



# Parent Handbook

## Mission Statement:

**Inclusive, accessible, affordable, quality childcare for all.**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Group: \_\_\_\_\_

**I have read, understood and initialed the parent handbook.**

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

The Parent Handbook can be read and initialed on-line.  
Once complete, email a copy to [ldaniel@town.jasper.ab.ca](mailto:ldaniel@town.jasper.ab.ca).



# Welcome to Our Childcare Program

Wildflowers Childcare is licensed by Alberta Human Services and provides accredited, high quality care and learning opportunities for children from birth to school-age. Wildflowers Childcare is a non-profit, non-sectarian program under the administration of and subsidized by the Municipality of Jasper.

## Our Philosophy

We believe that each child is a unique individual with his or her own individual needs and capabilities. It is our responsibility as Early Childhood educators to provide each child with a bright, positive, nurturing and secure environment. We believe that through play, children build a solid foundation for later learning. The educators at Wildflowers Childcare provide each child with a varied, interesting and developmentally appropriate program, which encourages active participation and provides first-hand experiences. Diverse needs are respected and valued as well as supporting families as the primary educators and care givers of their children. Children's family values and beliefs are respected and their physical, mental, spiritual and emotional development is supported in our responsive environment.

Wildflowers Childcare has adopted a Reggio-inspired approach and incorporated Flight – Alberta's Early Learning and care Framework into our daily practice. Taking a holistic approach to our practice allows us to educate the whole child; head, heart and hands. We work hard to incorporate nature into our daily activities, following the seasons with stories and songs, celebrating seasonal festivals, playing with natural toys, and encouraging the children to use their imaginations.

We believe each child is an individual and we value and develop each child's unique personality. By providing opportunities for children to explore, discover, create and imagine we build on their individual strengths, interests, abilities and knowledge to value and extend their learning.

Routines are adapted to fit the diverse needs of the children in our care and the children are treated as individuals and mighty learners. Activities are planned based on the emerging interests in the rooms and educators are responsive to the children's play and reflect frequently on next steps in the children's learning. Preschool aged children are supported in their learning through play and are able to build social-emotional skills to prepare them for a school environment.

## Evaluation and Improvement

The Educators and Friends of Jasper Childcare Board have monthly meetings to discuss any concerns of the program and to come up with solutions and improvements. We have an annual Open House and AGM hosted by the Friends for staff and parents to meet and discuss ideas or issues about childcare. The staff and management also perform Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS) or Rating Observation Scales for Inspiring Environments (ROSIE).

The Alberta Child Care licensing officer visits and/or monitors the program regularly. A licensing report is provided after review with the Manager of Childcare Services and the Assistant Manager. An overview of the report is discussed at the next staff meeting with all staff and management. Licensing Reports are posted in the front hallway of Wildflowers Childcare.

The program will be evaluated yearly by parents in the form of a parent survey. This process will be voluntary and anonymous. Children will evaluate the program with their parents during the survey. As well, during the program, children will be asked what they would like to see happening in activities and planning.

## Flight – Alberta’s Early Learning and Care Framework

***Flight: Alberta’s Early Learning and Care Framework*** is a guide for early childhood educators to use in their everyday work. It inspires curriculum meaning making by highlighting relationships and responsive practices in early learning and child care communities.

The framework recognizes, appreciates, and values:

- the practice of relationships among educators, children and families that make visible the uniqueness of each child care centre in Alberta.
- the co-constructed nature of early learning curriculum: recognizing the unique nature of learning in early childhood, educators make curriculum decisions “in the moment,” extending play and learning through thoughtful reflection and dialogue with children, families, and other educators.
- the search for a shared professional language—a language that asks educators to reflect deeply in order to make the values, principles, and goals that frame practice in early learning and child care clear to themselves and visible to others.

An early learning and child care curriculum framework is different than a traditional curriculum. It is focused on broad holistic goals rather than specific outcomes for each subject area and embraces children’s everyday experiences as the sources of meaning making. Early childhood educators observe the interests emerging from children’s fascination with the world and use the goals in the curriculum framework to describe and interpret their everyday experiences. The documentation that comes from these observations is seen in the room and through learning stories sent home to parents.

For more detailed information about the Framework visit: <https://flightframework.ca/>



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# **Your Child's Needs**

We strive to ensure that each aspect of the child is encouraged to evolve while also keeping the best interest of the child, as a whole, in view. The province of Alberta, Child care licensing branch has adopted

## **Physical Needs**

At Wildflowers children are given the opportunity daily to be mighty learners. Our program has purposefully designed indoor and outdoor spaces where interaction with the environment is encouraged. Ample time and varied experiences are provided outdoors in our play spaces and in the natural environment such as hiking, creek visits, garden play, biking and wildlife spotting. We encourage outdoor play in all seasons so children can explore and problem solve in different ways.

We provide the opportunity to develop gross motor skills through activities such as running, jumping, crawling, climbing, swimming and many other whole-body movements. Fine motor skill building activities are available throughout the day and include cutting, small block play, lacing, writing, art, sensory walls, eating with utensils and many others. Spatial awareness and rhythm are developed through games, sensory experiences, creative activities and individual play. Children learn first with their five senses: sight, touch, hearing, smell, and taste. Many opportunities are provided to explore the world in this way on a daily basis. This form of learning establishes the foundation for perceptual skills to evolve and grow during the child's time at our program.

Basic physical needs such as rest and proper nutrition are a focus of our program. Food provided meets the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth. Each family's food choices are respected and children are given a relaxing, responsive environment for meal times. Each age group is given rest times, some for napping and others for quiet time, meditation, yoga or mindfulness activities. Parents wishes in relation to nap time lengths are respected and given consideration but children's basic need to rest is never withheld.

We provide opportunities for each child to manage his or her own world by encourage self-help skill building. Children will take ownership for themselves and identity as a citizen in their early learning community by performing task such as dressing and undressing, putting away belongings, choosing and cleaning up toys, during bathroom time, hand-washing, and teeth brushing. Educators will give assistance when necessary and nurture the children's independence.

