
Easter Monday – April Remembrance Day – November
Victoria Day – May Christmas and Boxing Day Week– December\*
PD Day – June

\* The week is determined upon which day Christmas lands upon, the current year’s dates will be posted in the parent area.
Professional Development (PD) Days occur throughout the year; sufficient and prior notice will be given to find alternate child care.

**Maximum Hours**The maximum number of hours that a child is allowed to be at the Centre is 9 1/2 hours per day. This allows for an 8 hour work day, an hour long lunch break, and travel time. Exceeding this number of hours per day is both unfair to your child and to the Centre. If you do have a different work schedule (10 hours a day, 4 days a week), an appointment, or anything else that would interfere with this policy please let us know.

**Family Pictures**We request that you bring in pictures of your family to be displayed in their classroom. Pictures can have parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, pets and anyone else who is important to your child. This helps the children share with other children about their family and can also help with separation anxiety. Children love to tell their friends about their family. If you bring the pictures to the centre, we will laminate them and put them on a key ring so that they can be utilized by your child and move from class to class as they develop.

**Children Supplies**
Children are required to bring the following labelled items:
- Indoor shoes
- Weather appropriate outdoor clothing (Coat,
- Water Bottle (Must be labelled due to licensing regulation)
- Sippy Cup or Bottle for Milk for Younger children (Must be labelled due to licensing regulation)
- Either 2 Changes of clothing (pants, shirt, underwear, and socks) for children in diapers or toilet trained, or 3+ (mainly pants) for those in the process or just toilet trained. Accidents do happen, even to the children that have not had an accident in years. Also, sometimes children get their clothing wet in the water center and a change of clothing is appreciated. If children are lent clothing from the centre and it is not returned a charge will be added to your monthly bill for the cost of replacing the clothing.
- Diapers or Pull-Ups and wipes. Parents will be notified when their child’s supply is low, failure to provide requested items will result in your child using centre supplies and a charge will be added to your account.

**Seasonal Items**

Spring & Summer Fall & Winter
- Sun block (not expired) - Toque
- Hat - Gloves/mittens (Waterproof)
- Swimsuit & Towel (on Specials Days) - Winter Jacket
- Sunglasses (optional) - Snow pants
- Raincoat (when applicable) - Winter Boots
- Gum Boots (when applicable)
We do not allow scarves when playing outside since they pose a risk of strangulation. If your child brings one it may stay within their locker until it is time for them to leave the centre.

**Flip Flop and Croc Policy**At no time will flip flops, crocs, or any shoe that does not have a back strap be permitted as outdoor footwear. The children are very active and when playing outside they need shoes that provide them with stability as they test and develop their skills. Strapless shoes are a safety hazard and have been the cause of a lot of outdoor injuries. They are acceptable for indoor play but other shoes must be provided for outdoor play. Failure to provide appropriate outdoor shoes will result in the Centre sending the child home or calling a parent to bring appropriate shoes.

**What to Bring for Infants**We know starting daycare with an infant can be very overwhelming here are some basic things to remember: - Label all infant nutrition, this includes any food, extra snacks, and bottles of breastmilk or formula etc. - Feel free to bring a giant pack of diapers and wipes, as it can be hard remembering to bring diapers and wipes weekly. Please label any diapers and wipes you bring. - Write down your normal schedule when your baby typically naps, eats, takes a bottle or anything else we should know. This way we can adjust the routine to ease them in. - If your child has transitioned to milk you don’t need to bring any in. Just leave a bottle at the centre and we’ll fill it. - Please bring an additional bottle for water. We like the infants to have both milk and water available to them not wait for a milk bottle to be empty to fill it with water. - A pacifier if your infant uses one.- We provide blankets for nap but if your child has a special blanket feel free to bring it.- Indoor and outdoor shoes or boots. The infants go outside each day unless it is extremely cold or pouring rain and shoes are essential to staying safe.

 **Feeding Infants**

* All meals and beverages will only be served at designated tables
* All children will be required to sit at the table when eating and drinking
* No bottles will be given to infants at nap times, they will be given their bottles at the table or while staff are holding them, when they are done their bottles they will be laid down for a nap.
* Infant bottles will be labeled and kept refrigerated.

