

Maple Tree Children's Centre Parent Handbook

1075 Pandora Ave
Victoria, BC
V8V 3P6

Maple Tree Children's Centre welcomes you to our GROUP childcare programs. We work in partnership with families to offer a nurturing and inclusive environment for all children aged 0-5 years old. We have an open-door policy and seek to involve you in every aspect of your child's time with us, so please feel free to ask questions, share information, and/or stop by any time you'd like.

We have the following policies to ensure quality care for all children in our program. Please read them over carefully and let us know if there is something you'd like clarified.

Infant/toddler Programs (birth to 3 years old)

Our curriculum is based on the belief that children learn best through "play", while experiencing the world around them. As Early Childhood Educators, we believe our role is to provide a welcoming and safe setting, as we offer daily opportunities for early learning in all areas, including: self-help skills, self-confidence, empathy for others. Our goal is to foster a child's development as a whole (physical, intellectual, language, emotional, social) and life-long curiosity.

Some ways that we do this include:

- Primary caregiving (1:4 educator to child ratio)
- Free play in age-appropriate developmental areas (such as dramatic play, library, block area, sensory and art experiences)
- Daily circle times (exploring language, social development, music)
- Outdoor play (discovery, make-believe and gross motor development)

Multi-age/Preschool Programs and Junior Kindergarten (approximately 2.5 years old to kindergarten)

At Maple Tree Children's Centre, we believe children have a natural curiosity, and that it's our job to give them opportunities to grow their innate sense of wonder and love for learning. Research has proven that children learn best by using all their senses. We endeavor to develop children as a whole (physically, intellectually, linguistically, emotionally, and socially) by providing learning opportunities utilizing all the senses, including touch (tactile) and movement (kinetic) on a DAILY basis.

Some ways we do this include:

- Early literacy program
- Expanding monthly themes (often child-led)
- Free-play centres (hands-on science, sensory and dramatic play etc)
- Turn-taking "Circles" (show&tell, Q&A's, literacy, music, gross motor)
- Tactile Art classes often with many recycled and natural materials
- Interactive music lessons
- Weekly yoga lessons by a trained yoga instructor

Typically, a child will transition from infants, to toddlers, to preschool, to Jr K, but there is some flexibility (within the VIHA licensed ages). We will discuss all transitions with you in order to best meet the individual needs of your child.

Admission Procedures

Hours/days of Operations:

We are open Monday to Friday from 7:45-4:45. We are closed for all Statutory Holidays (including Family Day, Easter Monday, and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation), for **one** week in spring and **two** weeks at Christmas/New Years (following the public school calendar), and 3 professional development days per year to be determined by the beginning of each calendar year. **There is no reduction in fees for these days.**

Drop off and Pick up:

For drop-off, please ring the doorbell at your designated entry door, a staff member will greet you and take your child into the class. Please share any information about your child's morning/sleep etc. that might help us best care for your child. You are also encouraged to use the online app, brightwheel, to send along messages that are pertinent to your child.

Our latest drop off time is 9am. If you bring your child in later than 9am or your child is away, you are required to notify the educators in your child's program through phone call or brightwheel message ASAP, or the latest at 9am, with the reason.

We unfortunately can't take children after 9am without notification. If your child arrives after AM snack time (8:30-9am), please make sure your child has been fed.

For pick-up, please ring the doorbell at your designated entry door, a staff member will greet you and get your child. If you/a staff member don't have enough time to talk about your child's day, please use the brightwheel app to leave a message. They will get back to you the next business day.

Communication between staff and parents is of the utmost importance, so please be sure to come to us with any concerns/ comments/ suggestions you might have, and we will do our best to meet your needs.

If you are sick, please wear a mask when you speak to a staff in person.

If a child is not picked up by the time the Centre closes, there will be a \$5 fee for the first 5 minutes after 4:45pm, with an additional \$1/minute after that. If we have not heard from anyone by 5:15, we will begin calling the alternative people on the registration form. If we cannot make arrangements for pick up by 5:45, we are required to notify the Ministry for Children and Families.

Registration:

You will fill out a small registration form, which is what saves your place on the waitlist. When a space becomes available, we require half a month's fee deposit to reserve your spot. This deposit will go towards your **last** month's fee when you leave the Centre.

