

Parent Handbook



2025.V1

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to our Family Home Child Care Agency. This handbook has been designed to provide you with information about our program and policies. Please read it and keep it for future reference. Having an open, two-way communication is important to our success in caring for and educating your child. If you have any questions, concerns, ideas, or comments regarding our program, the staff of the agency, or the care provider who is looking after your children, please feel free to speak to us or to put your thoughts in writing.

We also encourage you to take the opportunity to visit our agency office. The agency office is housed within Family Matters, The Annapolis County Family Resource Center.

There are many resources available for loan at our agency office; please visit Family Matters Facebook page for a list of Family Matters programs and services.

You will also find posted at our agency:

- License for the agency
- Behaviour Guidance Policy
- Agency parent committee members
- List of community partners

Agency Information

Agency Name: Family Matters Family Home Child Care Agency

Agency Owner: Family Matters: The Annapolis County Family Resource Center

Agency and Resource Center Address: 10 Middle Road, Lawrencetown, Nova Scotia, B0S 1M0

Facebook: ACFRCfamilymatters

Website: www.family-matters.ca

Agency Phone: (902) 584-2210

Toll free: 1-800-399-7119

Agency Executive Directors: Denise Naugler denise.familymatters2018@gmail.com

Billie Jo Weir billiejofamilymatters@gmail.com

Agency Consultant Annapolis County: Colleen Jodoin

Consultant Phone: 902-824-4249

Email: fhdcfamilymatters@gmail.com

Agency Consultant Lunenburg County: Katharine Wile

Lunenburg County Consultant Home Office Located in Bridgewater

Consultant Phone: 902-521-2757

Email: fhccfmlunco@gmail.com

Facebook: familymatterslunco

Areas Served

Our agency currently serves Annapolis and Lunenburg Counties.

We also support surrounding areas (with consultation with agencies in nearby counties we will support Family Home Child Care in Digby and Kings County)

Hours of Operation

The agency provides services to care providers and families Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. The Agency is closed on Holidays.

Family home child care providers adopt their own hours of operations and will vary from home to home. Family home child care providers are closed on all government holidays, unless otherwise started by your child's individual care provider.

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 children's needs first. This is done primarily by ensuring the environment is a safe, nurturing, family-like environment that allows each child to be supported in their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development.

Family Matters Philosophy

Family Matters believes that children learn through play and exploration of 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.

Inclusion Policy

Family Matters, Family Home Child Care Agency believes that Every child should have opportunities to grow, learn, and develop a sense of belonging and safety within their families, communities, and society. The strengths and needs of children and families with diverse values, beliefs, abilities, and practices must be addressed, including tailoring the delivery of programs and services to meet social, cultural, jurisdictional, and linguistic considerations.

Agency Staff and Care Providers are encouraged to provide services to the children and their families that support strengths and meet the needs of the children in care. Agency Staff and Care Providers are encouraged to attend workshops and professional development on a regular basis to help expand their educational toolbox to ensure that all children are included and supported.

Grievance Policy

The agency and care providers welcome comments and/or suggestions to improve the quality of care for your child. When areas of concern arise concerning the Family Home or child, the problem should be brought to the attention of the agency and care provider who will be more than willing to hear your comments and suggestions or grievances and will do their best to work through it.

This process will be done by contacting:

- 1) The Care Provider
- 2) The Agency
 - A. Consultant
 - B. Director
- 3) The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Confidentiality Policy

Family Matters Family Home Child Care Agency follows the confidentiality policy of Family Matters: The Annapolis County Family Resource Center. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, board members and care providers. Any employee, volunteer, board member or care provider 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 setting. The only persons permitted to review the children's charts will be family/guardians, agency staff, care providers and a representative of the Minister of the Department of Community Services.

Information will not be given out by the agency or care providers without written consent from the child's family. 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 family consent.

To ensure that information is kept confidential, we strongly suggest that if you have any major concerns regarding your child to make an appointment with the agency's directors, consultant or your child's care providers after the rest of the children have left.