**Children’s Possessions**Children are welcome to bring and share their possessions, however the centre is not responsible for locating lost or stolen items. It falls under the parents’ discretion if the item should or should not attend with the child. Toy weapons are not permitted. COVID Regulation: We are strongly discouraging any items that are not essential to not enter the daycare. Please be sure that your child is not bringing in toys that are not essential to their happiness and that can be sanitized easily for staff.

**Our Staff**
We feel that having educated motivated staff is the most important factor in any child care facility. Instead of changing staff every time your child moves up an age group we try our best to maintain continuity of care by moving a staff member with them. This means that you and your child get to keep the strong relationship that you have formed with their teachers. Only one in two teachers is required by the government to have First Aid certification, we require that all of our full time staff do. Only 1 in 3 staff is required by the government to have their College Certificate or Diploma in Early Childhood Education, 8 out of 9 of our staff have the higher education level. We strive in our centre to reduce staff turnover by keeping competitive wages, benefits for staff and a positive work environment. This has allowed us to have very little staff turnover and provides the children with a strong relationship with every staff.

**Staff Attire**At Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre we expect our staff to engage in messy and active play with the children on a daily basis. Due to this expectation you will see a lot of our staff dressed casually. This is due to our active nature and expectation that they are involved in learning with the children. We believe staff need to be able to move freely with the children as well as engage in "messy" play.

**Culture/Language**We have a staff member who understands basic Spanish and another staff member who knows beginner French. We try to sing songs in French and Spanish as part of our curriculum. If you speak another language or would like to teach the children about your culture and customs let us know!

**Field Trips**Field Trips are exciting for children and provide a great learning experience. All field trips will be discussed with parents ahead of time and require a permission form to be signed. A form for volunteers will be posted in the parent area, we appreciate your help!

**Family Events, Special Days and Community Visitors**We believe it is important for families to be involved in our program. We will organize events that families are encouraged to participate in such as mothers/father’s day tea, grandparents etc. We also organize a Christmas party each year which allows for parents to gather and meet other parents in their child’s class. Santa attends and there is always tons of food! This gives families the opportunity to get to know each other as well as the other children and staff in the classroom. We try to provide the children with unique experiences by inviting community visitors and having special days. Events will be posted in the newsletter and the parent area. We invite parents to come share their talents or hobbies or careers with the children. If you have any ideas for fun events please let us know.

**Parent Teacher Interviews**Interviews with your child's teachers will be organized annually in June. Parents will be notified of Parent Teacher Interviews in the newsletter and a sign-up sheet will be posted in the parent area. If you are unable to attend any of the allotted dates please speak to a supervisor about arranging a time. Parents can request a meeting throughout the year if they have any questions or concerns.

**Fees/Subsidy**

Please see our website for current fees [www.wherethewildthingsgrow.ca](http://www.wherethewildthingsgrow.ca) Subsidy is a case by case basis, and with the new operating grants changing often we will discuss this upon registration.
If for any reason subsidy is denied or cancelled you are responsible for the full amount of the monthly fees. Although subsidy comes directly to the centre it is your job to ensure that you re apply on time and handle any issues with them. We will do our best to help families with subsidy issues but it is ultimately up to you.

If we walk your child from school it is an extra $75 for Kindergarteners. We do not walk children to school. After the 2022-2023 school year we will not be providing this service unless a group of three children minimum require it.

Your child’s birthday must happen on the 1st of the month to qualify for the price change, otherwise it will come into effect the following month.

**E-Transfers and Postdated Checks**We Accept E-Transfers, or cash. Our preferred method of payment is an E-Transfer.

**Late Pickup**If you are going to be late please let us know as soon as possible. If you are late a fee of $15 per child for every 15 minutes bracket will be charged to your account and due with your next month’s fees. This is to cover the costs of staffing. Staff make plans and appointments after work and it isn't fair to keep them waiting. If you are continually late we reserve the right to discontinue care. If you have a morning/afternoon spot share and do not pick up your child by the designated time in your contract the same fee will be applied.

**Late Payments**If your fees are not paid by the 3rd business day of the month your child will not be permitted to attend until fees are paid in full. Please speak to us ahead of time if there are unforeseen circumstance so that we can arrange a later payment date. If you have outstanding fees and your child turns an age in which their fees would drop (e.g. from 3 to 4 years), their fees will not drop until the outstanding fees are paid.

**Notice of Withdrawal**Written notice must be given one month prior to when your fees are due. This means, for example, that if you wish to withdraw anytime in September, written notice must be given by August 1st. Failure to give this notice will result in you being charged for that month including any portion subsidy would cover. Failure to pay will result in being reported to Collections.

