

Care Provider Handbook



Welcome to Family Matters Family Home Child Care Agency. This care provider handbook will provide you with the information you will need regarding programs and policies as well as other important information you may find helpful as one of our care providers. We will work to help and support you through our various programs, services and resources. We encourage you to bring forward any issues or concerns you may have, so we can continue together to provide top quality care that reflects our philosophy and mission statement.

Agency Contact Information:

Family Matters Family Home Child Care Agency is governed under the Board of Directors for Family Matters, Annapolis County Family Resource Centre.

Chair of Board: Jane Baskwill
(902)584-3692

Agency Co-Directors: Billie Jo Weir and Denise Naugler
(902) 584-2210

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Agency Name: Family Matters Family Home Child Care Agency

Agency Consultants: Colleen Jodoin
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Area Served

Our agency currently serves the following areas (but is not limited to):

- Annapolis County;
- Surrounding areas (with consultation with agencies in nearby counties we will consider taking homes outside of our catchment area)

Our Mission

To develop, coordinate, and deliver programs, services and support that are proven to promote the health and well being of children by providing homes and care providers that put the needs of children first. This is done primarily by ensuring a safe, nurturing, family-like environment that allows each child to be supported in all areas of the development.

Family Matters Philosophy

Family Matters believes that children learn through playing and exploring their environment and are entitled to opportunities that support all areas of their development. Our programs nurture and support child development through appropriate activities that follow the principles of:

- Children first;
- Equity and accessibility;
- Community based;
- Strengthening and supporting families;
- Flexibility;
- Partnerships.

Roles and Responsibilities of Agency Staff

The staff at our agency consists of agency co-directors, Family Home Child Care consultants and Family Home Child Care support staff as required. We also work regularly with community partners and volunteers.

Agency Co-Directors:

The agency co-directors carry out responsibilities set by the board such as, overseeing the consultant by ensuring that the consultants carry out their duties and responsibilities as set forth by the board of directors and the regulations set forth by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Agency co-directors' responsibilities include:

- Supervising agency staff
- Implement and reinforce board approved policy and procedures
- Purchases supplies as requested by consultants
- Deal with concerns regarding the Family Home Child Care Agency
- Act as the official voice of the agency, including communications with media, community groups, and government officials and agencies.
- Carrying out consultant responsibilities such as approving homes as required

Consultants:

The family home child care consultants coordinate the Family Home Child Care program on behalf of the agency and deliver support services to the care providers and families. This includes recommending approval of, supporting and monitoring care providers, as well as the following:

- Makes sure all parties are aware of Daycare Act and Regulations
- Make sure care provider and agency files are up to date
- Provide workshops to care providers
- Communicates with the Department of Education and Early Childhood

Development regarding concerns, grants, etc.

- Completes subsidy on a monthly basis
- Completes incentive grants on a quarterly basis
- Discuss purchases with the agency co-directors
- Consultation with the agency co-directors as issues arise
- Deliver equipment to care providers
- Provide and implement care provider and parent advisory committee meetings
- Monthly home visits to care providers
- Inspections/Approvals
- Responsible for maintaining lending library
- Provides seasonal newsletters to care providers
- Advertises for the agency/ care providers
- Assists in developing a plan for opening and closing day homes as required
- Oversees the Family Dayhome Canadian Childcare Federation level 1,2,3
- Assists in the recruitment of backup providers
- collaborates with NSCC for placements for students

Volunteers and Community Partners:

Volunteers and community partners are always welcome at our agency to assist agency staff with the delivery of the Family Home Child Care program. They will work under the direction of the agency co-directors and/or the Family Home Child Care consultants. Requirements and responsibilities will vary depending on the situation. All volunteers must adhere to agency policies and must sign in and out of the volunteer binder, noting the date and activity in which they are participating or the care provider's home in which they are visiting. All volunteers must provide a Vulnerable Sector Check and Child Abuse Registry Check.

Care Provider:

The care provider is approved under the license of the agency. Care providers can establish their own business name, fees, and contracts with the help and support of the consultant.

- Complying with the act and regulations, service agreements, and standards;
- Provide an agency consultant access to visit the Family Home Child Care at least once every 30 days to provide support.
- Participate in regular professional development coordinated through the agency.