## **Mental Needs**

The mental needs of a child are characterized by cultivating positive relationships, nurturing confidence and providing opportunities for developmental growth through play and social interactions. Learning happens through hands-on play, repetition and variation. We introduce children to a number of experiences and opportunities for learning so they can absorb and develop at their own speed. We believe that each child learns in their own way and at their own time. Children are given the opportunity to develop reasoning skills through uninterrupted play, "I wonder" statements, open-ended questions and reflection and observations from the educators. Through conversations and imitation, children learn language as well. Educators always model how to speak in a clear and concise manner with children in order to help them learn. When possible, this can be done in multiple languages to respect the diversity of our families. The children will also experience rhyme and rhythm in language, stories, nursery rhymes, rhythm and dance. All of these activities are essential as pre-reading exercises.

Each child will have the opportunity to participate in self-directed activities that develop independence and initiative as well as foster the ability to make decisions. Creativity encompasses the originality, the willingness to experiment, the imagination and the spirit of exploration present in each child. We value

and promote creativity both in artistic endeavors and in thinking and problem solving. We provide the materials and the environment and the children provides the creativity and imagination.

Each child has the opportunity to develop positive relationships with others (both adults and children). They will be encouraged to cooperate, to take turns, to resolve personal conflicts, to function as a group member and to observe role models in order to learn positive social behavior. This will look very different at each age group and expectations would change depending on developmental level and abilities of the individual child.

## **Emotional Needs**

Wildflowers Childcare supports the emotional needs of children in our program by providing a safe environment where children are encouraged to express themselves freely without judgment. Our responsive environment provides a familiar routine for children which is especially important for children with diverse needs. Each child will have the opportunity to participate in self-directed activities that develop independence and initiative as well as foster the ability to make decisions and problem solve. Challenges are created for children in our daily practice so they can master skills.

Educators will role model healthy relationships by being respectful and responsive to children and their families. Children will learn to accept and express their feelings with the help of educators. They will develop an awareness and respect for the feelings of others and will have opportunities to give and receive affection. They will also learn to express anger appropriately and cope with frustration or disappointment. Supporting and encouraging knowledge about emotional intelligence is an important part of our program and develops a solid foundation for later learning.

Building relationships, confidence and acceptance, developing empathy and compassion, fostering diversity and inclusivity, understanding adversity, and sharing/turn taking are all important components of the emotional development. At Wildflowers this may look like feelings charts in the room, Kimochi lesson plans, dramatic play, activities that require taking turns, culturally diverse materials, books about diverse families and many other group and individual activities. Children are supported in their quest to be might learners and educators encourage learning social-emotional skills through play.

## **Spiritual Needs**

Educators will support children's spiritual development, by inviting children to learn and be comfortable with qualities such as respect, responsibility, and empathy for self and others. Spiritual needs means making connections, values, reflection, learning about one another and openness. We will encourage learning of all cultures and diverse families to support the acceptance of all individuals. Connection to the community and nature will be a priority as well as sharing how children can take action to preserve and protect it. Educators will honour each child's uniqueness in our welcoming and inclusive environment and support children in finding wonder, joy and inspiration in their daily lives.

In our registration package we have questions where parents can share values and beliefs as well as events that are important to their family for us to take note of. Families are encouraged to share photos of themselves, home, pets and celebrations to be incorporated into our daily practice. Examples of this developmental need can be seen in our rooms by incorporating multicultural materials and books, family photos, sharing circles, community member visits, visits to our local Grandmas and Grandpas and connecting with nature daily.

# Inclusion & Diversity Policy

High quality childcare programs are important for all children. Wildflowers Childcare: Early Learning and Out of School Care programs focus on policies and practices that promote positive developmental outcomes for children. The programs place a strong importance on adult – child ratios, group size, learning environments and educator – child interactions in order to deliver high quality childcare.

Wildflowers Childcare strives to achieve equal relations between nationalities, races, religions, cultures, genders, and developmental abilities; to cultivate each child's right and ability to stand up for themselves and for others and act to promote equity. Administration will endeavor to make staff, children, families, and other stakeholders involved in the program aware of strategies aimed at achieving the goal of equality for all.

Wildflowers Childcare will develop programs which support the goals of inclusion and diversity through the following strategies.

All educators and staff will strive to ensure that their interactions with children:

- Promote gender equality
- Promote equality regardless of race, culture, religion, nationality or differences
- Encourage children to develop to their full potential regardless of different abilities or needs
- Are anti-bias interactions
- Are responsive to the diverse needs of the children and their families.
- Use language and implement daily practices that are inclusive and non-discriminatory

Educators will:

- Identify and monitor their biases concerning gender, stereotypes or other differences between children.
- Utilize the parent's expertise in relation to their child's needs and invite children and families to share cultural experiences, preferences and traditions.
- Show respect for the various ways that families care for their children and be aware of different child-rearing practices and beliefs.
- Display posters and provide materials that are representative of a variety of social, cultural, linguistic and ability backgrounds including non-traditional family units such as single parent families, same sex parents and/or children living with grandparents. (dolls, dress-up clothes, puzzles, food, songs and music, games, art materials, books and print material, photos, posters, etc.)
- Regularly change the images and materials used within the program to maintain interest and stimulate and to reflect the changing nature of society.
- Share information with children about different cultures and abilities.
- Provide opportunity for children to use their native languages with each other and where able with educators and allow opportunity for children to teach peers and providers/staff words and/or phrases from their home language.
- Talk to children about differences in positive ways.
- Help each child to be able to recognize and challenge bias.
- Acknowledge and value children's unique and individual differences and qualities.
- Provide additional support to identified children as required in order for those children to fully experience and benefit from the program offered.

It is the responsibility of all educators and administrative staff to identify individual children's needs and where appropriate collaborate with community supports and access funding for children who require additional support within the child care programs.