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 and their setups.

By law, each approved family home 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.

Staffing

All agency staff and care providers are required by the minister to have the following checks completed before having any contact with children;

- Criminal records including a Vulnerable Sector search
- Child Abuse Registry
- First aid with CPR C
- Care providers must provide the agency with character references that are checked prior to approval

Care Provider

The Care Provider is approved under the license of the agency.

Care provider's can establish their own business name, contracts, and rates with the guidance and support of the consultant.

Care providers that are supported through a licensed agency are able to offer (and be offered):

- *Equipment, toys, resource books, story books, etc are available to borrow for free*
- *Paid professional development*
- *Play groups*
- *Planned monthly visits by your consultant in your home for children's activities and to offer support for the care provider*
- *Ability to offer fee reductions for all families and Government Subsidy for those who qualify.*
- *And much more*

Matching Requirements

The consultant will have a list of family homes registered with the agency. Information on these centers will include:

- Age range of children accepted
- Location
- Days and times open
- Philosophy and mission of the day care
- Cost of child care

Fee Structure

Fee payments:

Care providers set their own daily/monthly fees. It is the care provider's responsibility to let families 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 family is late, they may ask for you to withdraw your child(ren).

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

Our care providers strive to provide flexible child care services. The daily/monthly fees are based on child care being provided during individual providers hours of operation. If you require child care services earlier or later in the day, please speak to your care provider. An additional fee will be charged for any additional hours of service as negotiated by the care provider and the families.

Fees During Vacations:

Care providers are allowed a minimum of two weeks vacation a year, unless stated differently from your care provider. It is the care provider's responsibility to give families time to find alternate care and discuss fees.

Fee Reduction

As part of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, fee reductions will be applied directly to childcare bills for centers and agencies that signed a funding agreement with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) . The government goal is for all families to pay \$10 a day on average for each child in care by 2026.

Every child is eligible for fee reduction.

Subsidy

Subsidies are paid directly to the center or agency of your choice, on your behalf.

If you choose to transfer your child to another childcare center or family home day care agency, within the province, your subsidy will go with you. Eligibility is based on your family's **(1) income and finances**.

You must be eligible in both areas to qualify.

Income

- Line 236 of your CRA Income Tax Notice of Assessment is used to calculate income.
- If you do not have a recent Notice of Assessment, current pay stubs may be used. Gross income minus some deductions will be considered income.
- If you have additional sources of income, they must also be reported and will be considered in the calculations.

2. Finances

- To be eligible for the program, you may not have more than \$50,000 in savings or liquid assets

Subsidy Rates

- Approved daily Subsidy rates are calculated on a sliding scale and will vary depending on the total family income and number of dependents within the family.
- If the daily government rate is calculated at less than \$1.00 per day, applicants will not be eligible for Subsidy.
- Eligibility for child care subsidy will be reviewed annually or more often, if determined by your Caseworker.
- If you are receiving a subsidy, you are required to notify your Caseworker of any changes in your circumstances which may affect your eligibility, as those changes happen.
- If you fail to notify your Caseworker, you may lose your subsidy and/or be required to repay the subsidy you've already received.

Your Responsibilities

1. You are required to find a suitable childcare center or family home day care agency, and to notify your Caseworker of the start and end dates of care.
2. If your child begins care before confirmation of eligibility of subsidy, you are responsible for paying full childcare costs.
3. If you transfer your child to another care facility or agency, or terminate care, you are responsible for notifying your Caseworker.

What You Will Need

1. A signed and completed Child Care Subsidy Application Form.
2. A copy of your most recent CRA Notice of Assessment.
3. A copy of a current pay stub.
4. Copies of any additional documents that are relevant to your family situation (for example, financial statements, proof of custody or citizenship).

What to Expect

- Assessments can take up to 6 weeks to complete.
- Applications are assessed by a Child Care Subsidy Caseworker. Your Caseworker may call you with additional questions and will notify you of eligibility or ineligibility.
- Incomplete applications or applications submitted without required documents will not be processed.