- Participate in agency efforts to assist parents and care providers in matching requirements with services.
- Provide a Family Home Child Care that ensures the health, safety and well-being of the children in their care and promotes positive healthy development in children.
- Provide a program that is developmentally appropriate to the children in their care.
- Participate in a parent advisory committee that is established by the agency, when requested.
- Post notices and minutes of parent advisory committee meetings, as provided by the agency.
- Post notices to parents of significant changes affecting approved Family Home Child Care in a conspicuous place within the family day care home.
- Ensure that the records of each child for whom they provide care are complete, organized and kept confidential.
- Maintain a current First Aid and CPR certificate.
- Complete Child Abuse Registry Check (every year) and Vulnerable Sector Check (every 3 years)
- Ensure that the outdoor play area is enclosed by a fence at least 1.5 meters high or there is access to a safe and appropriate outdoor space nearby.
- Carry adequate liability insurance to cover the Family Home Child Care.

Duties of owner or person in charge

1. Permit the agency co-directors, or a person acting on his or her behalf, to enter and inspect the facility and examine the premises, equipment and facilities.
2. Permit the agency co-directors, or a person acting on his or her behalf to examine the accounts, books, and records of the facility.
3. Permit the agency co-directors, or a person acting on his or her behalf to assess the program and services of the facility.
4. Display the license issued in a conspicuous place in the facility.
5. Post in a conspicuous place and provide to each parent of a child in attendance a notice of the act and regulations, the facility policy respecting licensing, enrolment, and attendance criteria, program and staff/child ratios.

Programming

6. Establish a program to stimulate the development of the children, to be delivered on a day-to-day basis.
7. Post the information on the program in a conspicuous location and advise parents through the parent handbook.

Record Keeping

8. Maintain daily records in respect to infants and toddlers, including:
 - Unusual occurrences and other pertinent information that is not necessarily a daily occurrence;
 - Space for the parents to write special instructions or information in respect to their child.
 - All daily records shall be available to the parents at the end of each day.

Physical Regulations

9. All facilities (including agency and Family Home Child Care) will comply with municipal by-laws, as well as fire, health, sanitary, and safety regulations.
10. Adequate storage space for food, beds, play equipment, program supplies, cleaning and medical supplies in the facility. Cleaning and medical supplies must be kept out of reach of the children.

Equipment and Furnishings

11. Every facility shall provide for the children enrolled:
 - a. Furnishings of a suitable size;
 - b. Play materials and equipment;
 - c. Dishes, cutlery, and personal hygiene items on an individual basis and in a sanitary condition always;
 - d. Separate cots or mats, with washable and moisture resistant covers, for each child when they attend for more than half a day;
 - e. Bedding that is clean and warm.
12. Office and staff facilities and equipment shall not infringe upon the space or interfere with the routine activities of the children.
13. The sleeping area for infants must always be under the supervision of staff when infants are present.
14. Cribs must have been manufactured after 1986 and must comply with the standards of the Hazardous Products Act.
15. Strollers must be equipped with a sunshade.
16. Facilities are not permitted to use playpens, jolly jumpers, or walkers for children of any age.

Medical

17. Rules and procedures will be created, enforced, and approved by the medical health officer and the Minister respecting the regular examination of children, annual reporting, and immunization.
18. The facility will be responsible for the recognition of symptoms of ill health of the children in the facility.
19. If a child shows symptoms of a communicable disease, the child will be safely removed and not be permitted to associate with other children in the facility until a qualified medical practitioner has seen the child.
20. When an accident, serious illness or communicable disease occurs, the facility will immediately secure the necessary medical assistance and notify the parents or guardians of the child.
21. Every facility will have an approved first aid kit for emergency treatments.
22. All medical supplies, drugs or medicines will be labeled with the name of the child or staff person, the date and the instructions. All medical supplies, drugs, or medicines will be kept out of the reach of children and locked in a storage area.

Hygiene and Safety

23. Safety belts will be used for infants when they are in highchairs, infant seats, and strollers.
24. Staff and volunteers are required to wash their hands before and after diapering each child and before food preparation.

25. The counter of the diapering area must be cleaned with a disinfectant after each diapering.
26. All toys for infants and toddlers must be cleaned with disinfectant when necessary or at least twice weekly and checked for broken pieces or other hazards on a daily basis.
27. Highchair trays must be cleaned with disinfectant after each use.
28. The care provider will carry out monthly fire drills with the children, ensuring they are familiar with evacuation procedures. Rules and procedures regarding evacuation of the facility will be posted.
29. All programs must comply with fire, health, insurance, and transportation regulations.
30. Adequate liability insurance must be carried to cover the facility.
31. Addresses and telephone numbers for emergencies will be listed on a card and posted in a conspicuous place in the facility, including:
 - a. Staff members;
 - b. Substitute staff members;
 - c. Taxi services;
 - d. Ambulance, hospital, fire department, and police (9-1-1).
32. Every vehicle operated by or for a facility for the purpose of transporting children will meet the requirements of the Motor Vehicle Act. Any individuals transporting children for the facility will be licensed under the Motor Vehicle Act.
33. Every child being transported will be delivered to a staff member of the facility, to the parent or guardian of the child, or to the person appointed by the parent or guardian.
34. The safety of the children in transit where the facility is providing transportation for the children is the responsibility of the facility.
35. All children being transported in vehicles must be seated in child restraint systems appropriate for their height and weight and certified by Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards until they reach the height and weight required to safely use a seat belt.