## **Inclusion**

Simply put, childcare inclusion means that all children can attend and benefit from the same childcare programs. Children with diverse needs attend the same programs they would if they did not have those needs. The principle of inclusion goes beyond the notion of physical integration and fully incorporates basic values that promote and advance participation, friendship and a celebration of diversity.

To assure full participation for children with diverse needs (children characterized as having disabilities, delays or disorders in the areas of physical, social, intellectual, communicative, emotional, and/or behavioural development), the Wildflowers Childcare has the following principles:

- **Inclusion:** No child will be excluded from our programs based on their diverse needs, developmental level or type of disability. If the diverse needs of a child exceed what the program can typically support in a ratio-based environment, then a referral will be made for Inclusive Child Care Programming and a support staff will be hired so that the child can attend.
- **Full participation:** necessary supports will be provided so that all children can participate, in some way, in all activities.
- **Advocacy:** educators and parents promote “inclusive, accessible, affordable, quality child care” for all – at our programs, and in the community.

Children with diverse needs, require childcare for the same reasons that all other children need childcare. Children with all levels and types of disability benefit from social and developmental experiences with their typically developing peers. Typical children also benefit from inclusive experiences.

Wildflowers Childcare commits to providing fully inclusive environments that support the health and well-being of every child in our program. For a child who has additional support needs, the parents and the existing professional supports to the child will be consulted to ensure the best possible environment.

As part of our Inclusive Childcare Contract and ECS contract with Alberta Education, Wildflowers Childcare will complete and submit as required all referral and evaluation forms, reports and invoices for any child that requires additional support through the Alberta Government Children's Services Department. Educators who are designated as Enhancement Workers will be provided with resources in order to further their knowledge of the developmental challenges of the children enrolled in our care.



# Positive Guidance Practices

Child Guidance is the teaching and learning process by which each child develops socially appropriate behaviour as they learn and grow. We believe that guidance and discipline is something adults do with and for children, rather than something done to children to stop them from behaving in undesirable ways. The intention is to help each child become self-disciplined as they learn appropriate behavior patterns. Child Guidance involves a continuous process of guiding behavior and is offered while appropriate behaviour is occurring as well as before, during and after inappropriate behaviour is displayed. While there are a wide variety of theories and approaches related to guidance, the goal remains constant: to assist children in developing self-control, self-confidence, and ultimately self-discipline and sensitivity in their interactions with others. A problem-solving approach is preferred during interactions between children and when adult guidance is needed. All guidance given is reasonable to the circumstances presented.

These guidelines form the basis of our approach to guidance at Wildflowers Childcare and are communicated to parents during orientation and are also listed in our Parent Handbook which they receive at time of registration.

## Prevention Techniques

- Establish clear, consistent and simple limits.
- Make statements of expectation rather than pose questions.
- State limits in a positive way.
- Focus on the behavior, rather than on the child.
- Offer straightforward explanations for limits.
- Reinforce appropriate behavior.
- Encourage the child to use caregivers as a resource.
- Encourage and support social-emotional learning

## Intervention Techniques

- Gain the child's attention in a respectful way.
- Use proximity and gentle touch.
- Remind and support
- Acknowledge feelings before setting limits.
- Distract or divert when appropriate.
- Model problem-solving skills.
- Offer appropriate choices.
- Redirect.

## The following forms of guidance are not permitted

- Physical punishment of children, including hitting and spanking.
- Harsh or degrading measures that humiliate or undermine a child's self-respect.
- Verbal and physical degradation as well as emotional deprivation.
- Confining or isolating a child or withholding or threatening to withhold food, warmth, clothing, bedding, or basic necessity.
- Physical restraint in any form.

## Staff Qualifications

All staff employed at Wildflowers Childcare are **qualified Early Childhood Educators** and, as such, are issued with one of the following certifications by the Alberta Government, Child Care certification branch:

1. Level 1 – Early Childhood Educator
2. Level 2 – Early Childhood Educator
3. Level 3 – Early Childhood Educator

Some newly-hired staff may be granted an exemption until they complete the Level 1 – Early Childhood Educator requirement within the first six months of employment. These certifications are based on a combination of experience and training in Early Childhood Education. All full-time staff also have a valid First Aid Certificate. All staff, paid or volunteer, are required to have a criminal record check and a Child and Family Services intervention record check before working with the children at the Centre. Wildflowers Childcare staff will supervise the children at all times while in the Centre and while out on Centre activities.

### Supervision Policy and Practices

In order to ensure that primary staff observe children's play and behaviour both indoors and outdoors, we ensure the following practices are met.

Primary staff are required to fill out a daily safety inspection checklist in order to ensure the safety of the indoor and outdoor environment. The number of children is checked constantly throughout the day and always done before and after an outing, before and after an emergency evacuation, and at any time using the iPad Tadpoles sign-in system. The Tadpoles system allows us to take pictures of the emergency pick up person in order to easily identify them.

The supervision practices meet children's development needs by ensuring that staff are not only aware of the children in their care but are at the same time getting down on the child's level to engage with them. The furniture indoors is arranged in a way that allows for children to be seen at all times. When we are outdoors, staff spread out to different zones to ensure proper supervision and sight lines. The staff orientation package explains the importance of maintaining ratio and constant supervision.

### Volunteers

Volunteers are welcome at Wildflowers and we encourage parents to get involved when they can. All volunteer staff, receive at minimum a 4hr orientation at Wildflowers with the Manager or Assistant Manager. They are required to have a clean criminal record check including a vulnerable sector search and a Child and Family Services intervention record check before they can begin volunteering at Wildflowers. Volunteers receive an orientation handbook, tour of the facility, Health & Safety orientation and training. The orientation includes shadowing the Assistant manager and spending time in each of the different rooms to experience different age levels. Respectful and positive interactions are expected at all times when interacting with the children, their families and other staff members. A volunteer is never left alone with a child unless in the case of an emergency situation.

