Hand in Hand
Child Care Society

Early Learning

Parent Handbook

We Put the "CARE" in Child Care!

Proudly serving the Abbotsford Community since 1994

Current as of May 2026

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Welcome to
Hand in Hand Child Care Society

Thank you for choosing our program!

Hand in Hand Child Care Society is a non-profit organization offering early learning and school age care; our programs fit the needs of the whole family. We believe that every child deserves high quality care that supports their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. With multiple fully licensed locations at public schools across Abbotsford and our affordable rates, we are able to deliver excellent care to as many children as we can. Our play-based environment is guided by the BC Early Learning Framework which supports the creation of a rich learning experience and environment that enhances a young child's natural curiosity to learn and play. Through annual inspections, Hand in Hand demonstrates a long history of meeting and maintaining the high standards set out by the Fraser Health Authority's Child Care Licensing Regulations and Community Care Facilities Act. The time your child spends in our early learning program is an important part of their day. We are committed to providing a nurturing, play-based environment that supports children's well-being, fosters a strong sense of belonging, encourages active engagement through exploration, and creates opportunities for children to express themselves as they build relationships and develop confidence.

This handbook is designed for the parents/guardians to give insight into the policies and procedures that shape our child care programs. Please review the policies outlined in this handbook, if you have any questions or need clarification do not hesitate to reach out to the centre manager. Once you have read the handbook, please sign the back page and submit it to the centre, this is an acknowledgement that you have read and agree to the policies that we use within our programs and organization. This page is part of your registration package and must be completed in order for your child/ren to attend. Keep this handbook as an easy reference during your child's stay at the centre.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the Society, programming, or centre operations please do not hesitate to bring them to the attention of our Centre Manager. Centre phone numbers and email addresses are listed in section 4 of this handbook as well as on our website at www.handinhand.ca. Your feedback is important to us!

We look forward to making this a remarkable experience for you and your child.

Our Vision

Hand in Hand builds a future where all children, and those who care for them, belong to learning communities that intentionally offer time and space to build relationships, contribute their voice, and realize their potential. Impacting Communities by Caring Today.

Our Mission

We nurture curious minds and kind hearts by providing and promoting child care and education. Our innovative culture values our youngest citizens, supports employees, and parents/guardians.

1. Our History

Hand in Hand Child Care Society began our journey in September 1994.
The name "**Hand in Hand"** was established with a vision that portrays images of teamwork and collaboration with parents/guardians, the school district, and other community partners as we meet the learning needs of the families we serve.

Hand in Hand operates on site at Abbotsford elementary schools where we provide early learning and school age care programs for children up to 12 years of age.

2. Our Child Care Philosophy and Values

We value and believe in…

- ☺ Having FUN while building friendships with others!
- ☺ Age and ability appropriate activities.
- ☺ A safe and nurturing environment based on the adage "treating others with respect."
- ☺ Children knowing they are valued and accepted.
- ☺ Positive role models and interactions among our staff.
- ☺ Developing social and life skills while celebrating the unique diversity and abilities of others.

3. Society Members

3.1 Families

Your annual registration fee makes you a member of the Society. After paying the annual registration fee, your family becomes a member of the society, this allows you as the parent/guardian to attend the society's annual general meeting and to apply to become a member of the Board of directors.

3.2 Board of Directors

Hand in Hand Child Care Society is a registered non-profit society governed by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of parents/guardians and community members. Your annual registration fee also makes you a member of Hand in Hand Child Care Society. If you are interested in attending one of our meetings or representing your child's centre as a Board member, please call the administration office for further information.

3.3 Annual General Meetings

As a non-profit organization, Hand in Hand Child Care Society is required to have an Annual General Meeting for our membership which is held in the fall of each school year. Board of Director elections occur at our Annual General meeting. Annual financial statements and reports are reviewed. Parental input is vital for the well-being and continuing success of the Society. We also welcome parent/guardian assistance with our fundraising ideas and efforts.

3.4 Employee Positions

The Administration Team consists of the Executive Director of Programs, and the Executive Director of Human Resources (EDs)**,** Financial Administrator, Program Coordinator, Payroll Coordinator, Financial Assistants, Program Assistants and the Office Assistant.

The Centre Level Team that works directly with your child consists of a Centre Manager, Supervisor, and Assistants depending on the enrollment numbers for each site. For children that require the assistance of a support worker in order to participate successfully in a program, we have a long-standing partnership with the Supported Child Development Program that helps us to assess and provide the support needed.

4. Centre Information

4.1 Centre Locations, Contact Info, & Age Criteria

- **SAC** indicates an on-site Hand in Hand school age care program
- **PS** indicates an on-site Hand in Hand preschool program
- **EL** indicates an on-site Hand in Hand full day early learning program