Registration of Children

36. Every facility will keep files for each child admitted, including:
 - Name of the parents or guardians;
 - Name of the child;
 - Home address(es) of the parents, guardians, and children;
 - Child's date of birth;
 - Name and address of the child's physician;
 - Person to notify in case of an emergency;
 - Admission date of the child;
 - Daily attendance record of the child;
 - Discharge date for the child.
 - Other documentation to be included in the record for each child
 - Applications for admission;
 - Medical reports;
 - Financial reports;
 - Progress reports;
 - Consent forms from parents or guardians for emergencies;
 - Consent forms from parents or guardians for field trips;

All documentation must be kept for two years following the date the child leaves the facility.

Number and Ages of Children

Our agency serves children 0 months-12 years. Each care provider serves different ages and groups of children depending on the Family Home Child Care and their setups.

By law, each approved Family Home Child Care provider is permitted to care for a maximum of 7 children at a time, including their own children, and must not have any other children in their care, subject to the following restrictions:

- (a) no more than 2 of the 7 children may be infants (0-17 months inclusive);
- (b) no more than 3 of the 7 children may be toddlers or younger than toddlers (0-35 months inclusive).

If a care provider is only looking after school aged children, they may care for a maximum of 9 school age children at a time, including their own children, and must not have any other children in their care.

If a care provider is looking after only infants, then the care provider may care for a maximum of 3 infants at a time, including their own infants, and must not have any other children in their care.

Programs and Services

- **Learning Environment**

The learning environment for Family Home Child Care includes a number of developmental activities. During free play, children are able to choose their own toys, activities and interactions. The care provider will take cues from the child and engage with play that encourages imagination and creativity.

- **Supporting the development of children**

The environment should be your second teacher. If you have a variety of equipment that promotes cognitive, physical, language, and social skills with un-limited time to explore, it will help children succeed. Examples are:

- * Projects are not time sensitive
- * Open- ended crafts, should be process not product
- * Un-limited time to play
- * Loose parts

The consultant will be hired on the basis of their ability to assist care providers with ideas for activities and unstructured play. The need for music, art, hands-on science experiments, interactive play, and literacy will be emphasized to the care providers.

Services

Family Matters holds playgroups, programs and services weekly throughout the county, and Family Home Child Care are encouraged and welcome at all Family Matters events. To sign up for a monthly newsletter email Miss Kourtney; kourtney@family-matters.ca.

In addition, the consultant will hold a monthly playgroup at the Family Matters, Lawrencetown location.

Parent Involvement

Parents are to have access to all regulated information on their children and the Family Home Child Care on a daily basis. The consultant will ensure that a parent advisory committee is established to allow parents to be involved with the Family Home Child Care Agency. Parents are also encouraged to attend agency events, including training, playgroups, and field trips.

Administrative Supports

The agency will have current criminal record checks and child abuse registry checks on file for all care providers and any eligible person who is living in the family home who will have direct contact with and/or have access to records of children.

The agency will provide a template for forms, including:

- Incident reports;
- Registration forms;
- Parent contracts
- Daily records;
- Medical reports;
- Application for admission;
- Progress reports;
- Consent forms for emergencies;
- Consent forms for field trips;

The agency will help, as required, with the development of policy and procedures for the Family Home Child Care.

Fee Structure

Fee payments:

Care providers set their own daily/monthly fees. It is the care provider's responsibility to let parents/guardians know when fees are due and how they are payable.

Late Payments:

Care Providers will set their own fee for late payment, depending on how many times a parent/guardian is late, they can request the withdrawal of child(ren).

Early Drop Off and/or Late Pick-Up Fee:

The daily/monthly fees are based on child care being provided during your hours of operation. Earlier or later day childcare can be agreed upon between the care provider and the parent, with additional fees being charged as negotiated.

Fees During Vacations:

Care providers are allowed a minimum of TWO weeks vacation a year. It is your responsibility to give parents/guardians time to find alternate care and discuss fees.