There is a mandatory parent tour of Maple Tree Children's Centre BEFORE you enroll in the Centre. Please contact Sami at mapletreechild@gmail.com for all the registration and tours.

2024 Fees:

Maple Tree Children's Centre is opted into the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI).

| | Original Fees | Reduction | Fees |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------|-------|
| 0-18 months old | \$1874 | \$900 | \$974 |
| 19 months-36 months | \$1747 | \$900 | \$847 |
| 37months-5 years old | \$1236 | \$545 | \$691 |

Fees are payable on the **last business day of the month for the following month of care**, by direct bank withdrawal. (A banking form will be required to be filled out prior to starting care.) Special requests for payment schedules may be considered, so please just ask.

There will be no reduction in fees for days missed due to illness or vacations.

There will be a yearly increase in fees of approximately 4-5% to cover the rise in rental costs and yearly staff wage increases.

We gladly accept Child Care Subsidy, but this must be approved PRIOR to starting at the Centre. Parents are responsible for all renewals. Please ask for more information about subsidy, as we might be able to help speed up this process.

Late Payments:

In order for Maple Tree Children's Centre to maintain its quality programming for all children, fees must be paid on time. Any outstanding amount from the previous month will result in care being suspended until payment arrangements have been approved by us. The child's place will only be held for TWO weeks in the event of unpaid accounts.

There will be a charge of \$45 for any NSF cheques or AFT returns, and in the event of repeated late payments (2 or more), there will be a 5% late payment fee **AND** 2% per day thereafter. This will be strictly enforced. If you need to pay late for any reason, please connect with Sara at mapletreechild@gmail.com **BEFOREHAND** and an arrangement can easily be made.

Withdrawal:

If you choose to withdraw your child, we require a full **calendar** month's notice or one month's fees in lieu of notice.

For example, if you would like your child's last day to be January 31st, we need written notice by January 1st at the latest. Another example is if you would like your child's last day to be February 12th, we need written notice by February 1st. In this case, full fees will need to be paid in February as your child's last day will be considered the last day of February. *There will be NO discount offered for February fees, however the deposit will be returned in a timely manner.

When adequate notice is not given, you will be required to pay the full month of fees.

We require written notice by the 1st of the month for deposits to be returned. Please email us at mapletreechild@gmail.com, as we consider an email as written notice. When we receive your email as written notice, we will send you a confirmation email. Please let us know if you don't get a confirmation email from us.

Maple Tree Children's Centre reserves the right to terminate care arrangements at any time **in the event of repeated breach of policies, abuse towards staff or children in the Centre, or acute aggressive behaviour from the child.** We will endeavour to give as much notice as possible, but safety for staff and other children will always be our first priority.

Gradual Entry:

In order to best support children and ease them into a positive child care experience, we ask that all families adopt our gradual entry policy. This lasts approximately 1-2 weeks, depending on the age and temperament of the child, and depending on any previous childcare experience. This gradual entry period will begin once your child's space becomes available, so please allow for this time when considering your start date.

Gradual entry will be individualized for each child as we take this time to find out about your child and any family history you'd like to share. It typically starts with a visit to the Centre with a parent/guardian and moves to a short stay alone. Then, we might try an entire morning, and then a morning and nap time, with the intention of making your child feel comfortable with his/her new surroundings. Please take this time to get to know our routines, ask questions, and share anything

about your child that makes him/her unique. We are here to partner with you to make this experience wonderful for your entire family.

Health and Safety Policies

Safe Release of a Child:

We will only hand a child over to an adult (age 18 or older) whose name is on the registration form for approved pick up. If a staff member has not previously met this person, appropriate ID will be required. Any existing custody/contact orders must be on file in order for us to best support your family, as we cannot deny access to a non-enrolling parent (unless their information is not on the registration form, in which case, they will be treated as an unauthorized pick up).

No child will be allowed to leave our care if we have any reason to believe that the person picking them up/driving them home is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. It is our responsibility, to the extent that is possible, not to release a child to an authorized person who is unable to adequately care for a child. Under these circumstances, we will offer to call another person to come pick up the child. If the presumed impaired person chooses to drive, with or without the child, we will immediately call the police. If difficulties arise, all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the safety of the child and others in the Centre. If necessary, the police will be called for assistance.

Obligation to Report:

As professionals, we have the obligation **by law** to report any suspicion and/or disclosure of abuse or neglect towards a child in our care. We will not investigate these matters ourselves but report them to the Ministry for Children and Families.