Parent Volunteers are not required to do a formal orientation as they did one when their child started at Wildflowers but they are asked to familiarize themselves with all our policies and procedures especially when assisting on field trips or with skating and swimming days. The room lead staff will go over expectations with the parents and assist them in familiarizing themselves with the children and the procedures.

**Parent Volunteer Responsibilities:**

- Read and Initial Parent Handbook outlining Wildflowers Childcare’s Policies
- Ask Staff what their expectations of the children and volunteer(s) are while on the Field Trip ( example: walk in a line; a Staff and/ or Volunteer at the front, end of line and someone intermixed in line to ensure safety)

**Friends of Jasper Childcare**

Our Parent Board was revived in January of 2008 and they have worked very hard to fundraise for and advocate for our childcare programs. They meet monthly to discuss fundraising ideas as well as discuss any concerns about programming. The Board hosts fundraisers each year as well as family fun events.

The funds raised are used to:

- enhance programming;
- buy equipment;
- organize family events; and
- show staff appreciation.

If you are interested in being part of the Friends of Jasper Childcare, please contact the Childcare Services Manager or Administrative Assistant.

**There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children.  
One of these is roots, the other, wings.**

*-Hodding Carter*

# General Policies

## Absences

We hope that children attend regularly as they benefit most from regular attendance. If your child is going to be absent, please call and let us know. Calendars are required to be filled out every month to let us know of your child's expected attendance or days that will be missed.

- Parents and/or guardians receiving provincial government childcare subsidy will note that **regular attendance is a requirement** for continuation of subsidy.

## Arrival and Departure

All children must be presented, in person, to a staff member, and please make sure you connect with a staff member to make sure they are aware your child is now in our care and your child is signed in. Upon arrival, please assist your child with putting on their indoor shoes and putting their belongings in their locker.

**\*\* Please ensure your child is dropped off prior to 9:30 am, when programming begins. \*\***

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to connect with the group their child is registered with. For example, if you arrive and the Bluebells (the group your child is part of) are at the Elementary School Park, you will be required to take your child to the park for drop-off. If your child is going to be late, please call the Centre to let us know.

At pick up time, please advise at least one staff member, in person, that you are leaving with your child and confirm your child is signed out. A child will not be released to the care of anyone other than the custodial parents/guardians, and those designates listed as emergency contacts on the child's application or drop-in form. Please advise the staff, in writing, of any other person you wish to have pick-up your child. Ensure that your designate knows the sign in/out procedure. This is for your child's safety.

## Clothing

Please ensure your child arrives in play clothes. We do lots of art projects, play with the water table, and encourage self-help skills even when children make a mess. Please have a change of clothes in your child's locker for these times. Your child will require a pair of indoor shoes. For fire safety, shoes will be worn at all times. Regular outside play is a part of any well-rounded Early Childhood Program. We go outside everyday unless the weather is truly unpleasant. Please be sure that your child has appropriate clothing to ensure his or her comfort and safety in unexpected weather conditions. In the winter, a warm jacket, snow pants, hat, waterproof mittens, and snow boots are required for each day. Wet weather requires rubber boots and rain pants. For hot summer days, a sun hat, sunscreen, T-shirt, shorts or bathing suit are recommended. **\*\* Please label all of your child's belongings. \*\***

## Communications Policy

At Wildflowers, we strive to keep parents and staff well informed of all issues relating to the running of the centre and to the welfare of the children. We encourage an atmosphere of openness. We are receptive to new ideas and opportunities for improvement and welcome appropriate feedback from parents and staff at all times.

The procedures set out below will ensure the availability of information on any matter relating to the operation of Wildflowers Childcare, while complying with the provisions of the Privacy Act.

These procedures aim to ensure that positive communication is maintained between Wildflowers Childcare and parents:

- Staff will communicate with all parents, regularly in an open and positive manner regarding their child.
- A comfortable and supportive environment for parents to communicate with staff will be provided.
- Staff and parents will treat each other with respect, courtesy and understanding and appropriate language will be used at all times.
- Staff will respect parents' individual choices in raising children and any related cultural practices.
- Staff will make sure that parents are acknowledged when entering or exiting the program.
- Staff and parents will only speak positively about a child when the child can hear.
- Staff will ensure that parents are aware of all forms of communication and communication will be maintained through: daily greetings, personal conversations, notice boards, emails, Tadpoles notes and newsletters.
- Parents and staff are required to maintain confidentiality at all times.

## **Community Resource Use**

Wildflowers is very fortunate to have the use of the pool, skating rink, and Centennial Park on a regular basis. We also use the library, museum, thrift shop, hiking trails and local businesses for field trips. As part of the program, local professionals come and present information of interest to the children as well. Wildflowers works in partnership with Community Outreach Services and Community Family Services regularly.

## **Diapers**

Please supply the Centre with the diapers and diaper wipes your child will need. Diaper bins are kept in the washroom of our centre and in the infant room for each child in diapers. Staff will assist the child as soon as he or she asks or shows readiness to toilet train. We believe that children will toilet train themselves when ready to do so.

## **Grievances/Concerns Policy**

Concerns will be treated as confidential and due discretion will be applied by both staff and the parent(s) involved. No discrimination will be applied to either the family or child as the result of the concern.

Any concerns in regard to the Wildflowers Childcare can be made:

- Verbally to room staff, or any staff member within the program;
- Verbally or in writing with the Assistant Manager or Childcare Services Manager;
- If the concern is in respect to the Childcare Services Manager, the matter can be raised with the Director of Community & Family Services.
- All concerns will be acted upon immediately. Where it is not possible to resolve the concern within a certain time frame a letter indicating progress will be sent to the parent/guardian.

If you have any concerns about Wildflowers, you may contact one of the following people:

Lisa Daniel, Manager – Childcare Services 780-852-6517

Director, Community Development 780-852-2100

Beverly Gylander, Child Care Consultant, Alberta Child & Youth Services 780-305-6676.