Hours of Operation

The agency provides services to care providers Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:00PM. In the case of an emergency please refer to the Accident Report section of this handbook found on page 18.

Family Home Child Care providers adapt their own hours of operations and may vary from home to home. Family Home Child Care providers are closed on all government holidays, unless otherwise stated.

Storm Day Policy

The agency does close for winter storms and power outages. Care providers can create their own Family Home Child Care storm day and power outage policy. If a parent decides to keep a child at home, they are asked to call the care provider to inform them of their child's absence. Family Home Child Care will close if the Department of Highway is reporting to stay off the roads due to severe/dangerous weather conditions.

Childcare fees are payable when the agency/care provider is closed due to storms.

Holidays

If any day designated a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, then the holiday will be observed on the Monday immediately following. The family home child care will be closed for the following holidays: (unless otherwise stated)

- New Years Day
- Heritage Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Natal Day
- Labour Day
- Truth and Reconciliation Day
- Thanksgiving day
- Remembrance Day
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

Care Provider Absence

Care providers are entitled to take days off for appointments and illnesses. Care providers are required to give as much notice as possible when they will be absent and are encouraged to arrange alternate care arrangements or have a substitute available.

However, it is recommended that parents arrange back up childcare for the event that a care provider is unable to secure alternate arrangements.

Child Attendance

Child's First Day:

The first day that a child attends the family home day care is a very important day for the child. Children who are introduced to a childcare setting with the help of their parent/s are better able to cope with their new situation. The introduction helps to open lines of communication between parent/s and care provider, so that special information about the child can be shared. In addition, the parent and the child become familiar with the environment, care provider, the routine, and the activities at the Family Home Child Care.

We suggest the following ideas for a child's introduction to the Family Home Child Care:

- The parent and child visit the Family Home Child Care together prior to the first day.
- If taking the time off is not possible for the parent, we suggest bringing the child in early, initially the first few mornings and spending that time together in the Family Home Child Care.

If this is the child's first childcare experience, the family may need some extra support during this transition. The care provider will assist the family through the transition. The agency consultant is also another support member.

Withdrawal:

We hope that the child/ren will be part of the Family Matters Home Child Care Agency for many years, however we understand that children will leave from time to time. As a childcare provider you may want to have your own withdrawal policy in place, if not then parents are required to give you a minimum of two weeks written notice.

Arrivals and Departures:

Arrival

- A parent or guardian must bring the child into the home. His/her outerwear must be removed in the designated area.
- The child **must** be escorted into the home and greeted by the care provider. The care provider's responsibility for the child does not begin until the child/ren is in their care. **Children are not to be left at the door or unsupervised area.**
- The person arriving with the child must sign the attendance sheet, noting the date and time of arrival. This allows the care provider to see who is on the premises during fire drills and emergencies, and to keep attendance records. For after school programs, the care provider will be responsible for signing them in, parents will sign them out.

- For infants and toddlers, on arrival the care provider must be apprised of any special circumstances that may affect the child's behaviour or well-being that day. These are noted in the daily records; which parents are entitled to view.
- The care provider must be notified if the child will not be attending or will be late. If the child is going to be late, they must arrive at the Family Home Child Care by 11 am. Children are not permitted to be dropped off during the lunch/rest period unless otherwise arranged by the care provider.

Departure

- Children must be picked up by the closing time designated by the care provider.
- If, due to unforeseen circumstances, a parent will be late picking up a child, he/she must call the care provider in advance and late fees are applicable.
- Parents of infants and toddlers should be encouraged to review the daily activities log to see if any unusual occurrences impacted their children during the day.
- Children must be picked up by an authorized parent or guardian. In the event that a parent is unable to pick up the child, they must notify the care provider in advance with who will be picking up their child and an approximate pick-up time, that person will need to show ID.
- Agency staff members and the care provider will only release a child to those persons listed on the authorization form at the time of enrolment. ***Changes to authorization lists must be kept up to date.***

If an authorized individual wants someone not listed on the authorization form to pick up a child, they must inform the care provider **in writing**. If this is not possible, the care provider must be able to contact that individual for authorization, or the child will not be released. ID must be presented upon pick up.