Confidentiality:

We ask all staff members of Maple Tree Children's Centre to sign a pledge of confidentiality upon starting their employment. This ensures that all information you share with us remains within our Centre. Please feel comfortable to disclose any circumstances that you feel would be helpful in us understanding your child or family better. In return, we also ask that you keep any information about other children/families from the Centre confidential.

Health Policy:

In order to provide quality care for all children at the Centre, we have a health policy which outlines when a child is required to be kept at home. These are recommendations from the Public Health Authority and will be strictly enforced at Maple Tree Children's Centre. During communicable outbreaks such as Covid 19, we will adopt various additional health policies to align with the Health Authority guidelines. These policies will be communicated to you through brighwheel app, as well as on posted signs at the daycare and will be strictly enforced to ensure everyone is safely cared for at Maple Tree.

Symptoms which require a child to be kept at home:

- Pain - any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain.
- A common illness (**fever, chills, headache, sore throat, cough, runny nose, fatigue, nausea, diarrhea, difficulty breathing**)
 - Fever (99.6 degrees F/37.6 degrees C or more for armpit, 100.4 degree F/38 degree C or more for oral). Fever accompanied by general symptoms such as listlessness or sluggishness may be an early sign of an illness that requires a doctor's attention.
 - Headache and stiff neck (should see physician).
 - Sore throat or trouble swallowing.
 - Persistent cough and sneezing are NOT mild symptoms as germs can be easily spread by coughing and sneezing.
 - Nausea and vomiting may be early signs of illness.

- Unexplained diarrhea or loose stool (2 or more) -may or may not be combined with nausea, vomiting or stomach cramps. These symptoms may indicate a bacterial or viral gastrointestinal infection which is very easily passed from one child to another via the fecal-oral route.
 - Difficulty breathing - wheezing or a persistent cough.
 - Infected skin or eyes, or an undiagnosed rash.
 - Severe itching, dry skin of either body or scalp if caused by head or body lice or scabies.
 - Children with known or suspected communicable diseases.
- *When your child has ANY communicable diseases including Covid-19, you are required to let us know.

In Summary, a child must be kept at home (or taken home) when the child:

- has one or more of the above symptoms, or
- is not well enough to take part in the regular programs of the Centre.

For common illnesses except for runny nose and headache, children may return to the Centre **after 48 hours once these symptoms have stopped and without the use of medication** and are able to fully take part in the regular programs of the Centre.

****48 hours** is NOT from when your child was picked up**, as your child was sent home for experiencing symptoms, and therefore could possibly still be contagious. Please begin counting the 48 hours from the first day your child has no symptoms, without the use of medication.

For runny nose and headache, children need to **be monitored for 24 hours**. If symptoms stay mild and do not progress, children can return to the Centre.

For infected skin or eyes, or an undiagnosed rash, children may return to the Centre **after 24 hours once these symptoms have stopped** and are able to fully take part in the regular programs of the Centre.

*It should be cleared out. If not, please bring a doctor's note.

* If the symptoms (runny nose and eyes, coughing) are caused by a known allergy (e.g., hay fever, asthma) the child is not contagious and does not have to be excluded. A doctor's note may be required to substantiate this.

* Even though it's just remaining symptoms, a doctor's note may be required for a persistent cough.

When your child gets tested Covid-19 positive, you are required to keep your child home for 5 days from the start of symptoms or 5 days from positive test if no symptoms. Your child can return after 48 hours once these symptoms have stopped and without the use of medication.

When your child is confirmed to have HFMD by a doctor, your child can return when all the spots are crusted over. *A doctor's note is required.

If it's not the confirmed case, your child can return after 48 hours once these symptoms have stopped and without the use of medication.

For other communicable diseases, we follow the BC CDC guidelines, "Sneezes and Diseases" <https://sneezesdiseases.com/assets/uploads/1589214601pDsukixOst24Mk9wayE3eA9Jjii7.pdf>.

A doctor's note may be required.

If it's not the confirmed case, your child can return after 48 hours once these symptoms have stopped and without the use of medication.

Parents are required to notify Maple Tree Children's Centre if their child is infected with a communicable disease. This will help us know what to look for in other children and help stop the spread within our Centre. We are also required to notify all families in the Centre, so they can watch for similar symptoms. We will not disclose the identity of the child with the communicable disease to other families. Communicable diseases include, but are not limited to: chicken pox, pink eye, measles, hand/foot/mouth disease, Covid-19.