## Hours of Operation

The Centre is open between 7:45 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. In order to pick your child up and collect their belongings, we ask that you arrive by 5:20 p.m. We operate Monday through Friday, year-round with the exception of statutory holidays.

- Parents picking up children after closing will be given a warning after the first incidence. After the second incidence parents will be asked to connect with Community Outreach Services or Childcare Services Manager to discuss possible solutions to the lateness issue.
- If the lateness becomes a pattern and can not be resolved previous to a third incidence, service at Wildflowers will be terminated and if the family wants to re-instate care they will have to go on the waitlist.
- If a child has not been picked up thirty minutes after closing, and the parents and/or emergency contacts cannot be contacted, Wildflowers will call Child and Family Services and/or the R.C.M.P. and ask them to take custody of the child.
- Staff at Wildflowers Childcare will not take legal responsibility for the child or shelter them outside the centre due to legal liability.

Wildflowers Childcare observes the following statutory holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Heritage Day (civic holiday in August)
- Labour Day
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- Thanksgiving Day
- Remembrance Day
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

**\*\*When a day designated as a statutory holiday coincides with a Saturday or Sunday, the program will be closed on the next business day.**

## Liability

The Centre agrees to use all due care in the provision of service to the children and with regard to their personal belongings. The Centre and staff will not, however, be held liable for any loss of or damage to clothing or other personal effects of the children. Furthermore, the Centre and staff will not be held liable for accidents, injuries, sickness or disease that may occur to any child while in attendance at the Centre.

## Lockers

Your child will be given a locker upon enrollment. The locker needs to be emptied at the end of each week. This allows lockers to be cleaned effectively.

## Lost-and-Found

A lost-and-found box is provided for lost clothing. The staff are not permitted to assist you in finding your child's belongings during Centre hours. If you let them know what is missing, they

will look for it during clean-up time. All lost-and-found items will be cleared out at the end of each season and donated to the Jasper Thrift Shop.

## **Media Policy**

All employees of the program are prohibited from posting any photographs or program specific information online to any social media sites, or other websites. Parents and volunteers who attend our events and take photos, are asked to refrain from posting any group photographs to any social media or other websites without the permission of the parents of the children in the photographs. The only time photos of children are permitted to be used is:

1. For advertisement of our program on our website.
2. In the case of the local media covering a Wildflowers Childcare program or event taking place in a public space.

If you would **not** like photos of your child/children used, see below for the appropriate procedure.

## **Medications**

The Centre is only permitted to administer prescription medications. Please do not request that over-the-counter medication be administered.

## **Naptime**

Children who need or want to nap are welcome to do so. We respect the child's internal schedule with regard to sleeping and we provide the opportunity for a nap in a restful setting. That said, we will never insist that a child sleep.

## **Notification of Child Absenteeism**

Parents/guardians of Children who will be absent from a pre-booked spot are required to notify the Centre as soon as possible. Long-term vacancies (considered one week or longer) need to be reported in writing to the Centre one month prior to the vacancy.

## **Parent/Guardian Information**

Several notice boards are set up in the front foyer to display information about all programs and daily activities as well as other pertinent information.

## **Parents as Partners**

The Centre has an open door policy and parents are welcome at all times. Parental input and involvement is valued and encouraged. The program aims to make sure parents and children are happy with the service provided and is devoted to promoting communication between parents and staff.

Parents can be involved with Wildflowers Childcare in many ways:

- by discussing their child's general progress and development with staff;
- by filling out parent surveys to share feedback and ideas;
- by joining the Friends of Jasper Childcare Parent Board;
- by attending social events or information nights;
- or by assisting with fundraising events.

## **Pets/Animals**

Due to allergies, animals may only be brought to the Centre with prior permission.

## **Photo Permission Procedure**

Upon admission to the program, please inform us in writing if you **do not** wish to have your child's photograph or name featured on our website and/or appear in print or on-line media.

## **Referrals & Observations**

Once a year we send home the Ages-and-Stages (ASQ) and Ages-and-Stages – Social/Emotional Questionnaires (ASQ-SE). These questionnaires allow parents to see expectations of typically developing children at certain age groups and are a tool to assist us and you in recognizing any challenges your child may be experiencing. If staff at Wildflowers have any concerns regarding your child's development they may speak to you directly about possible assistance or ways you can help at home and please feel free to ask the staff for suggestions/ideas at any time if you have concerns. If at any time you would like a referral to any specialized programming such as Speech Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy or an Early Intervention/prevention specialist, please speak to your child's room staff or to the Childcare Services Manager and we would be happy to refer you to a specific discipline.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is strictly prohibited at the Centre, in the yard and the surrounding area. Parents/guardians are asked to put out their cigarettes before approaching Centre property.

## **Tadpoles**

In 2012, Wildflowers Childcare began using a computer program called tadpoles to assist in communication with parents and to stream line attendance for the program. The program uses an iPad to facilitate this software and teachers also use an iPod touch or iPhone device when out in separate groups.

The software allows the staff to share daily reports, photos, videos, notes and reminders instantly to parents' email throughout the day. It allows us to notify all parents by text message of program closings or other urgent messages.

## **Technology**

Wildflowers Childcare does not promote the use of technology in our program, we do not use television, videos, or computers in our program. Rarely when asked by the children to investigate something specific the staff will use the iPads in their rooms with the children. The iPads in our rooms are used primarily for attendance, communicating with parents and playing music for the children.

## **Toys**

We ask that you leave your child's personal toys at home. We have many age-appropriate toys at the Centre as well as a lot of interesting material to experience. Toys brought from home may get lost or broken. Your child will be asked to leave personal items in their locker for safekeeping. Exceptions will be made for comfort items such as blankets, cuddly toys, etc.

- Toy guns and other weapons are prohibited.
- Candy, gum, marbles, jewelry, balloons etc. are not permitted as they pose a health risk.