Administration Office	604-859-1843	office@handinhand.ca
Aberdeen **(SAC)**	778-369-0114	aberdeen@handinhand.ca
Alexander **(SAC)**	604-852-8229	alexander@handinhand.ca
Blue Jay **(SAC)**	604-852-0504	bluejay@handinhand.ca
Centennial **(SAC)**	604-853-9376	centennial@handinhand.ca
Dr. T.A. Swift **(SAC & PS)**	604-859-0717	thomasswift@handinhand.ca
Early Learning Centre **(PS & EL)**	604-859-3830	earlylearning@handinhand.ca
Godson **(SAC)**	604-850-5293	godson@handinhand.ca
John Maclure **(SAC & PS)**	604-852-1622	jmaclure@handinhand.ca
Mountain **(SAC & PS)**	604-850-3609	mountain@handinhand.ca
North Poplar **(SAC)**	604-859-3177	northpoplar@handinhand.ca
Prince Charles **(SAC)**	604-853-6156	princecharles@handinhand.ca
Prince Charles **(EL)**	604-853-6156	pcearlylearning@handinhand.ca
Sandy Hill **(SAC)**	604-850-9541	sandyhill@handinhand.ca
Ten Broeck **(SAC & PS)**	604-870-5671	tenbroeck@handinhand.ca
Terry Fox **(SAC)**	604-859-5964	terryfox@handinhand.ca

Age Criteria: Our early learning programs offer care for children between the ages of 30 months to 5 years of age. Your child should be toilet trained (or in the process of being trained) to attend.

Hand in Hand Child Care Society maintains appropriate liability insurance at all sites.

4.2 School Closures

4.2.1 School District Closure Days

Preschool programs do not operate on school district closure days including pro-d days, winter, spring, and summer breaks as the space may be shared with our school age program.

Full day Early Learning programs will remain open on school pro-d days, winter break and spring break closures. During the summer months (July & August) programs will be closed at the end of June/beginning of July for a maximum of 3 days to allow for summer prep/centre deep cleaning. We will also be closed the last week of August (this week may vary depending on when school opens for the fall) for staff vacation/wellness. We may also close for a maximum of 3 days at the end of summer to allow for September prep/centre deep cleaning.

4.2.2 Severe Weather Closure

In the event of district school closures due to weather conditions, emergencies, utility disruption (heat, hydro etc.), Hand in Hand child care programs will also remain closed.

- In severe weather conditions the decision to close schools is made by the school district superintendent who will inform media outlets by 6 am. The Hand in Hand Executive Directors (EDs) also have the authority to make a closure decision on behalf of the Society. Factors that go into this decision include staff and student safety, road and school ground conditions and whether centres can be fully operational.
- Announcements will be posted on our website www.handinhand.ca and our Facebook page as close to 6 am as possible.
- If schools are open during extreme weather, Hand in Hand staff will attempt to arrive at the centre in a timely manner for opening times. However, employee's ability to arrive on time can be affected during adverse weather conditions. Please call the centre prior to leaving your home to ensure staff have arrived.
- Should a decision be made by the school district or EDs during the day to close schools, our staff will contact parents/guardians to come to pick-up their child as soon as possible.
- No refunds or credits will be issued for these closure days.

4.2.3 Staff Professional Development/ Training

Hand in Hand will close 1 – 2 additional days during the school year to allow for staff training and professional development. Parents/guardians will be given a minimum of 60 days' notice for a closure day.

4.2.4 Unanticipated Closure of a Program

In the event of a disruption of services (hydro, water etc.) during program operating hours, the Fraser Health licensing procedure we follow is:

> *We will wait for one hour for the disruption to be repaired while at the same time attempting to get an update from the service provider. After one hour of no service, we are required to notify parents/guardians of the closure and the need to pick up your child immediately.*

4.2.5 Permanent Closure of a Program

In the event a decision to permanently close a program is made by the Board of Directors, the parents/guardians will be given as much notice as possible to allow time to seek alternate child care arrangements. This notice will be a minimum of 60 days unless there are extenuating circumstances that will not allow that to happen. Past decisions to close a program involved financial sustainability or the school space was no longer available.

4.2.6 School District Job Action

In the event of school district job action disputes or disruption, Hand in Hand will receive direction from Abbotsford School District as to whether we are able to provide child care services. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of centre operation changes to the best of our ability. Credits and refunds may be considered by the Board of Directors depending on the circumstances regarding the length of time with the closures and how the Society is impacted by the job action.

4.2.7 Stat Closure Days

Our programs will be closed for all Stat holidays as well as Easter Monday and Boxing Day:

New Year's Day	Canada Day	Remembrance Day
Family Day	BC Day	Christmas Day
Good Friday	Labour Day	Boxing Day
Easter Monday	Truth & Reconciliation Day	
Victoria Day	Thanksgiving Day	

4.3 Respect Policy

Respect will be shown to all staff, children, families, and community members at all Hand in Hand sites.

- We show respect to children, parents/guardians, and staff by communicating considerately, keeping our voices at an appropriate level, and using respectful language.
- All communication between parents/guardians and staff should be conducted with respect and professionalism.
- Inappropriate outbursts of disrespectful language from a child or adult which is directed to staff, a child, or adult will result in a warning and possible immediate discharge from the program depending on the severity of the incident.
- This includes postings on social media deemed to be disrespectful in nature.

4.4 Addressing Concerns or Issues

Parents/guardians are to discuss concerns or grievances with Hand in Hand Managers in a respectful and professional manner.

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide feedback and express any concerns they may have. Share your concern with the Centre Manager or Supervisor in a discreet way, away from the children or other adults.
- If the matter has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may choose to contact the administration office to speak with the Executive Directors, Financial Administrator, or Program Coordinator.
- If after this step you feel your concerns have not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may request that the Executive Directors forward your concerns to a delegated Board of Director member; they will contact you.

4.5 Social Media

We believe that respectful face-to-face communication is the most effective approach for addressing any problems or concerns parents/guardians may have.