*We may be closed if we have 3 or more CONFIRMED cases of Covid-19 or any communicable diseases. We will clean and disinfect the rooms and resume care as soon as possible. We will endeavor

to keep the centre open as best as we can, unless we cannot maintain required staff-to-child ratios.
There will be NO reduction in fees for daycare closures.

*We cannot accept your child into care if they have received non prescription medications such as Tylenol, Advil, etc. for any reason unless you have a doctor's note.

If a child becomes ill/injured while at the Centre, we will contact you or your emergency contact to pick up your child. Your child must be picked up ASAP within maximum of one hour. In the meantime, we will endeavour to make your child as comfortable as possible, by offering them their blanket, laying them on a mat, sitting with them, and/or making a quiet space for them away from activity areas. In the event of an emergency, we will utilize first aid and/or call an ambulance.

Allergy policy:

We are a nut-free Centre, as we have some children in our centre who have severe peanut/tree nut allergies. Exposure to these allergens could cause a life-threatening reaction. Your assistance with the following is appreciated.

- Please do not send any peanuts, peanut butter or foods containing peanuts or peanut butter to be eaten in the centre.
- Please do not send any tree nuts or food containing tree nuts to the centre. Examples of common tree nuts include (but not limited to) almond, Brazil nuts, cashew, chestnut, filbert, hazel nut, macadamia nut, pecan, pine nuts (pignoli), pistachio, and walnut.
- Please read ingredient labels carefully to ensure that the snack sent in with your child to be eaten in the centre does not contain any peanuts and tree nuts. (Note: that "may contain" on ingredient labels of foods that are nut-free are acceptable, this just indicates that the manufacturing facility is not nut-free.)
- If your child has eaten foods containing nuts in the morning, please have your child wash their hands and face with soap and water before sending them to the centre. (Note: Hand sanitizer does NOT remove peanut/nut residue.)
- Please be cautious when preparing lunches and snacks at home to minimize the risk of contamination with allergens.

We may ask you to keep foods out of the centre that say on the packaging "may contain" depending on the severity of the allergy. This will be on a case-to-case basis per centre and classroom. Also please be mindful when packing lunches to ensure that there is not cross contamination with nut products on foods entering the centre.

We also may make certain centres/classrooms free of other foods if allergies arise.

*Aldersmith is currently completely nut-free due to severe allergies. All products including items marked as "may contain nuts" are NOT allowed in the centre.

Medication:

Maple Tree Children's Centre will not administer any medication that is not prescribed by a doctor. If your child requires medication, please submit a Medication Administering form with the appropriate dosage and times, either signed by your doctor, or accompanied with the prescription in its original packaging to be kept in our locked medicine cabinet.

*We may ask you for a doctor's note for prescribed medication.

Inspections/Visitors:

Maple Tree Children's Centre is licensed by the Vancouver Island Health Authority and is subject to periodic inspections. We also have occasional visits from Public Health Nurses and a Fire Warden. We will ensure that the children are safe and comfortable during all these visits and may even utilize them as learning opportunities about community helpers.

As an Early Childhood Educational facility, we may also have ECE students volunteering in our program, as they work towards becoming licensed to practice in BC. We will be sure to notify you of any new people working with your children.

Food and Drink Policy:

Each child will need to come to the Centre with enough food for the entire day (which includes 2 snacks and a lunch) and a clean water bottle. In the preschool and Jr.K rooms, foods that should be kept cold need to be brought in a thermal lunch kit with an ice pack, as the space is VERY limited in our mini fridges. In the infant and toddler rooms, they may place your child's cold items in the labeled basket in the fridge. Please prepare your child's food in the manner that you wish them to eat it (for example, cheese cut into cubes). Foods that tend to spoil if prepared in advance (fruit etc), can be cut up by staff.

We are sensitive and respectful of all cultural differences in food choices but have the following policy in place to ensure a consistency in health for all the children.

Snacks need to include foods from 2 of the food groups from the Canada Food Guide. Some suggestions include: yogurt/muffin, tuna/crackers, hard boiled egg/veggies, bagel/cheese, rice cakes/milk, cottage cheese/fruit, cereal/soy milk, chickpeas/pita bread.