## Updates

For the child's safety, the Staff and Management must be notified of any change of address, telephone number, status of employment or family status. Parents/guardians are required to fill out and update information forms on a regular basis.

## Waitlist

When applying for admission, parents/guardians will be asked to come for at least two visits to the Centre. At this time, parents/guardians will have an opportunity to get to know the facility, the program and the staff. Children are admitted if spaces are available, and application forms have been completed.

### What to bring to the Centre with your child:

- ✓ At least one change of clothing (several if your child is toilet training).
- ✓ Sleep time necessities (special blanket, teddy, soother).
- ✓ Indoor shoes with rubber soles.
- ✓ Bottle(s), if needed.
- ✓ Comfort items (especially when child is first starting)
- ✓ Appropriate outdoor clothing for all seasons:

**In the summer:** rain wear and a sun protection (bugspray and a hat).

**In the winter:** a toque, mittens, warm winter jacket, snow pants and warm winter boots.

# Health and Safety Policies

Wildflowers Childcare allows for the provision of health care to a child when:

1. there is written consent given by the parent/guardian to do so; and
2. if the health care that is provided is first aid.

## Administering Medication

The Program can only administer prescription medicine if:

1. the medicine or herbal remedy is in the original labeled container;
2. a medication form is filled out and submitted to the program;
3. the labeled medication bottle is left with the program; and
4. the labelled bottle states the dosage and times that dosages are required.

The medication will be administered as per the labelled directions. It will be stored in a locked and labelled medication box in the fridge. Only Emergency Medications will be stored in a sealed bag in the teacher's storage unit. Once the medication or herbal remedy has run its course, the staff are responsible for returning it to the parent/guardian.

On outings, emergency medication such as an epi-pen, will be sealed in a Ziploc bag and placed in the first-aid kit in the emergency backpack.

## Additional Healthcare Requirements

In the case of a child requiring additional healthcare due to a medical condition (seizures, feeding tube, etc.), staff members will be trained by a parent/guardian and/or a medical professional to meet and maintain the child's healthcare needs. The parent/guardian and/or medical professional will be required to complete an *Additional Healthcare Requirements* form that will be kept in the child's file for reference. All staff working with that child will be required to read and learn about the additional healthcare requirements pertaining to him or her. An *Incident Report* form will be completed in the event First Aid is administered by staff. The child's name, group name (Marigolds, for example) and a note requiring staff to read the child's file will be added to all allergy and medical lists.

## Allergies

Please ensure that the staff is made aware of any suspected or known allergies, reactions and the procedure to be followed in the event of a reaction. See medication section of the Health Policy.

**\*\* Nuts are prohibited at the Centre due to allergies. \*\***

## Cleaning

Clean-up is considered part of each project and children are encouraged to help by putting away toys and materials as they finish with them. The staff work hard to keep the Centre clean. The kitchen and bathroom, table tops, highchairs and chairs are disinfected throughout the day. Face cloths and towels are washed after each use and blankets are labeled with the child's name and are washed weekly. All dishes and cutlery used at the Centre are washed and sterilized after each use. All preschool toys and equipment are washed and disinfected weekly. Toys that are mouthed are disinfected immediately. Please let us know if you have any concerns.

## **Equipment and Furniture**

Toys and equipment in each area of the Centre are appropriate for the developmental levels of the children using those areas. These are kept in good repair at all times.

## **Diapering Procedures**

Diapering procedures are posted by the change table. All staff will follow these procedures and parents are also asked to follow them when changing a child at the Centre.

## **Hand Washing**

To reduce spread of flu or any type of common virus or communicable disease the centre has the following hand-washing policy.

At Wildflowers Childcare, all employees wash their hands in the following circumstances:

- before and after preparing, serving, eating food, or feeding others;
- before and after brushing or flossing your teeth or others' teeth;
- before putting in and after taking out contact lenses;
- after blowing your nose or wiping a child's nose;
- after coughing or sneezing;
- after handling garbage;
- after playing in the sandbox; and
- after using the bathroom.

Wildflowers has established that 'washing hands' implies the following:

1. Use liquid soap or a clean bar of soap (anti-bacterial soap is not necessary). Wet hands with warm, running water. Rub on soap, lather well.
2. Rub hands together briskly for 15+ seconds.
3. Scrub all over, including the backs of hands, wrists, between fingers, and under fingernails.
4. Rinse under running water.
5. Dry with a clean towel.

## **Healthy Child Policy**

An ill child is defined as a child that:

- Has any of these symptoms: vomiting, diarrhea, fever, new unexplained rash or cough;
- Requires greater care and attention that can't be provided without compromising the care of the other children in the program;
- Has other symptoms that lead a staff member to believe that the child poses a health risk.

Please arrange alternative care for a child who is ill and refrain from bringing them to Wildflowers. A sick or ill-feeling child, with or without a temperature, will be sent home if staff feel that he or she poses a threat to healthy children and staff. A temperature is considered anything over 38 degrees Celsius. A child well enough to attend the Centre is considered well enough to engage in any and all activities, both indoor and outdoor.

Should a child become sick during the day, parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child *immediately*. In the event that we cannot contact a parent, an emergency contact will be called. Under the care of a staff member, your child will be kept isolated from the other children until picked up. A child who arrives visibly unwell will not be accepted for that day. A child who is symptom free for 24 hours will be allowed to join the program again, as long as the program is satisfied that the child is no longer a risk to others.

Children with communicable diseases cannot be cared for at Wildflowers Childcare. If you suspect a communicable disease, please contact your physician or the Health Unit. Your child will be welcomed back after the contagious period has passed and/or upon presentation of a note from the Health Unit or physician stating: the illness, the duration and a safe return date. A license holder/provider must be satisfied that a child no longer poses a health risk to persons on the program premises including staff, children, and caregivers.

The program will keep a record of the ill children and report on statistics yearly to the Alberta Childcare Licensing Authority. Staff will not be permitted in the Centre if their health poses a risk to the children or other staff.