- If you have an issue, please speak directly with centre staff or administration; refrain from posting on social media.
- Please act responsibly and respect the privacy of others involved, as everything you post on social media is visible to the world.
- Due to privacy considerations, staff and parents/guardians are not to post pictures of children, parents/guardians, or staff members on a social media site without consent of the persons involved.
- To prevent misunderstandings, we ask that comments regarding our centres or staff only be posted with the permission of the organization or the staff member involved.
- Even with good intentions, it's important to consider that anything you share about another person could potentially harm their image and possibly your own.

4.6 Confidentiality

Parents/guardians will be required to read and agree to the following as part of their registration. To confirm this, we ask all parents/guardians to sign the last page of the handbook and return it to your centre manager.

- To protect confidentiality, parents/guardians must not share or post any identifying information, photos, or details about other children, their families, or Hand in Hand staff. This includes anything learned through program activities, events, communications, or daily interactions.
- Staff will not share family or child information with another program or provider without written parental consent.
- Confidentiality must always be maintained. Any concerns about the release of information should be discussed with the Executive Directors.

4.6.1 Ensuring Confidential Security

All information on registered families will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the centre and online in our secure child care management program, EsiKidz. Staff will not disclose registered family and/or staff member personal information without obtaining written consent to do so.

4.7 Keeping You Informed

If you have any concerns or questions regarding your child or the program, please speak with our staff. We will inform you of any concerns that we may have in regards to your child.

It is imperative to keep our Managers informed of any changes in the home environment that may impact your child's sense of well-being as this can alter their behavior and attitude. This includes parental separation, illness in the family, moving, or a similar situation.

Newsletters will be emailed to parents/guardians with information on activities, themes and/or fundraisers as well as important dates to remember, (e.g. closure days). Staff may also use EsiKidz to communicate with parents/guardians through the parent app. Please take the time to read notices when received. The parent bulletin board will also post notices and information regarding the program.

5. Financial Policies

5.1 Fee Schedule – see EsiKidz and our website at www.handinhand.ca

5.2 Annual Registration Fee

- To complete the registration process, the annual, non-refundable $50 registration fee must be paid.
- This fee is per registering family and must be paid every year. The fee covers July 1st to June 30th of each year.

5.2.1 Holding a Space

- To ensure fairness and support families on our waitlist, a child care space can only be held if regular fees continue to be paid.
- If your child will be absent for one month or longer, you may choose to continue paying fees to keep your space.
- If fees are not paid during this time, your child will be considered withdrawn from the program and the space may be offered to another family.
- Families who choose not to hold their space are welcome to request care again in the future; however, availability cannot be guaranteed.

5.3 Payment of Fees

5.3.1 Monthly Payments

- Childcare fees are due on the 5th of the month via a preapproved PAD or PAC payment.
- If this payment does not go through, any outstanding amounts will automatically be processed on the 21st of the month.
- If your child is absent for illness, vacation, unscheduled centre closure, or withdrawal without 30 days' notice, the fees paid will still apply.
- **We do not accept cash or cheques.**
- **Fees are non-refundable, non-negotiable and no credits.**
- **Tax Receipts** for income tax will be issued to parents/guardians through the EsiKidz Parent Portal by the end of February each year.

5.3.2 Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) & Pre-Authorized Credit (PAC)

- PAD/PAC information must be added by the parent/guardian in EsiKidz. Your child is not registered until PAD or PAC has been uploaded.
- Parent/guardians must notify the finance department by email with a minimum of 30 days' notice of any changes to the monthly PAD/PAC payment.
- If your PAD payments are altered, parents/guardians can request a temporary approval from the Financial Administrator to make payments by credit card through our Stripe payment option on our website at www.handinhand.ca. (see section 5.3.3)

5.3.3 Stripe Online Payments via Hand in Hand Website

- Parents/guardians can make credit card payments using the Hand in Hand website at www.handinhand.ca.
- Navigate to the **"For Parents"** section and scroll down the page to "**Make a Payment."**
- Follow the prompts for the required credit card information along with your child's name and month you are paying for and select **"Make a Payment."**
- When payment has been approved a confirmation email will be sent to the parent/guardian and the admin office.

5.3.4 Third Party Payment

- If fees are paid by a third party organization, such as MCFD, we will require adequate documentation upon registration.

5.4 Government Subsidy – Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB)

- ACCB is available to qualifying families through the Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC).
- It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that all ACCB forms are submitted to the government.
- It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that all ACCB is renewed before the ACCB has expired. Parent/guardians will receive notification from MECC a month prior to ACCB expiry.
- The parent/guardian must pay the ACCBs portion of monthly fees until ACCB authorization is approved and payment is received from MECC.
- Once the ACCB payment has been received, child care fees paid by the parent/guardian will be credited to their account.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for paying the difference between the subsidy authorization and the program's fees.
- Parent payment portions will follow the same policy as Section 5.3 above, including back payments owing to Hand in Hand from MECC.
- ACCB does not cover the $50 annual registration fee or the cost of field trips. Parent/guardians are responsible for these additional fees.

5.5 Late Fee Charges

- All childcare fees are due on the 5th of every month unless an approved Special Payment Arrangement is in place.
- If fees are not paid within 5 business days after the 5th of the month, parent/guardians may incur a $20 Late Payment Fee.
- All remaining outstanding monthly fees will be charged on the 21st of the current month.
- If payment is not received by the due date, childcare services may be discontinued at the discretion of the Financial Administrator, until payment is received in full or a payment plan is in place.