Parental Expectations

Our agency's programs are designed to encourage and facilitate active learning and development through exploration and play. To ensure that a child gets the most out of the program and is safe, comfortable and happy throughout the day, we have developed the following guidelines:

- Every child will need the following personal items, which should be kept at the family child care home (and replaced with clean items when required):
 - a small blanket
 - pillow and sheet for rest period
 - a toothbrush (discuss with provider)
 - indoor AND outdoor shoes
 - a complete change of clothing (underwear, socks, pants, shirt, etc. - just in case!). ***If the child is potty training parents are asked to send several changes of clothing, as accidents may occur during this training process.***

- Children’s possessions will be stored in a storage bin/locker marked with his/her name. The bin/locker will also contain notices, artwork, soiled clothing, etc. Parents are asked to check it daily so that they can ensure that they collect any items which need to be taken home, and to ensure that spare clothing and bedding are clean and in good condition.
- If a child is being toilet-trained, parents are responsible for providing any diapers needed, and any special toileting supplies that that child needs (the care provider will keep parents updated on the child’s diaper needs).
- A child may bring a safe toy for rest period, such as a plush, stuffed toy, a doll, or a favourite nap time blanket.
- Children should wear comfortable clothing so that they can participate in all aspects of the program. Parents are asked to send their child in the appropriate outdoor clothing for the day. Care providers try to take the children outside at least once a day, at the playground, for walks, or field trips in all kinds of weather. Children play indoors when the temperature falls below -25C (-13F) with or without a wind chill factor, or when the wind chill factor is -28C (15F) OR lower regardless of the temperature. (Canadian Paediatric Society). When the UV index from Environment Canada is high (6-7) or very high (8-10): (a) children have hats with brims and lightweight clothing; (b) children apply (with support from an adult as needed) adequate sunblock with a SPF of at least 30 on all exposed skin before going outside, following the application instructions set out by the manufacturer; and (c) outdoor activities are planned for the early morning and late afternoon, when possible, especially when UV conditions are very high. There should always be access to shade in the outdoor play space.

Following are lists of seasonal outerwear that each child will require:

Everyday	Summer	Winter	Fall/Spring
- Change of clothing -Diapers(toddlers) - Wipes - Other items for diaper changing (if needed) - Inside sneakers or rubber bottom slippers - Jacket -Blanket - Teddy or comfort toy if needed	- Sun hat - Summer Jacket - Waterproof rain boots - Sneakers - Light sweater - Shorts - Pants	- Warm hat - Snowsuit - Warm boots - 2 pairs of mittens - Sweater - snow/ pants	- Sun Hat - Warm Hat - Jacket - Waterproof rain boots - Mittens - Sneakers - The agency provides muddy buddies.

All items of clothing should be clearly labelled with the child’s name or initials.

Parental Involvement and Communication

The agency is extremely interested in having parents involved in our agency and Family Home Child Cares. Communication and feedback from parents are critical to our success.

For the most part the agency will communicate with parents through the care provider. When required, the agency will communicate with parents directly by regular mail or email, where possible.

Parent Bulletin Board

As a care provider, you are required to post a parent bulletin board that is in a location that is easy for the parents to see; upon which specific information must be posted. This board needs to contain program information that may be of interest to parents, notices regarding upcoming meetings and events; as well as parenting and community information that may interest parents. Parents are encouraged to check the board on a regular basis.

The regulations state that the parent bulletin board must include the following information:

- An approval sticker from the Department of Community Services (will be provided to you by the Family Home Day Care Consultant)
- A copy of annual inspection (will be provided to you by the Family Home Child Care Consultant)
- A notice indicating that the following information is available for viewing by the parents:
 - The Day Care Act, the Day Care Regulations, and the Family Home Child Care Program Regulations (see also link at: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/elcc.htm>)
 - A copy of the agency's behaviour guidance policy (will be provided to you by the Family Home Child Care Consultant)
 - The minutes of the last parent advisory committee meeting (will be provided to you by the Family Home Child Care Consultant)
 - Notice of the next parent advisory committee meeting (at least two weeks before the meeting date; will be provided to you by the Family Home Child Care Consultant)
 - Rules and procedures regarding evacuation procedures for fire and any other emergencies (must be developed by you as soon as you set up your Family Home Child Care)
- A card listing addresses and telephone numbers of staff members, substitute staff, taxi, ambulance, hospital, fire department, police and any other emergency information
- A copy of any critical issue's notification sent to parents (see next subsection)

Critical Issues Notifications

When critical issues arise, which could impact the way the Family Home Child Care is run or managed, the agency must provide notice in writing to parents. In particular, the agency must notify the parents if any of the following occur:

- (a) The approval of a care provider or a Family Home Child Care is or will be revoked;
- (b) A Family Home Child Care or agency is closed or sold;
- (c) Conditions are imposed upon the agency's license or any written information about the agency's license or program has been given to the agency by the Director;

(d) The police or an agency established under the *Children and Family Services Act* are investigating a matter involving a care provider or other person associated with the Family Home Child Care, unless the police or the agency established under the *Children and Family Services Act* directs otherwise. Notice of a closure or sale under (b) above must be given at least 2 weeks before the date of the closure or sale.