**Confidentiality Policy**

Families are expected to keep any information that they learn or overhear about other families at the centre confidential.

Staff understand that the information given to them by parents, employers and other staff, and any conversation had with any of the above mentioned is to stay strictly confidential and within the walls of the daycare. Discussions about children between staff are to be had while not in the presence of other children’s parents or in front of any children. Any daycare files, parent files, staff files, or children’s files and personal information are to stay confidential as well and are not to be removed from the daycare unless discussed and agreed about with the owner.

Any information pertinent to suspected child abuse or domestic abuse may be discussed with Alberta Family and Social Services and with any other appropriate criminal justice personnel who are assisting with the investigation or prosecution of the case. All other information not related to such case shall remain confidential between the child/ren and families and Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre.

All records containing confidential information will be maintained securely in the centre and only be accessible by staff or the director of Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre

The only exceptions to confidentiality include:

1. Parental requests in writing that the program release information.
2. Parent or other adult makes a report or comment about child or spousal abuse.
3. Court orders disclosure via subpoena.

Every staff and volunteer will be informed of the conditions of this confidentiality policy at orientation with that individual. There is a document to be signed within their new staff package stating that they understand the terms and conditions of the confidentiality of the centre.

Staff fully understand that any violation of this requirement may result in immediate termination.

**Collections**If fees are not paid in full by a month after either notice has been given by the family or a month after we have terminated care the account will be taken to collections, unless a payment plan has been agreed upon by both parties. If the account is taken to collections 50% of the total bill will be added onto the amount owing to account for the collection agency’s fees.

**Bounced Checks**
If your check bounces you are responsible for paying the fee.

**Tax Receipts**We will write you a yearly statement for tax purposes. If at any time in the year you require a receipt, please submit a request to a supervisor.

**Lice**If your child has lice please keep them home until it has been treated and all the eggs have been removed. You are expected to continue treatments as per the recommendation on the box or bottle. You are also expected to let the centre know. If we find lice, eggs, or egg casings in your child's hair they will be sent home immediately. A notice will be posted in the centre when a child has lice, the family's identity will not be disclosed.

**Injury Report**If your child is seriously injured (needs medical attention) you will be called immediately. If your child has a minor injury such as a scrape or bruise an injury report will be written and given to you to sign. Anything that we notice that leaves a mark gets a report as well as anything that could cause future issues (concussion).

**Medication** If your child needs to have medication administered at the centre you must fill out a form. We can only give medication that is prescribed by a doctor and in its original bottle. An exception to this would be Tylenol for a child who is teething. The medication must still be in its original bottle and a medication form must still be completed each day. Tylenol must be taken home daily. Only parents/guardians can bring medication for their children, we are unable to accept medication provided by any other individuals.

**Emergency Medication**Emergency medication such as Epi-Pens and inhalers have a specialized form that must be filled out before we can administer it or have it on the premises. Please be extremely specific when filling out symptoms, the more information the better. If any child has a seizure at any time we are required to call 911 regardless of how mild it is.

**Nutrition**Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre will provide snack in the morning and a snack in the afternoon in addition to a lunch time meal in the middle of the day. Canada’s Food Guide will be followed for all snacks and meals prepared at the centre. If children are hungry between meals they may be provided with an extra snack.

* Morning snack will be at around 8:45 AM
* Lunch will be between 11:00 AM and 11:30 AM, with infants being served first, followed by the toddlers and then older children.
* Afternoon snack will be at 3:00 PM

**Allergies**Children's allergies will be posted in all rooms on the wall near the eating area. If your child develops any allergies that are not on their registration form please let us know immediately.

**Food from Home**It is fine to bring food from home but if it is a substitution for a meal it must follow the Canada Food Guide. If your child is having a birthday feel free to bring a special treat. If you are interested in bringing in a special treat please enquire about any allergies in the class. Please do not bring in junk food to the facility on a daily and regular basis.

**Nap Time**Nap time is between 12:00p.m. – 2:30pm. (often earlier for infants) Each child that naps will be provided with a rest mat, blanket and sheet. If your child has a special blanket they like to sleep with they are more than welcome to bring it. We also don’t mind if they bring a special stuffed animal if they have one they are attached to. When naptime approaches we turn off the lights, turn on soft music and put out the children’s beds. We then sit with the children and help the children who have a difficult time falling asleep by rubbing their backs or by rocking them if necessary.