5.6 NSF Charges

- All NSF payments will incur a **$30 Service Charge**.
- If a PAD or PAC payment is returned as NSF, the payment will be reprocessed on the 21st through automatic withdrawal.
- If a parent/guardian has more than three (3) NSF payments, future payment may only be accepted in the form of debit/credit with your centre manager or online via the Hand in Hand website.

5.7 Late Pick-Up

- If you know you will be late picking up your child, please inform the centre as soon as possible so we can reassure your child that all is well. Your estimated arrival time and/or giving verbal authorization for an alternate pick-up person is required.
- **If late pick up is a recurring problem, (i.e. 2 times in a 30-day period) continued participation in the program may be at risk.**

5.7.1 Late Pick Up Charges

- After program closure, a late fee charge of $10 for every 15 minutes will apply.
- Fees will be added to the next applicable bill.

5.7.2 Late Pick Up with No Contact from Parent

If there has been no contact by program closure from the parent/guardian, staff will carry out the following procedure:

- A call will be placed to the parent/guardian(s) soon after program end time to inquire about arrival time.
- If no contact by 15 minutes past closure, calls will be placed to all emergency contacts.
- If your child has not been picked up 30 minutes after program closure and there has been no contact with a parent/guardian, the staff member is obligated to inform the local authorities.
- Late fee charges will apply as per policy 5.7.1 – Late Pick-up Charges.

6. Program Elements

6.1 Daily Schedule

Hand in Hand recognizes the importance of creative free play in a young child's development. Staff will model and promote key social and life skills, such as sharing and joining in with our friends, sitting in a circle, independent self-care skills and following directions. Our early learning programs put a large emphasis on doing processed art with the children. Processed art focuses on the experience, exploration, and creation process rather than the final product. We focus on creativity, sensory experience, and artistic freedom without a right or wrong result.

6.1.1 A Day at our Preschool program:

Meet and Greet – We say hello and get ready to play and be with our friends.
Free Play – A time to play with friends at a variety of stations, such as the house play area, floor toys, blocks, art, painting, puzzles, and much more!
Snack - A snack sent from home.
Circle Time – Singing songs, finger plays, stories, games, & sharing.
Outdoor Play – On the playground, in the sandbox, or community walks
Home

6.1.2 A Day at our Full Day Child Care program:

Meet and Greet – We say hello and get ready to play and be with our friends.
Morning Free Play – A time to play with friends at a variety of stations, such as the house play area, floor toys, blocks, art, painting, puzzles, and much more!
Snack - A snack from their lunch kit.
Circle Time – Singing songs, finger plays, stories, games, and sharing.
Outdoor Play – On the playground, in the sandbox, or community walks
Lunch Time - Lunch sent from home.
Quiet / Rest Time – All children in daycare are required to have a quiet/rest time. For children who do not nap, there will be quiet activities such as books and puzzles.
Snack - A snack provided by Hand in Hand.
Afternoon Free Play - Art activities and outdoor play.

6.2 Arrival

All parents/guardians are required to sign their child in upon arrival using the tablet at the centre.

- Hand in Hand is not legally responsible for your child without an adult signing them in and a staff member receiving them at the door.
- If your child will not be attending on a scheduled day, please notify the centre as soon as possible.

Sharing information with our educators at drop-off that may impact your child's day helps us better understand and respond to changes in their behaviour or emotions. Even something as simple as a rough start to the morning or an upset at home can influence how a child experiences their day.

6.3 Departure

Parents/guardians are required to sign their child out at the end of the day, using the tablet at the centre. If your child will be picked up by someone other than yourself, **you must notify the centre ahead of time**.

- If you have not notified us of a change in the regular pick-up person, your child will not be released to them. Ensure the alternate adult comes with photo ID as staff is required to confirm their identity.
- For liability reasons, staff are not permitted to drive children in their personal vehicles.
- Children will not be sent home in taxis, allowed to walk home alone, or be released to anyone under the age of 19 years of age.

6.4 Custody and Access

It is the responsibility of the **enrolling parent/guardian** to provide a copy of a relevant Court Order or Separation Agreement or pertinent other custody information that may deny or "legally restrict" access by the child's other parent/guardian or another family member.

Without a copy of a court documentation on file, Hand in Hand staff has no right to deny one parent/guardian access over the other. If this situation arises, the staff will notify the enrolling parent/guardian.

It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent/guardian to inform centre staff immediately, in writing, of any changes to the original submitted documents and to provide a copy of any amended court orders.

6.5 Unauthorized Pick-Up

- If anyone other than the enrolling parent/guardian will be picking up your child, you must inform the centre, even if the adult is listed on your authorized pick-up list.
- If you have not notified the centre of a change in the regular pick-up person, your child will not be released. Ensure the alternate adult comes with photo ID as staff is required to confirm their identity.
- Verbal authorization from the enrolling parent/guardian will be allowed via the telephone if a situation suddenly arises.
- Photo ID will be required by a pick-up person to confirm identity with centre staff.

6.6 Alleged Impaired Pick-Up

When it is alleged by a staff member that the pick-up person is impaired, it is the staff's legal responsibility to do everything possible to prevent the alleged impaired person from leaving with the child. If a staff member has reason to believe that this adult is unable to adequately care for the child, the staff member will offer to call a relative or friend to pick up the adult and child **OR** offer to call a cab.