Lunches need to include foods from 3 of the food groups from the Canada Food Guide. Some suggestions include: leftovers such as rice/meat/veggie, potatoes/fish/salad, noodles/chicken/bok choy, or meat sandwiches/raw veggies, vegetable soups/crackers/cheese.

Foods that are not to be brought to the Centre include: gum, candy, pop, junk food etc. Please ensure that all juice is made from 100% **real** fruit/veggie blends, and not fruit punches/drinks, as these contain mostly sugar. We also are a nut-free Centre, which means peanut butter, nuts or nut bars are **not** permitted in the Centre due to an increase in severe allergies in young children.

Active Play policy:

Active play is physical activity which includes moderate to vigorous bursts of high energy and raises the heart rate, such as running or jumping. This helps promote healthy growth and development and supports body control and movement. Active play can help build strong bones and muscles, improve balance, coordination, and assists with the development of gross motor and fine motor skills. It also helps promote children's confidence, improve concentration and thinking, and provides opportunities to develop social skills and make friends. At Maple Tree Children's Centre, we will be doing active play for a minimum of 1 hour per day outdoors, regardless of weather, and often longer than that when weather permits. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the season and that appropriate clothing is packed for the quickly changing weather. See "items from home" for a complete list. Screen time will be very limited, with only special programs of particular interest being offered approximately once a month. Children under the age of 2 years old will have no screen time.

Rest/Nap:

We believe that children need time to rest their bodies after such busy "work" throughout the day. Therefore, we provide a separate sleeping area (appropriate to age) for each child attending Maple Tree. If an older child is no longer napping, we ask that they rest on their mats for quiet time for at least 20-30 minutes, then they are free to get up to play quietly until their friends are up from their naps. If you wish for your child to stop napping in our preschool or Jr. Kindergarten programs, we will do our best to keep them awake. If they fall asleep, we will attempt to wake them up after we have put all the children to sleep. If we cannot gently wake them up, it shows us that their bodies might be needing a nap. We cannot physically move the child to wake them up.

Toilet Learning:

We understand a lot of different preferences parents have, but here's what we do at the centre.

We require that the child must show signs of readiness (see the Signs of Readiness to begin toilet learning below.). The child **MUST** be kept in diapers/pull-ups at all times until he/she has dry diapers/pull-ups for periods of at least two hours or more for a couple of days to a week at the centre. Then the child **MUST** wear his/her underwear without diapers/pull-ups for the health and safety of all the children. We may need to keep your child in diaper/pull-ups for outdoor time and nap time. Parents are required to supply diapers/pull-ups and extra clothes (including socks) until your child's toilet learning is fully established.

Signs of Readiness to begin toilet learning

- The child stays dry for a long period of time (the child is able to hold his/her urine and bowel movement).
- The child can communicate or shows signs of their need to eliminate (urinate/defecate).
- The child is capable of putting their clothes on and taking them off.
- The child begins to show a genuine interest in toilet learning.

We will encourage the child to use the potty every hour or so. Children will be encouraged, NOT forced. (We will NEVER put a child on the potty unless the child is willing.)

When accidents happen, we may need to put diapers/pull-ups back on your child, even though he/she is wearing his/her underwear without diapers/pull-ups. (Accidents will be dealt with sensitively, and children will be encouraged to undress and redress themselves.) *It will be the educator(s)' decision to put diapers/pull-ups back on the child or not.

We will NOT start the child's potty learning, when the child is experiencing any other changes (e.g., moving, new siblings, new childcare/program situation, after long vacation, etc.)

In case of accidents, we will empty contents of underwear, but we will NOT wash out or rinse out soiled clothes, due to sanitary concerns. we put soiled clothes in a plastic bag for you to take home and wash.

Please send your child with clothes that are easy for him/her to pull down and pull up by themselves. (We will be there to support your child, but it is very important for children to do it themselves.)

Please keep in mind that the daycare environment is different from your home. We will support you and your child through this process to our best ability.

Special celebrations/pets:

We enjoy celebrating special events and encourage parents to send a special treat for their child's birthday or for other cultural events that are important to their family.

If you'd like to send special treats, please speak to the educator in your child's program ahead of time. They will give you information about food allergies in their program and make a plan for the day.