It is crucial for children to get adequate sleep. During the deep states of sleep energy is restored, blood supply to the muscles is increased, tissue growth and repair occur and the hormones responsible for growth and development are released. Research has shown that adding as little as 27 minutes of extra sleep, per night, makes it easier for children to manage their moods and impulses so they can focus.

**Nap Limits**

It seems there is a trend to want to cut naps younger and younger. This has been difficult for us as we see these children throughout the day and they are unable to regulate their emotions, often become aggressive, or extremely weepy. We spoke to a sleep consultant and have used their recommendations to form our policy. Often children fighting sleep at night has more to do with their routine and sometimes sleep regressions. Often it is a knee jerk reaction to cut naps when children start to fight sleep at night, but this is not developmentally appropriate, or best for optimal brain development in young children. We are unable to restrict children’s naps to less than 1 hour, this is because naptime is when we give staff breaks. It also does not allow the child to complete a full sleep cycle, and they typically wake up very agitated. To allow staff to go for their break we need an entire hour to cover that break. It is recommended that children nap until the age of 4. We have an awake group for children over three, so if your child starts to exhibit signs at home or at daycare of no longer needing naps, we are willing to discuss their naps being shortened or cut. This depends on how each child handles losing their nap; what works well for one child may not work for another even within the same family. We also may have to discuss naps being reinstated if a child does not have the ability yet to forgo a nap.

We encourage our awake group to take some time to do quiet activities during this time to refuel and recharge. It is recommended that children who do not nap have one hour of play a day where they do less fast paced activities and spend time doing activities such as art, blocks, puzzles, or books etc. The awake group typically plays outside during nap time to allow the sleeping children to rest. If weather does not permit, they do quiet activities inside instead. Sometimes a child who is weening off naps may not be able to join this group since the outside group is full and there are not enough children to start up a second or third group.

Due to ratios, we are unable to put children less than three into an awake group, this drops the ratio and affects staff break times because more staff would be needed in ratio. It is also not recommended for toddler’s brain development to stop napping. Toddlers who do not nap often get aggressive and unable to cope, this is not fair to them, staff, or their peers. Often toddlers fighting sleep at night need more sleep not less. There is a natural sleep regression that occurs during the age of 2. It is not because they need less sleep but because their body requires more stimulation to burn the energy. It is not encouraged to decrease the nap but rather to consistently continue to offer the nap until the regression passes. If a child is unable to not nap without a major tantrum by 5:00 p.m., they are not ready to stop napping. For children under three, an hour and a half is the most we will limit to unless they are infants, in which we will not limit their naps. Good day time sleep is always reflected with good nighttime sleep. Children need adequate naps in order to sustain themselves for the duration of the day. Too little day time sleep can cause way more nighttime wake ups and bedtime struggles.

Good Sleep equals more good sleep. Without enough daytime sleep, bedtime initiation will become harder, attention span and behavioural control will significantly decrease and ultimately you will have a more irritable, miserable child. A child who is forced to stay awake all day and is in a playful, learning environment will become extremely exhausted. Immune systems will weaken and there is a very good chance this overtired child will spend more time sick than healthy.

Sometimes a child who is experiencing difficultly at bedtime is searching for quality time with parents. In a world of so many screens, it can be easy to forget that children need uninterrupted, fully focused connection. Make quality time a non-negotiable part of your bedtime routine, like reading a book, doing a puzzle, or even just chatting about your day with each other.

If your child uses screens two hours before bedtime, this can seriously impact their body’s ability to produce melatonin and you will have a struggle getting them to sleep at bedtime. Adults should also be removing screens at least an hour before bed.

**Diapering**Our staff will ensure that the diapering routine is a child/staff interaction opportunity. The child will be spoken to in a quiet, comforting manner. All children in diapers will be changed at 8:45 a.m., 10:45 a.m., after nap, and at 4:00 p.m. Soiled Diapers will be changed immediately. Before and after diapering Staff will wash their hands with soap following Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centres Hand Washing Policy. The changing surface will be disinfected after every child. Gloves will also be available to staff, but do not negate proper hand washing procedures.