If the alleged impaired person chooses to get in the car with the child, the staff member will inform the person that we will immediately notify the police as they are endangering the safety of the child. If the staff member is worried that the child may be at risk or in need of protection a call must also be placed to the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

6.7 Registration/Re-Registration

Registration packages and payments are managed though our online child care program called EsiKidz.
All parts of the registration package must be completed, including setting up payment information, prior to a child's acceptance in a program.

An EsiKidz Parent Portal invitation will be sent to the parent/guardian. If this link is lost or otherwise unavailable, please contact your centre manager.

- It is the parent/guardians' responsibility to ensure that their child's EsiKidz profile, including financial information, is completed prior to their child starting in the program and to ensure that the parents' and child's information is kept current.
- Parents should use a personal email for their registration.
- We require a current headshot photo of your child for identification purposes as per licensing requirements, this can be added directly to your childs/rens profile on EsiKidz.
- To ensure fairness and reduce waitlists, families who wish to hold a space for one month or longer must continue to pay for their spot. Please see section 5.2 for more info.
- Registration is ongoing throughout the year as space becomes available.

6.7.1 Annual Registration Form

- Parent/guardians must complete an **Annual Registration form** to complete their registration.
- This form indicates the days you have enrolled your child for care.
- If the parent/guardian wants to adjust their initial approved schedule, they must submit a new updated Annual Registration Form with the requested changes to the Centre Manager.
- If the Centre Manager finds that the requested care schedule is not available, they will offer the option of what part-time care is available. The parent/guardian must resubmit the form to confirm the agreed upon revised schedule.
- **To confirm registration, the annual, non-refundable $50 registration fee must be paid** (see section 5.2 for more info).

6.7.2 Registration/Re-registration Priority List

Re-registration of families for programs that operate at or near the licensing enrollment capacity, including a new admission of siblings, will follow the priority procedure below:

1. Families currently attending full time.
2. Siblings of current full-time children.
3. Children attending part-time and increasing to full-time enrollment.
4. Siblings of current part-time children.
5. A transfer from another Hand in Hand centre.
6. Wait-list children, full time.
7. Wait-list children, part time.

** New families requiring more days of care will receive priority. E.g.: 4 days/week versus 2 days/week. **

6.7.3 Children Requiring Support

Some children benefit from additional supports to help them fully participate in the child care environment. These supports are provided through partnerships with community agencies that work with children who have diverse developmental needs in areas such as physical, cognitive, communication, or social-emotional development.
If your child has previously received support at another child care centre, please inform the Centre Manager prior to registration so we can work together to plan for a smooth transition. Families are responsible for connecting with the appropriate support agency to confirm eligibility and availability of funding or services.

6.8 Parent's Request for Withdrawal

If you decide to withdraw your child from the centre, we require **one full calendar month's written notice**. Notice must be provided **to the Centre Manager on or before the 1st day of the month prior to your child's final month of care**.

For example, if your child's last day will be **April 30**, written notice must be received **no later than March 1**.
If the required notice is not provided, **one full calendar month of fees will be charged in place of notice**.

Please note that if your child is withdrawn for any period of time, **their space cannot be held**. If you wish to return at a later date, your child will be **considered a new registration and may be placed on the waitlist if space is not available.**

If you are not satisfied with our program and/or we are unable to accommodate your child's needs, withdrawal from the program may be in the best interest of the child and family. In this case, the one month notice will be waived.

6.9 Centre's Request for Withdrawal

- If your child has a diagnosis that can affect their ability to self-manage or if there is a history of behavioral concerns where support was required in another child care setting, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the Centre Manager at the time of registration. This will help the manager determine if a support plan needs to be in place prior to your child starting.
- It is essential that parents/guardians share information upon registration with the Centre Manager that may impact your child's successful experience at Hand in Hand. Every effort will be made by staff to meet the needs of your child. All information shared will be kept confidential.
- If we notice a change which causes concern regarding your child's behaviour, we will share this with the parent/guardian. We will work collaboratively with parents/guardians to try to find a resolution to the concern.
- If after these steps have been followed, and after consultation with the Executive Director(s), it is determined that the well-being and safety of your child, other children or staff is being jeopardized, the parent/guardian will be required to withdraw the child.

6.10 Child Guidance and Support Practices

Within our play-based learning environment, we understand that children develop social, emotional, and self-regulation skills through exploration, interaction, and guided experiences. Play provides meaningful opportunities for children to practice problem-solving, cooperation, communication, and emotional expression.

Our goal is to support each child's sense of belonging, confidence, and well-being. Educators use positive guidance strategies that focus on teaching and skill-building. Through play, modeling, and supportive conversations, we help children learn how to navigate social situations, manage emotions, and make respectful choices.

Hand in Hand has partnered with the Fraser Valley Child Development Centre to bring the CALM curriculum to our Early Learning Programs. We will be using Melvin the Monkey, Tucker the Turtle and their friends to help strengthen your child's self-regulation and social emotional wellbeing.