***Special treats need to be store bought prepackaged items, NOT homemade items, and nut-free.**

We occasionally welcome visits from all sorts of pets belonging to family/staff and believe that children receive a great benefit from their interactions with these furry friends. If you'd like to bring your pet in for a visit, please let us know in advance, and we will find a time that works. We will take all health and safety measure to ensure that children interact safely with these animals and that extra sanitary steps are taken (hand washing and keeping pets apart from eating surfaces, etc). If your child and/or family member has an allergy or extreme fear of animals, please let us know and we will be sure to discuss this in advance.

Items from Home:

If your child would like to bring special toys/items from home, please remind him/her **beforehand** that we will keep these in their cubbies until circle time when they can show it to the group and return

them there after for safe keeping. The children all love to take part in "show and tell", but we want to make sure these items are not lost/broken/or a cause for quarrels during the day.

A "stuffy/cuddly" can be kept in your child's cubby for nap time, and brought out for hugs during the day, if needed. Please let us know if your child is attached to a certain object and how we can best meet his/her needs for comfort.

Please do NOT bring anything of monetary or sentimental value to the centre.

The following are items that need to be kept at the Centre in your child's cubby:

- Rubber soled inside shoes/slippers
- Water bottle
- Diapers/wipes (if needed)
- Diaper change mat
- Crib sheet and small blanket and stuffy, if desired (kept in a pillowcase)
- A change of clothing appropriate to the season
- Outdoor coat appropriate to the season
- Sun hats and sunscreen in warm weather
- Warm hats/mittens in cold weather
- Rain/winter boots
- "Muddy buddies" (rain/snow pants)
- Earthquake comfort pack in large, labelled Ziploc bag (3 individually sealed snacks- granola bars/fruit leathers etc, bottled water, emergency space blanket, small toy or game, small package of Kleenex, family photo, handwritten note reassuring the child)

Please be sure to label **EVERYTHING** from home including: meal containers, lunch kits, clothing, boots etc.

Laundry:

We ask that parents take their child's sheet/blanket/stuffy home with them each Friday, to be returned **clean** on Monday. This also ensures that a child's belongings continue to smell "like home", which can greatly help with transitions. Muddy buddies and spare clothing will also need to be washed periodically, and we will send them home in a bag to be cleaned on occasion.

Emergency Plan and Procedures:

Maple Tree Children's Centre takes several preventative measures to ensure children's safety during an emergency. These include: regular inspections from the fire department, regularly serviced fire extinguishers, clearly labelled emergency exits, a fully stocked first aid kit, monthly fire and earthquake drills with the children, and staff fully trained in first aid and CPR.

In the event of a **fire** a staff member will calmly attract the children's attention. We will gather at the exit furthest from the fire, where we will do a headcount of the children. Before leaving the building together, if it's safe to do so, we will collect our cell phone, first aid kit and attendance sheet. We will meet in the grassy area across the property that is a safe distance from the fire and call families to pick up their children. We will not re-enter the building until the fire department declares it safe to do so. If we cannot re-enter the building, we will meet at the Save-on-Foods located at 1010 Pandora Ave.

In the event of an **earthquake**, we will remain where we are at that time but move away from all potentially dangerous falling objects/glass. We will get under any tables available (or simply crouch down with the children under our arms) and utilize our practiced "duck and cover" techniques until the shaking stops. Staff will instruct the children to stay calm during the earthquake and do a headcount at that time. After the shaking stops, we will grab our attendance sheet, earthquake backpack (with children's comfort packs), first aid kit, and cell phone, before doing another headcount and bringing the children a safe distance from the building to the grassy area across the property. There, we will call families to pick up their children if they are able. We will not re-enter the building until it is

deemed safe to do so. If we cannot re-enter the building, we will meet at the Save-on-Foods located at 1010 Pandora Ave.

In the event of **snow**, we will endeavor to follow the local school districts (#61, #62, and #63), and if any of the districts decide to close, we will close as well. Due to some of our staff living in all of Victoria and surrounding areas, we may also decide to close if we feel it would be unsafe to travel. If road conditions deteriorate during the day when we are open, we will call parents to pick up early for the safety of families and staff alike. We will post a notice on brightwheel, letting parents know of our plans for the day. **There will be no reduction in fees for days missed due to any emergencies.**

Guidance and Discipline Policy:

At Maple Tree Children's Centre, our goals for guidance and discipline are to support children in developing respect, self-control, self-confidence and sensitivity in their interactions with others. This is done while appropriate behaviour is occurring, with positive reinforcement, as well as before, during, and after socially unacceptable behaviour is displayed. We believe that each child is a unique individual, and that their behaviour reflects their level of development, personality/temperament, and experience in their family and/or cultural influences. For this reason and others, we encourage families to be as much a part of our program as they can. We also utilize ongoing observations of the children's interactions, and periodic ages and stages questionnaires to help us better meet each child's individual needs.