Any notices under this section must be in writing. These notifications will be sent by registered mail to the last known address of a person who is required to be notified and posted in a conspicuous location in the family day care home.

Parent Advisory Committee

Another method for communicating with parents is the parent advisory committee. Each agency must establish a parent advisory committee to provide a forum for parents to have input into and receive notice of any matters of interest or concern to the parents. The parent advisory committee is also a body that will be used by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to communicate through the agency with the parents, if there are issues with the agency's license. This communication will come from the Director of Early Childhood Development Services.

Below are the relevant parts of the regulations:

Membership of parent advisory committee

20 (1) An agency's parent advisory committee must be comprised of at least 4 members, as follows:

- a) at least 3 parents of children currently enrolled in the agency's family home day care program;
- b) at least 1 care provider;
- c) 1 non voting representative of the agency, who must attend each meeting of the committee.

Health Policies

At our Family Home Child Care, we are concerned about the health and safety of all children and care providers. Care providers are strict about enforcing health regulations. Infections can spread rapidly within a Family Home Child Care, so universal precautionary measures are always taken.

A child is asked to remain at home if they display symptoms such as:

- Temperature 99.5F or 37.5C attached with other symptoms (as may be teething if only temp)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea- very loose bowel movements
- Unexplained rash
- Coughing- persistent cough over the period of one week or more, breathing difficulty
- Scabies, Impetigo, and Pink Eye will NOT be accepted into child care.

Children who have any of these communicable diseases will be sent home and may return 24 hours after the last symptom.

If a child becomes sick at the child care, the parent/guardian will be called IMMEDIATELY to take the child home. If the child becomes very ill, the doctor on call at the nearest health centre will be called. Before the child returns to the family home a note from the doctor **may** be required stating that the child is healthy, not contagious, and may return to the daycare. Child may be isolated (supervised) until the parent arrives.

A child should be home when he/she is ill. Weather permitting the children will be going outside at least once daily. If a child is well enough to be at a family home, he/she is well enough to play outside. If a child is absent due to illness, please notify the Family Home Provider before 8:30am and **report** the child's symptoms. This will increase awareness to look for similar symptoms in other children and track communicable disease at the centre.

If a child may have been exposed to contagious conditions at the centre, parent(s) / guardian(s) will be notified, without revealing names.

Every precaution will be taken by staff to protect children from food or materials that may cause reactions. Please inform staff of any allergies. It is crucial to keep staff current on any changes in medical information regarding allergies and treatments.

Care providers are only permitted to give medication to a child when authorized by a doctor or parent. Care providers will be observant every morning of each child noting whether the child appears healthy, flushed, persistent cough, runny nose, red eyes, etc.

Any accident which results in first-aid treatment by staff or further treatment will be recorded by staff in an accident report form. Reports will be viewed, discussed and signed by a staff member, parent, and consultant.

We have a 24-hour symptom free policy which means if a child is showing symptoms of being sick 24 hours before going to the family home they are not permitted to come (i.e. throwing up or diarrhea the night before they were supposed to be attending the family home).

Nit Free Policy: In Accordance with new health regulations that states:

Children with head lice should be treated and should attend school or childcare as usual. "No-nit" policies, which keep children with head lice away from childcare, aren't effective. Here's why:

*Head lice are common among young children

*Head lice don't spread disease

*Cases of head lice are often misdiagnosed. To confirm a case of head lice, you need to find live lice

*Children may have head lice for several weeks with no symptoms Children with head lice should be treated and should avoid head-to-head contact with other children until the lice

are gone. Childcare programs should let families know when there is a case of head lice and provide information about diagnosis and treatment.

Medication Policy

The care providers are only permitted to give medication authorized by a doctor or parent.

All medication must be in the **original** container, with a readable label.

Parents will be asked to complete an authorization form for each new medication (or provide a written letter of consent), stating the child's name, date, nature of and reason for the drug, complete instructions on administration and dosage, and any special instructions.

Over the counter medication will not be given by the care provider unless written instructions are received from the parent or the child's doctor. These instructions are to include the child's name, date, nature of and reason for the drug, complete instructions on administration and dosage, any special instructions, and the parent's or doctor's signature. The care provider may have a medication form for the parent(s).