Clear and consistent expectations will be established in age-appropriate ways. Educators gently redirect behavior when needed, helping children understand natural consequences and explore alternative solutions within the play environment. To create a safe, caring, and engaging learning environment, we support children in learning the following expectations:

1. Safe Bodies
2. Kind Words
3. Gentle Hands
4. Listening and Following Directions
5. Problem-Solving and Self-Regulation
6. Responsibility and Independence

We value strong partnerships with families and maintain an open-door policy. Parents and guardians are encouraged to share questions or concerns regarding any incident or our approach to guidance and behavior. Open communication ensures we can work collaboratively to support each child's development.

When challenging behaviors arise, educators respond calmly and intentionally:

- If a child becomes overwhelmed, angry, or physically aggressive, an educator may guide the child to a quieter space within the classroom to support emotional regulation. The child will always remain within sight and supervision of staff.
- Educators help children identify their feelings, reflect on what occurred, and practice problem-solving strategies in a developmentally appropriate way.
- Once the child feels ready, they are supported in rejoining play and rebuilding peer connections.
- Hurtful language or unsafe behavior toward peers, staff, parents, or others is addressed promptly as a learning opportunity to reinforce empathy, respect, and safe play.
- The Centre Manager will communicate with parents/guardians regarding significant incidents, and together we will develop supportive strategies that align between home and school.

Through play-based learning, children are given the time, guidance, and support they need to build lifelong social and emotional skills in a safe and nurturing environment.

6.11 Wandering / Missing Child

Wandering Child: In the event a child wanders away from the group or "chooses to walk away" from the program, the following procedure will be followed:

1. A search of the area to locate the child will be conducted.
2. If unsuccessful, a call will be made to the police.
3. Parents/guardians will be informed after the call to the police is placed.
4. The administration office will also be contacted to aid with the search.
5. Once child has been located all parties involved will be contacted.

6.12 Objects from Home

Objects from home are welcomed on show and share days **only** and will be brought out only at circle time.

- Toys from home during play time can cause problems with sharing and they may get lost or broken.
- If a toy arrives from home, it will remain in the child's backpack.
- If your child uses a security toy at home during nap time/ or if they are feeling anxious, please discuss this with your centre manager, and a plan can be made to ensure your child feels safe and secure in the program.

Hand in Hand is not responsible for any lost or broken items brought from home.

6.13 Clothing and Personal Possessions

A list of "Items Needed" will be provided upon registration, ensure all items required are in the child's backpack every day.

- Please label all items with your child's first and last name. Backpack items include snack and/or lunch, indoor shoes and a change of clothing.
- Outdoor shoes will be removed in the cubby area. The ideal indoor shoes are slip-on runners or slippers with a hard sole that your child can manage taking on and off easily.
- Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes suited to the weather. Muddy Buddys/rainsuits are required during the fall and winter months.

Bedding: All bedding must be taken home on Friday to be laundered and returned with your child on Monday.

6.14 Toileting & Diapering Policy

Our program supports children's independence, dignity, and health during toileting and diapering routines. We recognize that children between the ages of 3 and 5 are at varying stages of toileting development. Our educators provide patient, respectful, and developmentally appropriate support while maintaining a safe and sanitary environment.

Preschool- Hand in Hand requests that children be toilet trained upon enrollment in our preschool programs, however we understand that accidents may happen in regard to toileting. Ensure that your child has an extra set of clothing in a plastic bag in their backpack for those times. If an accident happens, we can assist your child in changing their clothes. This will be done in a discreet manner, with the appropriate supplies in the children's washroom.

6.14.1 Toileting Readiness and Independence

- Educators support toilet learning in a positive, encouraging, and non-punitive manner.
- Children are invited to use the washroom at regular transition times (e.g., before outdoor play, before rest time, before meals) and whenever they indicate the need.
- Children are encouraged to practice independence with clothing management, wiping, flushing, and handwashing, with assistance provided as needed.

6.14.2 Supervision and Privacy

- Children are supervised at all times in accordance with licensing requirements.
- Educators maintain sight and/or sound supervision while respecting each child's privacy.
- Washroom routines are handled discreetly and respectfully.
- No child is left unattended during toileting or diapering.

6.14.3 Diapering and Pull-Ups (Full day Early Learning Programs)

For children who are not yet fully toilet trained:

- Diapering takes place in a designated changing area, in the washroom.
- Staff follow strict hygiene procedures, including:
    - Wearing disposable gloves
    - Cleaning the child front to back
    - Placing soiled diapers in a hands-free, covered receptacle
    - Cleaning and disinfecting the changing surface after each use
    - Washing both the child's and educator's hands after each change
- Diaper creams or ointments require written parent authorization and must be clearly labeled.
- Families must provide diapers/pull-ups and wipes as needed.

6.14.4 Accidents and Soiled Clothing

Toileting accidents are a normal part of development.

- Children will be supported calmly and respectfully.
- Staff will assist children in changing into clean clothing as independently as possible.
- Gloves will be worn when handling soiled clothing.
- Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed bag and sent home the same day.
- Affected areas will be cleaned and disinfected according to health regulations.
- Parents/guardians will be informed of frequent accidents or concerns.

Families are required to provide at least one full change of clothing, clearly labeled, to be kept at the centre.

6.14.5 Health and Hygiene Practices

- Proper handwashing with soap and water is practiced after toileting and diapering.
- Cleaning and disinfecting procedures follow public health and licensing standards.
- Educators model and teach healthy hygiene habits daily.

6.14.6 Family Partnership

Toilet learning is most successful when there is consistency between home and the early learning environment.