For more information, or to apply for Child Care Subsidy, please visit:

<https://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/families/application.shtml>

or Phone Intake Toll free: 1-844-804-2084

Examples:

<u>Infant</u>		<u>After School</u>	
Care Provider Fee	\$45.00	Care Provider Fee	\$15.00
Fee Reduction	\$17.00	Fee Reduction	\$4.00
<u>Subsidy</u>	<u>\$23.00</u>	<u>Subsidy</u>	<u>\$3.00</u>
Due from Parent	\$5.00	Due from Parent	\$8.00

Storm Day Policy

The agency does close for winter storms. We determine closures based on school closures for each area. Closures are announced on local radio stations, as well as on the school websites. Child care fees are still in place when service is available. Family Home Child Care may be open during these days. It is advised that you call your Care Provider to ensure they are operating. If you decide to keep your child at home, please call your Care Provider and leave a message. Family Homes will close if the Department of Highways recommends motorists stay off the roads due to severe/dangerous weather conditions and/or power outages.

Child care fees are payable when the Agency/Care Provider is closed due to storms.

Holidays

If any holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, then the holiday will be observed on the Monday immediately following. These holidays are paid. The family home child care will be closed for the following holidays: (unless otherwise stated by your child's care provider)

- Christmas Day
- New Years Day
- Canada Day
- Good Friday
- Thanksgiving
- Remembrance Day
- Boxing Day
- Victoria Day
- Labor Day
- Heritage Day
- Day of Truth and Reconciliation

Child Attendance

Your Child's First Day:

The first day that a child attends the family home child care is an especially important day for your child. Children who are introduced to a child care setting with the help of their family are better able to cope with their new situation. The introduction helps to open lines of communication between family/s and care providers, so that special information about the child can be shared. In addition, you and your 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 your child's introduction to our family home day care:

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

If this is your child's first child care experience, you and your child may need some extra support during this transition. The care provider will assist you and your child through the transition, the Agency Consultant is also another support member. Please feel free to share your concerns and feelings with your provider or consultant.

Withdrawal:

We hope that your child/ren will be part of our family for many years, however we understand that children will leave our care from time to time. If you plan to withdraw your child from the Family Child Care Home, the family needs to comply with the withdrawal policy your Care Provider has. If your Care Provider has no policy with the withdrawal information, you are asked to provide a written two-week notice.

Arrivals and Departures:

Arrival

You must bring your child into the home. Their outerwear must be removed in the designated area. Your child **must** be escorted into the home and greeted by a care provider. Our responsibility for your child does not begin until they are in the care of a care provider.

***Children are not to be left at the door or unsupervised area.**

The provider records the arrival and departure times of your child. This allows us to see who is on the premises during fire drills and emergencies, and to keep accurate attendance records.

For after school programs, the Care Provider will record these times upon the child's arrival (i.e. morning, lunch time, and after school).

For infants and toddlers, on arrival please advise the Care Provider of any special circumstances that may affect your child's behavior or well-being that day.

Please notify the Care Provider if your child will not be attending or will be late (please give an approximate time of arrival). If your child is going to be late, they must arrive at the family home by 11am. Children are not permitted to be dropped off during the lunch/rest period unless otherwise arranged by you and your child's Care Provider.

Each Provider has their own daily schedule that meets the needs of their children.

Departure

Children must be picked up by the closing time designated by the Care Provider.

If, due to unforeseen circumstances, you will be late picking up your child, you must call the Care Provider in advance. Note that a late pick-up fee will be charged, unless previously agreed upon with the Care Provider. Families of infants and toddlers should 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 family member. In the event that you are unable to pick up your child, you must notify the Care Provider in advance regarding who will be coming for your child, and an approximate pick-up time, that person needs to show ID. They must also be listed on the alternate pick-up list on your child's enrolment form, unless previously agreed upon with the Care Provider.