Some techniques that we use to guide children's behaviour include:

- Arranging our environment to prevent challenging behaviour (having enough materials for all the children, providing a balance of individual/small group activities, offering a varied routine with opportunities for calm/loud play etc)
- Establishing clear, consistent, & simple limits
- Offering straightforward explanations for limits
- Stating limits in a positive way, rather than in a negative way
- Using a calm voice or singing to model appropriate behaviour
- Focusing on the behaviour, rather than on the child
- Stating what is expected rather than posing questions
- Allowing time for children to respond to expectations
- Reinforcing appropriate behaviour with both words and gestures
- Ignoring minor incidents or attention seeking behaviour
- Encouraging children to use us as a resource
- Gaining a child's attention in a respectful way
- Using proximity and touch
- Reminding, reminding, reminding
- Redirecting or diverting when appropriate
- Modeling problem-solving skills
- Offering appropriate choices
- Using natural and logical consequences
- Limiting the use of equipment/toys/supplies
- Providing opportunities for children to make amends
- Providing time away (within the play space, but away from the activity area, with the intent to provide children the opportunity to develop self direction and to become aware of when they are becoming anxious or agitated)
- Holding (only if the child becomes a safety hazard to him/herself or others, with the intent to soothe the child and to keep them and others safe until self control is regained)

Field Trips:

Maple Tree Children's Centre believes that children learn best with a variety of outdoor and educational experiences in and around our beautiful city. In order to fully enjoy these experiences, we have the following policies in place to ensure everyone's safety:

- We ask that parents sign a consent form upon registration, for regular field trips.

- We will try to let parents know the day before or the morning of, about where we're planning on going, but since, as the day progresses, there are occasional changes to enrolment and/or weather, we often have "spontaneous" outings.
- If you'd like to be informed each time we go out, please let us know and we will be happy to give you call at work. At any time, if you need to contact us, you can call us at the Centre, leave a message, and we will get back to you as soon as we return. In case of emergencies, you can call/text the daycare cell phone. We will regularly check the cell phone, when it is safe for us to do so, and will get back to you as soon as possible.
*The daycare cell phone is for emergency. Please use brightwheel to contact the educators. We do NOT respond to text messages unless it's emergency.
- We ask that parents have at the Centre EACH DAY, appropriate weather gear for their child. This includes: rain pants, boots, hats/gloves (winter), and sunscreen/sun hats (summer).
- We bring daily enrolment sheets and emergency cards on each outing away from the Centre and take regular roll calls during outings. We ask that parents update us IMMEDIATELY if there are any changes to phone numbers, emergency contacts etc.
- We stock our outing backpack with a first aid kit, diapers, wipes, kleenex, water, sunscreen, extra clothing, and children's medication (if applicable) etc. In case we plan on have a picnic during snack or lunch time, we ask that parents pack all their children's lunch and snacks in a thermal lunch kit inside an easy-to-carry child's backpack.
- We ensure that each location is safe of potentially hazardous objects by doing a visual perimeter sweep upon arrival. We speak to the children regularly about the rules of each location (for example, which playground equipment is for "older" children only), talk through what their boundaries are (for example, only going as far as the grass at the park), point out a safe meeting place (in case children become separated), and go over safe practices of each location (for example, staying away from the edge of water).
- When children first start at Maple Tree Children's Centre, we spend the first couple of weeks staying a bit closer to the Centre, to teach them our field trip rules. Some of these include: holding onto the stroller or rope at all times, listening carefully to all caregiver instructions, stopping at crossroads to look/listen for traffic etc.

Inclusivity:

Maple Tree Children's Centre is an inclusive environment, offering care to children from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and lifestyles. We have no tolerance for discrimination against anyone and ask for support from families and professionals to better understand our differences and incorporate them into our program. Please let us know if you have something to share with the Centre in order for us to offer a more varied program.