- Educators will communicate regularly with families regarding progress or concerns.
- Individualized plans may be developed when additional support is needed.

- Medical or developmental needs affecting toileting must be discussed with the Centre Manager.

6.15 Meal Time

- It is vital that parents/guardians indicate food allergies on the registration form.
- All Hand in Hand centres are **NUT FREE.** Your cooperation and diligence by ensuring that only "nut free" food items are sent in with your child is appreciated.
- Staff will not heat, cook or do food preparation for a child's lunch or snack.
- Food will not be warmed in the microwave for safety and nutritional reasons.
- Lunches will not be stored in the centre refrigerator.
- Staff will encourage your child to eat what you have prepared for them.

6.16 Neighborhood Walks and Visitors

- Walks off site or visitors will be arranged from time to time.
- Impromptu walks in the immediate neighborhood may occur on any day. We will post a notice on the entry door to inform parents/guardians of our estimated time of return.
- Parents/guardians have signed to acknowledge that children will participate in "outdoor activities" as part of the online registration package.
- We may schedule a local visitor to come in and share with the kids; parents will be made aware of this visitor via email in advance and can choose whether or not their child participates that day.

6.17 Active Play

Active play promotes healthy growth and development and supports body control and movement. As a licensed early learning program, we are required to provide a minimum of 30 minutes of active play per session. This active play will either take place indoors or outdoors dependent on weather conditions.

The Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend that toddlers and preschoolers should accumulate at least 180 minutes of active play daily. Active Play includes periods of high energy activity, raising children's heart rate and possibly making them "huff and puff" such as running or jumping. Our Full Day Child Care program will incorporate at least 120 minutes of active play daily.

6.17.1 Outdoor Play:

Outdoor play will happen daily.

- Please ensure that your child comes prepared for outside play according to the seasons and the weather.
- In warmer weather, flip-flop sandals or open-toe shoes can be a safety hazard on the playground equipment. Children will not be allowed on the playground equipment if wearing this style of footwear.
- Hand in Hand asks that all parents send a muddy buddy/rainsuit for their child, as we spend a lot of time outdoors. This ensures your child's comfort, as well as allows them to be fully engaged in outside activities without the fear of getting their clothes dirty.

6.18 Screen Time

Hand in Hand believes in creative free play, we do not provide any type of electronic play for the children. Our play time will consist of toys, arts and crafts, books, circle time and physical play activities.

7. Health and Safety

7.1 Medical Information

It is vital that parents/guardians share your child's medical history at the time of registration (i.e. allergies, asthma, special medication, etc.)

- The online EsiKidz registration package will be filled out by the parent/guardian to indicate that a child has been identified with an allergy or if they require daily medication administration.
- We must be kept informed of any changes to your child's medical history after enrollment.

- All enrolled children are required to have a declaration of their immunization status included in their registration package.

7.2 Allergies

7.2.1 Food Allergies

All Hand in Hand centres are **NUT FREE**.

- Your cooperation and diligence by ensuring that only **nut free** food items are sent in with your child is appreciated.
- A list of children with food allergies will be posted in a visible location in the food prep area in the centre for all staff to be aware of.

7.2.2 Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan (AEP)

Anaphylaxis is a severe and very quick allergic reaction for a child that is a result from exposure to foods, insect stings, latex, medications or other substances that has been identified as a severe danger to that child. Anaphylaxis can lead to death if not treated immediately.

- If your child has an AEP in place, the enrolling parent/guardian must provide a copy of the care plan and we will ensure that all staff are trained to respond in the event of an exposure.
- The AEP must include a recent headshot, description of the allergy, emergency procedure, contact information, and consent to administer medication.

7.3 Medication

A Medication Administration form must be filled out and signed by a parent for any prescribed medication to be given to a child while at the centre.

Licensing Procedures that must be followed:

- Medication must be handed directly to a staff member.
- The medication **must be in** the original dispensed container.
- The medication form must be filled out completely and signed by the parent including the name of medication, the dosage and time to be given.

Do Not Send Medication in Your Child's Backpack. This includes asthma puffers.

Please Note: If medication does not come in the original dispensed container or original packaging or the medication form is not filled out completely, **we will not** administer the medication.

7.4 Immunization

Fraser Health Licensing regulations require that all children registered must have a current copy of their immunization records as part of their registration package. If your child is not immunized, parents/guardians must indicate this on the registration form.

- In the event a child is not immunized and there is an outbreak of a communicable disease in the centre, the parent/guardian will be contacted and informed right away. It is up to the parents' discretion whether their child continues to attend the program.

7.5 Illness

- Any of the following symptoms require them to be at home:
  - Acute cold, with coughing, sore throat or a runny nose with green liquid discharge.
  - A fever of 101° F/38.3° C or above.
  - Difficulty in breathing – wheezing or a persistent cough.
  - A stomach ailment, including diarrhea, cramps, loose stool, nausea / vomiting.
  - Pain – any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain
  - Infected skin, eyes or an undiagnosed rash. Severe itching of body and scalp.
  - Children with known or suspected communicable diseases.

- Please keep your child at home if they are not well enough to participate in program activities, both indoor and outdoor.
- All children who exhibit symptoms of illness must remain at home. They may return to the program after being symptom-free for 24 hours.
- If your child arrives at the centre or develops any of the above symptoms while in the program, the parent/guardian will be called to pick up their child as soon as possible. We will isolate and care for your child, however, we are not equipped to keep a sick child for an extended period of time.