## **Emergency Procedures**

Emergency procedures are reviewed with staff regularly at monthly staff meetings and fire drills occur monthly with the children. We also discuss emergency procedures with the children, where developmentally appropriate.

### **Accident or Illness**

In the event of a medical emergency, appropriate first aid will be given and parents/guardians will be called immediately. An ambulance will be called if the injury warrants, or if the Child Development Supervisor cannot reach the parents or emergency contacts and medical aid is considered necessary.

If a child is injured in any way at Wildflowers, an accident report will be completed by the staff for the parent's information. First aid packs are taken each time the children leave the Program site, including emergency information on each child.

Wildflowers tracks accidents and illnesses and this information is reviewed at monthly staff meetings and again at the end of the year. Yearly reports are then forwarded to the Alberta licensing officer.

### **Evacuation**

In the event of a fire, gas leak, or other threatening event that requires the Centre to be evacuated to the designated location, we will relocate to the Jasper Fitness & Aquatic Centre or one of the local schools within walking distance, Jasper Jr/Sr High School or Ecoles Desrochers. Parents will be contacted from there. An evacuation plan is posted at each door of our centre and all staff are aware of the procedure. Should a parent be in the Centre during an evacuation or drill, we ask that you follow the staff's instructions. Drills are held monthly.

Should there be a reason that the Centre needs to be evacuated (other than next door due to a Municipal Emergency), children will be taken to the designated Reception Centre and you will be called at your place of work or home to advise you of the situation. During any evacuation,

Wildflowers Staff will take with them all children's portable record files in either paper copy or accessible on our iPads

### **In the event of a community-wide evacuation, Wildflowers Childcare will:**

- Contact all parents/ guardians as well as emergency contacts by using our tadpoles communication system and our phone lines to come and pick up their children immediately.
- Begin organizing transportation in conjunction with the Municipality of Jasper for children who have not been picked-up by a parent/guardian or emergency contact.

Children will remain at the centre until they are picked up by a parent or emergency contact or we are instructed to leave our location. If a child is unable to be picked up, staff will begin making alternate transportation arrangements to either an assembly point or reception centre.

### **Incident Reporting:**

The Childcare Services Manager will contact the appropriate licensing staff immediately in the event of any of the following incidents:

- emergency evacuation, program closure due to emergency, intruder on the premises, child removed from the program without parent/guardian consent, an injury requiring medical attention, a lost child or a child left behind on the premises after operating hours.

### **Medications at Home**

If your child has been on medication or herbal remedies at home, we require that you inform the staff members when you drop your child off at the centre. This will allow us to observe them for any changes and could explain certain behaviours. Please ensure that staff members are made aware of any suspected or known allergies, their reactions and procedure to be followed in the event of a reaction. Staff members will monitor children carefully for allergic reactions after receiving medication or herbal remedies.

### **Power Outage**

In the case of a power outage, Wildflowers has flashlights available for staff and children and all students will be safely returned to their main room. The course of action from here depends on the season, time of day and availability of activities.

- If the power outage occurs in the spring/summer/fall seasons when longer daylight hours are available and temperatures outside are conducive to outdoor play, students will be brought outside with their belongings to wait for parents to arrive.
- If the power outage occurs during the winter months when outdoor playtime is not available and indoor space in the school is not properly lit, parents will be contacted 60 minutes after the initial power outage.

# Financial Policies

Wildflowers Childcare spaces require a monthly commitment. This means that even if your child is away or sick during the month, you are still charged for the space, whether your child attends or not.

**\*Any days cancelled once booking has been made are non-refundable/transferable.**

## Invoicing and Payments:

Invoices will be sent to parents/guardians at the beginning of the month. Invoices are payable within thirty (30) days of issue. All accounts unpaid after the due date shall be charged interest at the rate of two percent 2% per month (26.82% per annum) as per the Municipality Accounts Receivable policy.

If your family is approved for Alberta Childcare Subsidy, the amount will be estimated monthly and applied to your account. Parents are responsible for all fees not covered by Alberta Childcare Subsidy.

## Payment Options

Please note: there are **no refunds** once payments are received. Fees increase annually on January 1.

- **Municipality of Jasper Administration Office** - (south side of the Activity Centre)  
Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30a.m.-4:30pm (lunch breaks are 12:00 – 1:00 pm)
- **Online payments** - Available using your customer # and the payee Jasper (Municipality of)
- **Pre-authorized credit card payments** - Request a pre-authorized payment form.

## Subsidy

The provincial government has a childcare subsidy program set out to:

- Give eligible low-income families a choice of accessible and affordable childcare services.
- Promote family independence and support the family's goal for financial self-sufficiency, through work and training opportunities.
- Help eligible low-income Alberta families pay child care costs for preschool children enrolled in a Licensed Day Care Centre, or in an Approved Family Day Home

To apply, go to <https://www.alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx> and follow the prompts. If you would like assistance with this process, contact Community Outreach Services who will make arrangements to go through this process with you. 780-852-2100 or [community@town.jasper.ab.ca](mailto:community@town.jasper.ab.ca).

## Sharing Spaces

To share a full-time space, the children must be the same age/developmental stage, both parties must make a commitment in writing to the person with whom they are sharing with and both parties must be in agreement with the Space Sharing Policy. In order to uphold the quality of our program and ensure that new children build a positive relationship with the educators at Wildflowers Childcare, we will not be offering sharing opportunities for temporary situations. This means, if you want to share your space with a new-to-Wildflowers family, **the share must be consistent and regular: at least twice a week for a period of at least 3 months.**

The **Space Sharing Policy** reads as follows:

- Families can pair up to fill a full-time spot provided the children are in the same age group.