Parents are asked to send measuring utensils along with the child's medication.

All medications are to be given directly to the care provider, and for safety reasons must not be left with child's spare clothing and bedding in the cubby area.

It is recommended that a child who has been prescribed an antibiotic take it for 24 hours before returning to the family home day care.

Certain medical procedures can only be done with special training. If a child has special medical needs, these cases will be covered by the child's Individual Care Plan.

HIV and AIDS Policies:

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), the virus that leads to AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), is not transmitted through everyday contact. No confirmed cases of transmission through casual contact or biting have been reported. HIV is transmitted from one person to another by sperm, vaginal secretions, breast milk, blood, and from mother to child during pregnancy.

HIV is considered a disability, and by law discrimination based on disability is illegal. Parents have no obligation to tell the agency or the care provider if they are aware that their child is HIV-positive. If such information is disclosed to a member of the agency staff or care provider, s/he has an ethical obligation to keep the information confidential.

Universal Health Precautions adapted by Family Home Child Care Include

Those who work at our agency or are associated with the agency as care providers, help control the spread of infections by practicing proper hygiene and universal precautions. Children, care providers, agency staff, and volunteers:

- Wash their hands thoroughly with warm water and soap before meals, after toileting before and after administering first aid, and throughout the day as required.
- Dishes, eating surfaces and diapering areas are sanitized after each use
- Toys are checked for breakage daily and sanitized at least twice each week.
- Floors are cleaned daily, as required throughout the day.
- The laundry, kitchen and bathrooms are maintained in a clean and organized manner.
- Hands are washed immediately after exposure to blood, and all other bodily secretions
- All cuts are covered with a sterile bandage until healed
- Disposable latex gloves are worn by staff treating open cuts
- Blood-soiled surfaces are disinfected with bleach, which kills HIV
- Laundry stained with blood and other bodily secretions is washed separately in hot, soapy water
- Materials stained with blood and other bodily secretions are placed in sealed garbage bags and discarded in a lined, covered plastic container.

Emergency Preparation:

- The agency inspects all of the Family Child Care Homes on an annual basis to ensure that the premises are safe.
- The agency and each Family Child Care Home have an emergency evacuation plan and practice fire safety procedures and carry out monthly fire drills, the time, date, and number of children participating are recorded.
- All agency staff and care providers have been trained in First Aid and infant CPR and are required to keep their training up to date.
- A parent informs the Family Home Child Care of any changes to his/her address, place of work, telephone numbers, and authorization list, and injuries that the child receives outside the program.

Accident Reports

Care Providers are required to complete an accident report form for any accident which requires first-aid treatment by Care Provider. It will be signed by the staff member who administered treatment and the parent, then placed in the child's file. Parent(s) are to be informed of the injury at an appropriate time (depending on the extent of the injury), maintaining confidentiality of any concerned parties.

Should a serious incident occur, the care provider will follow this procedure:

- Immediately tend to the injured or seriously ill child, using First Aid and / or CPR;
- Call 9-1-1 to request emergency care for the child;
- Call the adult on the authorized list to attend the child at the emergency room;
- If possible, go with the child to the emergency room until the parents / guardians arrive;
- Fill out an incident report form;
- Advise the Agency of the incident.

Emergency Evacuation

If we have to evacuate the Family Child Care Home due to fire or other emergency and the home is not fit for immediate habitation, the parents or an authorized person will be contacted immediately and expected to pick up his/her child **immediately** at the designated emergency location.

Nutritional Information

Care providers are required to follow each of the following: Standards for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings; Guidelines for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings; and Food and Beverage Criteria in Regulated Child Care Settings. In accordance with these regulations, the following will be maintained:

- All regulations respecting the safety, preparation and serving of food as approved by the Minister shall be followed.
- Formula brought into the facility must be labelled as to contents, feeding instructions, name of the child, dated and placed in a refrigerator at 4.4 degrees Celsius or lower and must be used within 24 hours.
- All open foods will always be dated and kept refrigerated except during feedings and will not be kept or used beyond the expiry date.
- An adult staff member will hold infants under 6 months of age during feedings. Bottle propping and feeding infants in cribs is not permitted.

The care provider's menus are developed with the assistance of the Canada Food Guide for Children. Our care providers offer balanced and varied menus that utilize nutritious foods and health and allergy requirements. The care provider may plan meals in advance and may post menus for the interest of parents. Monthly posting is not required, daily menu posting is required.