Communicable Disease:
- If your child contracts a communicable disease, **you must notify the centre immediately** as we are required to alert other families.
- A doctor's note will be required confirming complete recovery prior to re-entry to the centre.

7.6 Head Lice

Head lice are common in group settings and can affect anyone. For more information on head lice and how to treat it at home, please visit the Fraser Health website.
- If it is confirmed by a parent that their child has lice, the child must stay home until the first treatment is completed, or
- If staff confirms that your child has lice while in the centre, the parent/guardian will be contacted, and will be recommended to pick up their child.
- With confirmed live lice cases, begin the recommended treatment. The child may return to the centre after the first treatment is completed.

7.7 Injury

Minor Injury: If your child sustains a minor injury while at the program, we will provide first-aid and will report the incident to you. Depending on the treatment required, a minor incident form may require your signature for our records.

Major Incident: In the case of an injury requiring medical or dental attention, the child's parents/guardians will be notified immediately. If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian, the alternate contact person will be called.
- If contact with the parent/guardian or alternate contact has been unsuccessful and it has been deemed that medical treatment and/or emergency transport is necessary, we will call an ambulance for assistance.
- If transport to a medical facility is required, a staff member will accompany your child to the nearest emergency facility. Any expenses incurred in this situation will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

7.8 Emergency Procedures

- Hand in Hand staff maintain current first-aid certification.
- Emergency procedures related to fire, earthquake, and evacuation of the premises are practiced monthly.
- Emergency procedures are posted at the front entrance of each of the centres.
- In case of a fire, long-term power failure, extreme weather conditions, or an evacuation of the centre due to an emergency situation, children and staff may need to relocate to our pre-planned emergency location, approved by Fraser Health. The address to this location is posted at the entrance of each site. A sign will be posted in the window reminding parents/ guardians of where we are.

7.9 Suspected Child Abuse

If a Hand in Hand staff member has reason to suspect abuse of a child may have occurred at the centre involving staff or a volunteer.
- The alleged person will be removed from the centre immediately.
- This will be reported to the parents/guardians, the Executive Directors/Program Coordinator, Fraser Health Authority – Licensing Facility and The Ministry of Children and Family Development.

If a staff member has reason to suspect abuse or neglect of a child has occurred outside the Hand in Hand centre (e.g. at home or by a relative).

- This will be reported to the Executive Directors/Program Coordinator and the Ministry of Children and Family Development as required by law.
- It is our legal responsibility to report suspicions/disclosures to the appropriate parties, not to determine if abuse has occurred.
- Our primary concern is for the health, safety, and well-being of the child.

8. Pandemic Policy

8.1 Health and Wellness Measures

Hand in Hand has developed its epidemic or pandemic response under the guidelines of Fraser Health Authority, the Ministry of Health, and WorkSafe BC. Our Health and Safety policy (Parent Handbook - section 7) continues to be applicable during a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak. Any temporary changes to our health and safety policy during a pandemic/outbreak will be communicated via email, our website, and social media and will link to the authorized source of information that our temporary change is based on.

As a licensed child care centre we are required to follow all directives given to us by the above legal authorities, including a mandatory order to close our centres for public health reasons. Their decision overrules any decision to stay open that any child care centre may wish to make. Notice of all closures will be posted on our website, social media and Facebook page.

Our Hand in Hand plan is to emphasize the most important goal in our centres – **Prevention.**

8.2 Prevention Planning

Hand in Hand follows guidance from Fraser Health surrounding prevention planning. Here are examples of how we work to prevent the spread of diseases:

- Good hygiene practices are taught and reinforced, including handwashing and covering coughs/sneezes.
- High-touch surfaces are cleaned and sanitized regularly on a set schedule.
- Children who become ill during the day will be separated from others and sent home as soon as possible.
- Food provided by the program is served directly by staff.
- Outdoor play is prioritized whenever possible.
- Air purifiers are used in program rooms.

8.3 Staffing/Ratios

Child to staff ratios as per the provincial child care licensing regulations is required during operations, regardless of a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak. If there is a shortage of staff available to work (E.g. – staff being asked to isolate), Hand in Hand may be required to reduce our operating hours, or rotate days of space availability, or perhaps close a centre temporarily. This decision would be made by the Executive Directors, with guidance from the Board of Directors. Any alterations to operating times/days will be communicated to parents/guardians via our website, social media, and email to the best of our ability prior to the changes being made.

8.4 Individual Exclusions

If it has been recommended by the Ministry of Health for an individual to quarantine, Hand in Hand will require all family members, including other children, to comply with this recommendation. Please share this information with your Centre Manager as soon as possible. If this occurs, we will contact Fraser Health and, at the direction of Fraser Health, we will share this information with other families in a confidential manner. These exclusions will apply equally to all children, families, and employees.

Parent Handbook Agreement

This sheet must be signed and returned to the centre prior to your child attending in a Hand in Hand program.

Child's Name: _____

Centre: _____

I have read and understand the policies and information outlined in the Hand in Hand Child Care Society Early Learning Parent Handbook.

By signing this document, I hereby agree to abide by the policies and information in this handbook.

Parent/Guardian Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Parent/Guardian Name (please print): _____

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

_____ _____

Centre Manager Signature Date