- The maximum number of families that can be involved in one share is 2.
- The owner of the share must attend at least 2 days per week (exceptions can be made during vacation periods)
- Calendars are done in advance for the month and organization is done between the families. A sharing contract is required and needs to be signed prior to starting the arrangement.
- Families are required to give one month's notice to the other families if they will not be continuing to share a space.
- Each family involved in the share will be invoiced by the Municipality of Jasper directly. At no time will parents pay each other for shared spaces.
- If your child is sick or unable to attend a day that has been booked in advance on your calendar, please advise the Centre. There will be no reimbursement of fees for that day. If another child picks up that spot, they will pay the Centre for the use.

**NEW SHARES:** If you are starting a share with someone who is new to Wildflowers, you will need to notify us by the 15th of the month prior to the start of the share, to give the family time to meet with us and come in for their 2 required visits.

In all cases of new sharing opportunities, we ask that in order to uphold the integrity of our program and not disrupt the quality of care we offer, that you contact currently enrolled children first regarding your available days. Children coming randomly do not usually enjoy or benefit from being in the program and it can be stressful for the other children in the room too. The new children are not used to the facility, educators or the programming and sometimes have never been in child care before. Offering your sharing opportunity to children already enrolled will also help parents secure more days as they wait for a full time space. Thank you for your continued cooperation with our sharing spaces policy.

### **Sharing Calendars**

If you are sharing a space, use the monthly calendar provided each month to calculate what you will owe. Calendars must be submitted by the 27<sup>th</sup> of each month, (expect February by 25<sup>th</sup>). The calendar needs to be submitted before the month begins to ensure accurate invoicing. The calendar also helps Wildflowers Childcare staff plan for when children will be dropped off and picked up. Calendars are available for pick up at the Centre and are available on-line at [www.jasper-alberta.com](http://www.jasper-alberta.com). Submit calendars to [wildflowerschildcare@town.jasper.ab.ca](mailto:wildflowerschildcare@town.jasper.ab.ca). See payment options at the end of this section.

**\*\* If you don't submit a calendar, you will be invoiced for a full-time space. \*\***

### **Termination of Service by Parents:**

Parents/Guardians of children who are attending on a full-time basis are required to give the Centre a written notice of intent to terminate attendance one month prior to the stated termination to avoid a one month non-refundable penalty equal to the current full-time fee. This applies to families in a share situation as well, with the 'owner' of the spot required to give 30 days notice to the centre and to the family.

### **Termination of Service by Centre:**

Wildflowers Childcare may terminate its services to a family under the following circumstances:

- fees for services are not paid in full within 60 days of invoicing and suitable arrangements cannot be agreed upon;

- the centre is unable to satisfactorily resolve a problem with a family;
- a pattern of late pick-ups that can not be resolved
- a family member harasses, threatens, or commits a violent or unlawful act toward a staff member, child or other family involved in the program;

**Third Party Collection:**

Administration will pursue collection of accounts through the issuance of statements, correspondence, and personal contact. After all methods of collection are exhausted, the Director of Finance and Administration for the Municipality of Jasper is authorized to submit your account to a collection agency.



# Nutrition Policy

## Emphasis on Nutrition

Wildflowers Childcare serves a regular daily schedule of one main meal and two snacks. Our goal is to serve highly nutritious and delicious meals and snacks. Our meals are provided by Glenda the Great Catering.

Examples:

Morning Snack	Starting at 8:45am	Milk or water, fruit, cereal or bagels, pancakes, eggs
Lunch	11:45am Marigolds & Clovers 12:00pm Bluebells & Sunflowers	Varied meals: Salad, hot dish, sandwiches, soup fruit, milk or water
Afternoon Snack	3:00pm	Vegetables, fruit, milk or water, home-made cookies, muffins, cheese or crackers etc.

Wildflowers Childcare conforms to the Canadian Food Guide's basic food groups and guide for nutrition for children. We provide a selection of food from the following food groups: milk and milk products, meat and meat alternatives, breads and cereals, and fruits and vegetables. The program strives to provide food without artificial flavourings, colourings, preservatives, or additives. Salt and sugar intakes are also minimized. Whole grains and whole-wheat products are used whenever possible.

If your child has any food allergies (such as dairy) we will serve food alternates. We do require a thorough medical history provided for a child with multiple or severe allergy complications, and for safety reasons, you may be required to supply your child's food in this case. Families that prefer specific diets for their children (such as Celiac diets and other specialized diets) will need also need to provide a medical report detailing the information and the staff will work closely with the family to accommodate the diet. In some cases, families may be asked to supplement with additional food items.

## Birthdays

In order to make Birthday celebrations more inclusive for all children Wildflowers Childcare will plan a once a month birthday celebration where we will celebrate all children's birthdays that month with a special treat for afternoon snack. This will be noted on our menus and we will make sure the children's birthdays are recognized. Since we have a contracted food provider able to make healthy treats for all the children, please do not bring treats/Snacks from home.

If you and your family want to hire Glenda the Great Catering privately to provide treats for a birthday party at home she is always available for that option.

**Special Occasions/Holidays:** Please refrain from bringing treats or snacks on special occasion days.

# Field Trip Policy

Any off-site activities are considered 'field trips' and special permission is required for your child to attend. The permission form is included in your child's application package. It requires the child's name, parent's name, signature and the date.

By allowing your child to partake in 'field trips', you are allowing the following:

- Field trips, means leaving Wildflowers Childcare by foot to walk into and around town accompanied by Wildflowers staff.

Any additional special event or activity that is off-site will be included in the monthly newsletter and there will be a **separate permission form** for that special event or activity.

The following procedures take place for all trips off-site including field trips or special events:

- Wildflowers Staff take an emergency backpack on all outings or evacuations. In this backpack, there is a copy of the portable emergency records, Kleenex, cell phone and a first aid kit.
- Staff repeat the field trip safety rules before leaving for any off-site excursion.
- A poster is left on the door of the child's room or on the fridge stating where the group is and a cell phone number to contact them.

Parent Volunteers are welcomed on field trips and extra staff may be required. Regular staff to child ratios will be observed unless special conditions apply and extra staff are required by the field trip operator.