**Toilet Training**Children who seem ready to start toilet training will be encouraged to use the toilet and will be asked every time their diaper is changed if they would like to sit on the toilet. Parents can bring pull ups, or transition right to underwear. We understand the first few weeks of toilet training are really difficult, and don’t mind dealing with accidents. We have many children start toilet training here first before they start at home. Going with their peers encourages many children If we see signs that they are ready we will let you know so we can get started. Let us know what is working at home, and we will do the same here. When children are toilet training or any other time a child has an accident, the staff member will help the child to find dry clothes in their cubby and the clothes will be washed at the centre unless otherwise specified by parent. A child care professional will be available throughout the entire process to help the child both physically and emotionally. When children are toilet training they have good days and bad days. Please bring multiple changes of clothes to ensure your child is comfortable.

**Hand Washing Policy**Children will wash their hands with soap and water after using the toilet, before and after eating, after outside play, before any cooking activity, after diapering, playing with pets and after sand play. Staff will encourage all children who have colds and runny noses to wash their hands frequently throughout the day.

To wash hands staff and children will:

1. Wet Hands 2.Use Soap 3. Lather and Scrub for 20 seconds

4. Rinse for 10 seconds 5.Turn Off Tap 6. Dry Hands

**Pandemic Policy**In the case of a pandemic the procedure is as follows:

1. Contact Alberta Health Services and confirm case
2. Follow Procedure Alberta Health Services Recommends
3. Centre will close if order by Alberta Health Services or any other governing bodies (Licensing)
4. Will reopen once Alberta Health Services criteria is met and is deemed safe

**Maternity/Paternity Leave**A lot of the time when parents are off on maternity or paternity leave they keep their older child home with them. We can't afford to keep spots vacant for months but when you are ready to come back you will receive the first available spots. We will also call if a spot becomes available in the last couple months of your leave and give you the first opportunity before we accept anyone from our waiting list. Many of our parents also leave their older child in part time while they are on leave so that they still have time to socialize with their peer group. We will do our best to find a spot share so that we can keep prices reasonable. We like this option because we still get to see your child!

**Illness and Communicable Disease Policy**Controlling communicable diseases in a child care facility is essential to providing a safe, comfortable and healthy environment for all children and staff. Staff members have an important role in the prevention, early detection and management of communicable diseases. Where staff know or have reason to suspect that a child may be suffering from a notifiable disease (as defined by the Province of Alberta Health Act Communicable Disease Regulation AR 238/85), the centre supervisor shall be notified and shall request the child’s parent to remove the child from the centre immediately. In cases where a communicable disease has been confirmed, a physician or public health nurse will be consulted and their recommendations will be followed.

Parents agree to keep children at home or seek alternate arrangements for the following conditions:

* Fever (100 F/38.3 C)
* Diarrhea or lose stool. The child will be kept at home until they have a regular bowel movement or for 24 hours.
* Vomiting
* Known or suspected communicable diseases.
* If the child is not well enough to take part in the activities at daycare. This includes excessive lethargy, headaches or other aches and pains.

Upon discovery of fever, diarrhea, vomiting and/or the possibility of communicable disease the staff will ensure that:

* The child at all times will be supervised by a primary educator with first aid and kept as far away as practical from other children.
* The staff will call the children’s parents or an emergency contact if the parent can’t be reached within 30 minutes. The parent or emergency contact will be asked to remove the child from the center immediately to help protect other children and families as well as centre staff.
* Any linen, toys and cot/crib used by the child will be disinfected immediately
* If staff suspects or knows that a child is sick a form must be filled out and signed by the staff member, program supervisor and parent.
* Children may not return to the center for 24 hours after symptoms disappear unless a doctor’s note states otherwise.
* If a child has a fever staff will monitor the child’s temperature every 15 minutes until the parent or emergency contact arrives and record the results.

**Privacy Statement**
Families are expected to keep any information that they learn or overhear about other families at the centre confidential. We have an inclusive environment which supports communication, in order to maintain this families need to be able to share freely knowing their privacy will be respected.

**Supervision Policy**
Staff will at all times be interacting with the children. They will constantly be moving around the room and positioning themselves to optimize their view of all children. Outside staff will do the same. Staff will spread out when there is more than one group of children. At staff orientation they will be shown around both the indoor and outdoor environments to become familiar with them. Staff will consistently be counting children to ensure that they are all accounted for. Children will be counted before and after all transitions such as from inside to outside. They will also be counted before leaving for a walk or field trip and consistently during the outing as well as on our return.