Care providers offer a nutritious morning and afternoon snack and for children who stay over lunch hour, a full lunch is provided which includes 1/3 of the daily nutrient requirement for the children. If a child requires supplements or special foods due to a medical condition, a care provider will do what he/she is able to, depending on the need,

but the parent may be responsible for supplying the supplements or special foods. The care provider eats with the children to help model appropriate eating behaviours and positive food habits. The care provider does not force children to eat, or withhold favourite foods for inappropriate behaviours, but will encourage children through positive modeling and reinforcement to try new or other foods.

Rest Period

Infants sleep according to their own individual schedule. For children under school age, a rest period is a part of the day's schedule. During the rest period, all children under school age are required to rest on their mats for one half hour. This includes children who do not sleep. After this half an hour, any children that are not sleeping may engage in quiet activities until the rest of the children wake up.

Policy on Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

As per the protocols outlined by the Department of Community Services for the prevention and reporting of child abuse, the agency staff and the care provider is legally required to report cases of suspected child abuse. If a Care Provider has an allegation of Abuse, it is the job of the Consultant to Notify the Department. A form will be filled out and the Care Providers Child Care will shut down until the Investigation is over.

Behaviour Guidance Policy

The agency has a written behaviour guidance policy with respect to permitted and prohibited behaviour guidance practices. The policy applies to all agency staff, volunteers and care providers. Staff, volunteers and care providers are always required to follow the guidelines. A copy of the behaviour guidance policy is posted on the parent bulletin board in the Family Child Care Home and is also posted at the agency facilities. A copy may be obtained from the agency and is to be reviewed and signed on a yearly basis. The written behaviour guidance policy must be reviewed with the parents of each child when they are first enrolled in the family home day care program. A copy of the agency's policy is included in the back of this handbook.

Staff will design an environment that will encourage positive attitudes and behaviours in children. They will provide age appropriate equipment that will support active, creative play and problem solving.

Staff will implement the following prevention strategies that will help to minimize conflict situations:

- Establish clear, consistent, simple limits and provide explanations for limits
- State limits in a positive manner and periodically remind children

- Provide opportunities for children to make choices throughout the day
- Focus on the behaviour, not the child
- Model and encourage appropriate behaviour
- Interact with the children

When intervention strategies are necessary in dealing with undesirable behaviours, the goal of the staff intervention is to provide guidance and support while helping the children to solve the problem on their own. The following intervention strategies are to be implemented:

- Get physically close to the child
- Get down on the child's level and establish eye contact with the child and use a calm voice
- Remind and redirect the child
- Acknowledge the child's feelings
- Use a schedule/routine with children

Confidentiality Policy

Family Matters Family Home Child Care Agency follows the confidentiality policy of Family Matters: The Annapolis County Family Resource Centre. This policy applies to all employees, board members, care providers and volunteers. Any employee, board member, care provider, or volunteer found to be misusing, repeating, or otherwise conveying information to anyone except those who require the information on a need to know basis to carry out their responsibilities, shall be considered to have committed a serious breach of employment duties and responsibilities which may be considered just and reasonable cause for dismissal.

All information provided to the agency and care providers for registration and health purposes is confidential within the agency and Family Home Child Care setting. The only persons permitted to review the children's charts will be parent/guardians, agency staff, care providers and a representative of the Minister of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Information will not be given out by the agency or care providers without written consent from parents/guardians. Family Matters Family Home Child Care Agency and its care providers will not verify a child's enrollment or discuss their behavior to anyone by telephone or in person, without parent/guardian consent.

Breastfeeding Policy

Approved by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

Under the Human Rights Act women are protected from discrimination and harassment because of sex, which includes pregnancy, and family status, which means being in a family-child relationship. In Nova Scotia it is illegal to discriminate because a woman is or was pregnant, because she may become pregnant or because she has had a baby. This includes a woman's right to breast-feed her child.

(1) *The Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination in the area of “the provision of or access to services and facilities”. Women have the right to breast-feed a child in public areas, including restaurants, retail stores and shopping centres, theatres and so forth. Women should not be prevented from nursing a child in a public area, nor asked to move to another area that is more “discreet”.*

(2) *The Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination in the area of employment against women who are breast-feeding. Employers have a duty to accommodate employees who are breastfeeding. This duty is limited only if the accommodation would create an undue hardship. Accommodation could include allowing the employee to have the baby brought into the workplace by a caregiver for feeding, and arranging a quiet place to breast-feed. This onus is on the employer to show an undue hardship if a request for accommodation related to breastfeeding is refused.*

(3) *The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission will accept complaints of discrimination based on sex and/or family status related to breastfeeding, and will deal with them in accordance with the above policies.*