Agency staff members and the Care Provider will only release your child to those persons listed on the authorization form at the time of enrolment. ***Please keep us updated with any changes to this authorization list.*** If you want someone not listed on the authorization form to pick up your child, you must inform us **in writing**. If this is not possible, we must be able to contact you

for authorization, or we will not release the child to the person. ID must be presented upon pick up. They must also have an appropriate child safety seat to transport the child/ren.

Check It Out!

In your child's Care Provider's home there is a bulletin board hung in a conspicuous place that must include:

- The Day Care Act and The Family Home Day Care Program Regulations
- Guidelines for Communicable Disease Control
- Parent Handbook
- Most Recent Family Committee Members and Minutes
- Copy of Agency License
- Recent Inspection Report
- Behavior Guidance Policy
- Family Communication Plan
- Current Activity Plan and Daily Routine of the Provider
- Current Menu that is Signed and Dated By The Care Provider Who Developed the Menu (This ensures that the menu complies with the Food And Beverage Criteria)
- Provider Contract with Agency
- Any Funding that is provided from the Minister

Illness of Care Provider

It is in the Care Providers best interest to find alternative child care services when possible, if no substitute is available it is the family's responsibility to find alternative care. We hope this will be done with enough notice that alternative arrangements can be made for the children.

Your Child's Needs

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

Your 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 shoes AND outdoor shoes

- a complete change of clothing or 2 (underwear, socks, pants, shirt, etc. - just in case!). ***If your child is potty training please send several changes of clothing, as accidents may occur during this training process.***
- Diapers and Wipes (if applicable)

Your child’s possessions will be stored in a storage bin/locker marked with their name. The bin/locker will also contain notices, artwork, soiled clothing, etc. Check it daily so that you can ensure that you collect any items which need to be taken home, and to ensure that spare clothing and bedding are clean and in good condition.

Your child may bring a safe toy for rest period, such as a plush, stuffed toy, a doll, or a favorite nap time blanket.

Children should wear comfortable clothing so that they can participate in all aspects of the program, including various messy play activities. Please send your child in the appropriate outdoor clothing for the day. We try to go outside at least once a day, (i.e. at the playground, for walks, or field trips), and in all kinds of weather and you are responsible for ensuring that your child/ren has the appropriate clothing to keep them both comfortable and safe. Following are lists of seasonal outerwear that your 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/splash Pants	- Sun Hat - Warm Hat - Jacket - Muddy Buddy’s provided by agency -Waterproof rain boots - Mittens - Sneakers

All items of clothing should be clearly labeled with your child’s name or initials.

While every effort is made to protect your child’s clothing and possessions from loss or damage, we cannot guarantee that this will not happen.

Health Policies

At our family home child care we are concerned about the health and safety of all children, staff and care providers. Staff and care providers are strict about enforcing health regulations.

Infections can spread rapidly within a family home, so universal precautionary measures are taken at all times.

Children are asked to remain at home if displaying symptoms such as:

- Temperature 99.5F or 37.5C attached with other symptoms;
 - Vomiting;
 - Diarrhea- very loose bowel movements (at least 2 occurrences);
 - 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 illnesses will be sent home and can only return 24 hours after the last symptom.

If a child becomes sick at the daycare, the family will be called IMMEDIATELY to pick their child up. If the Care Provider is unable to contact the family, the Care Provider will contact the alternate emergency contact as listed on the emergency contact portion of the child's medical form and that person will be required to pick up your child IMMEDIATELY. 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. Your child may be separated from the other children (under adult supervision) until family (or authorized person) arrives.

A child should be home when they are 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 they are 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 center. As per Public Health Guidelines, dayhomes are *required* to report absences due to illness when they reach 10 % of the dayhomes capacity. Providers also provide the consultant with their weekly attendance so the consultant is aware of any trends.

If a child may have been exposed to contagious conditions at the center, family(s)/guardian(s) will be notified, without revealing names. They will also be provided with any information specific to their child's exposure whenever possible (Please note: This information is meant as a guide for families and is in no way to be considered medical advice. Please call 811 or visit either your local clinic or Family Doctor with any concerns you may have.)