**Emergency Evacuations**If you are present in an emergency evacuation please proceed to the nearest exit. In the case of an emergency evacuation all parents will be contacted and if they cannot be reached your alternate contact will be called.

**Fire Drills**Fire Drills will be done every 4 months, this is to help prepare children for an emergency evacuation.

**Smoking and Vaping Policy**
Where The Wild Things Grow Early Learning Centre is a non-smoking facility. There is absolutely no smoking or vaping anywhere on the premises, this includes in your vehicle on our driveway. We also ask that it not occur if you are parked on the street in view of the windows. Please respect this rule, as we all appreciate it.

**Revisions to Handbook and Contract**Changes to our handbook will be posted in our parent area, then added to the handbook. The handbook can be found online on our website at all times.

**Critical Incident Reports**Any Critical Incidents will be reported to Child and Family Services Authorities as well as parents immediately. These include an emergency evacuation of the centre, unexpected program closure, an intruder on the program premises, a serious illness or injury to a child that requires the program to request emergency healthcare and or requires the child to remain in hospital overnight, an error in the administration of medication by a program staff or volunteer resulting in the child becoming seriously injured or ill, the death of a child, an unexpected absence of a child from the program (i.e. lost child) A child removed from the program by a non-custodial parent or guardian, an allegation of physical ,sexual, emotional abuse and or neglect of a child by a program staff member or volunteer, the commission by a child of an offense under the Act of Canada or Alberta, a child left on the premises outside of the program operating hours.

**Transportation**Unfortunately due to liability issues we are unable to transport children in a motorized vehicle owned by the daycare. Public transportation will be utilized on field trips. We may pick up children from General Stewart Elementary School only if there is a group of three or more children utilizing this service after the 2022-2023 school year. We are unable to provide morning drop off due to staff scheduling and licensing regulations.

**Suspension of Enrolment**We reserve the right to discontinue care in extreme cases. We will attempt to work with families to resolve the problem first but if other children are at risk we may have to terminate care.

**Personal Relationships Between Parents and Staff**
We value the relationships that staff and parents create outside of the daycare. We understand that these relationships will happen and are very beneficial to the staff, children, and parents of Where The Wild Things Grow. These relationships are bound to the Where The Wild Things Grow Confidentiality Policy. Any events or information that occur while Where The Wild Things Grow is open and operating will remain at the facility and not discussed. This includes speaking about any issues one may have with other families and staff, these problems should be directed to the Program Supervisor and not be a topic of gossip. If for any reason a personal relationship between staff and parents should come to an end, it is not to come into the facility. Personal relationships happen outside the Centre and the Centre is (and will remain) neutral territory; falling outs are an adult problem and will remain that way while the children are attending the facility. The children’s relationship with staff and parents will remain the same and staff will not in any way degrade a parent. Staff will be expected to treat the children the same way as before the falling out has occurred. Parents will be expected to perform in the same manner regarding how they speak about the staff member. The upmost essential relationships in this case will be those of the child, their staff and parents are especially important to them and those relationships will be respected while attending. Any form of aggression or hostility to a parent or staff member will result in the termination of a contract by Where The Wild Things Grow management. Where The Wild Things Grow is not responsible for any personal choices, events, financial dealings, or incidents that occur between staff and parents on a personal level. Where The Wild Things Grow and will not be held in any way accountable for the personal relationships sought out by staff and parent.

**Accidents or Serious Injury**
Non-Emergency incidents/injuries Staff will first:

1. Get the first aid kit and get the situation under control (pressure on a wound that is bleeding or give emergency medication)
2. Call for help using the intercom or someone in a neighbouring room.
3. The second person will call the child’s parents immediately and assist with caring for the rest of the group.
4. If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached within 15 minutes. The program supervisor or primary staff member will continue to call parents and/or emergency contacts until either has been reached. During this time, a contact note will be maintained to record the time staff members attempted to call**.**
5. If the parents can be reached within 15 minutes an injury or illness form will be completed by a supervisor or staff member and signed by the parent or emergency contactas soon as possible.

Emergency incidents/injuries staff will:

1. Call 9-1-1 to access emergency services.
2. The Program will contact parents or the emergency contact immediately.
3. The staff member will receive additional help from staff to maintain the proper supervision of the rest of the children in the group.
4. When the ambulance arrives a staff member will provide emergency services with the child’s portable record. The staff member will drive to the hospital and stay with the child until their parents arrives.