Allergies

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

Accidents

Any accident which results in first-aid treatment by staff or further treatment will be recorded by staff in an accident report form that is reviewed and signed by the parents. 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 family, then placed in the child's file. Family(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.

Lice

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

Children with head lice should be treated and should attend school or child care as usual.

"No-nit" policies, which keep children with head lice away from child care, 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. Child care 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 a family.

All medication must be in the **original** container, with a readable label and be handed directly to the care provider. Do not leave it in your child's bag. You will be asked to complete an authorization form for each new medication (or provide a written letter of consent), stating your 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 family or the child's doctor. These instructions are to include your child's

name, date, nature of and reason for the drug, complete instructions on administration and dosage, any special instructions, and the family's or doctor's signature. A medication form will need to be filled out.

Please send measuring utensils along with your child's medication.

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 your child has special medical needs, these cases will be covered by your 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 on the basis of disability is illegal. Families 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 precautions adapted by the family home day care include:

1. 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:
2. 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.
3. Dishes, eating surfaces and diapering areas are sanitized after each use
4. Toys are checked for breakage daily and sanitized at least twice each week.
5. Floors are cleaned daily, as required throughout the day.
6. The laundry, kitchen and bathrooms are maintained in a clean and organized manner.
7. Hands are washed immediately after exposure to blood, and all other bodily secretions
8. All cuts are covered with a sterile bandage until healed
9. Disposable latex gloves are worn by staff treating open cuts
10. Blood-soiled surfaces are disinfected with bleach, which kills HIV
11. Laundry stained with blood and other bodily secretions is washed separately in hot, soapy water
12. 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 amount 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.

Please inform the Family Home Day Care of any changes to your address, place of work, telephone numbers, and authorization list, and injuries that your child receives outside the program.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event that 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 families or an authorized person will be contacted immediately and expected to pick up your child **immediately** at the designated emergency location.

Nutrition

The Care Provider's menus are developed following the Standards for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings. Our Care Providers offer balanced and varied menus that utilize nutritious foods and health and allergy requirements.

The Care Provider must plan meals in advance and must post menus, they must also be signed and dated by the person responsible for menu development to confirm it is compliant with the Food and Beverage Criteria. Substitutions are recorded with a date and are kept on file. Care Providers offer a nutritious morning and afternoon snack. For children who stay over lunch hour, a full lunch is provided. If your child requires supplements or special foods due to a medical condition, a Care Provider will do what they are able to, depending on the need. You may be responsible for supplying the extra food or supplement. The Care Provider eats with the children to help model appropriate eating behaviors and positive food habits. The Care Provider does not force children to eat, or withhold favorite foods for inappropriate behaviors, but will encourage children through positive modeling and reinforcement to try new or other foods.

In accordance with Regulation (4.4) Staff and Care Providers allow infants to explore their food, feed themselves and respond to hunger and fullness cues.

When child care facilities purchase or receive donations of food or beverages from an outside source, such as a caterer or family, the food must be from an establishment permitted by the Department of Agriculture and comply with the Food and Beverage Nutrient Criteria. The licensee must ensure that the product includes a list of ingredients and any special food preparation, storage or serving instructions are clearly labeled.

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.

Outdoor Play

Weather permitting* full day children play outside *at least* twice daily. After school children play outside at least once.

*Extreme weather conditions may include, but are not limited to, heavy rain or thunderstorms; extreme wind conditions; sleet or hail; icy conditions; extreme cold; extreme heat and humidity; extreme UV index levels.

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. The Agency Consultant must have their Child Abuse Protocol Certification or comparable training. If a Care Provider has an allegation of Abuse and is investigated, it is the job of the Consultant to Notify the Department. A form will be filled out and the Care Providers Day Home will shut down until the Investigation is over.

Behavior Guidance Policy-See "Appendix A"

The agency has a written behavior guidance policy with respect to permitted and prohibited behaviour guidance practices. The policy applies to all agency staff, volunteers and care providers and is provided in the appendices of this manual for your information.

Staff, volunteers and care providers are required to follow the guidelines at all times.

A copy of the behaviour guidance policy is posted on the family bulletin board in the Family child care Home and is also posted at the agency facilities.

The written behaviour guidance policy must be reviewed with the families of each child when they are first enrolled in the family home day care program.

This is required to be reviewed by the agency staff with the care provider on an annual basis.

Family Involvement and Communication

The agency is extremely interested in having families involved in the Family Home Child Care program. Communication with families and receiving feedback from families are keys to our success. The agency will communicate with families through the Care Provider and when required, directly by regular mail and email, where possible. Families can be involved by attending and being a part of bi yearly Parent Committee Meetings.

Please see “Appendix B” for the Agency Communication Plan

Critical Issues Notification

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 families. In particular, the agency must notify the families if any of the following occur:

(a) The approval of a Care Provider or a Family Home Child Care they manage is or will be revoked;

(b) A family home child care or agency is closed or sold;

Notice of a closure or sale under (b) above must be given at least 2 weeks before the date of the closure or sale. This must be posted in a conspicuous location in the family home child care.

(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 day care, unless the police or the agency established under the *Children and Family Services Act* directs otherwise.

Any notices under this section must be in writing and must be sent by registered mail to the last known address of a person who is required to be notified.

Playgroups

Family Matters holds playgroups weekly throughout Annapolis county, and Family Homes will be welcome to these playgroups. Please ask your Care Provider to provide you with a Family

Matters Calendar for up to date information on what is happening at Family Matters if you are in Annapolis County.

Parent Advisory Committee

The Consultant will ensure that a family advisory committee is established and that, through this committee, families are involved with the Family Homes and are informed of what is occurring at the Family Homes daily. Families will also be encouraged to attend agency events, including training, playgroups, and field trips.

As per Regulations, each agency must establish a Family Advisory Committee (and meet two times a year) to provide a forum for families to have input into, and receive notice of, any matters of interest or concern to the families. The Family Advisory committee is also a body that will be used by the Department of Community Services to communicate through the agency with the families, if there are issues with the agency's license. This communication will come from the Director of Early Childhood Development Services. If you are interested in being a family representative of the family advisory committee, please let us know.

Family Matters Family Home Child Care Agency and Care Providers look forward to Learning and Growing with You and your Child/ren!

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.

- A. *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 centers, theaters 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".*
- B. *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.

- C. 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.*

Behaviour Guidance Policy

Statement:

Behaviour guidance is teaching and guiding children towards self-control and solving their own conflicts. Appropriate expectations are set for the development level of the children, and expectations are stated to the children in a simple and clear manner.

Scope:

Family Home Child Care Agency Staff, Care Providers and Volunteers.

Procedures:

The following guidance techniques will be used:

- Discipline statements will be expressed positively whenever possible.
- Children will be praised for behaving appropriately.
- Staff will demonstrate acceptable behaviours for the children.

Prevention:

The best method of discipline in a child care setting is preventing negative behaviours before they happen.

Methods used to prevent negative behaviours include;

- **Praising children’s positive behaviour:** For example, if you see a child has trouble walking and you catch the child walking say “way to go, you remembered your walking feet”
- **Give Children opportunities for choice:** Staff, care providers and volunteers will provide the children opportunities to make choices and to help with routines. Staff, care providers and volunteers set reasonable expectations and guide the children to discover the link between their behaviour and the end result.
- **Ignore minor incidents and allow children to problem-solve on their own:** For example: If two children are arguing over a toy, wait to see how they solve the problem on their own. As long as the children are safe, allow them the opportunity to work it out on their own, encouraging them to “use their words” and praise efforts.
- **Environmental:** The environment communicates many things to the child and can greatly influence the child’s behaviour. In considering the behaviour, staff and the care provider should examine the environmental factors and what they communicate to the child. Such factors to be considered (but not exclusive to) are: materials provided , space and layout, and the program. For example: If the child is constantly arguing over a plasma car in the room, think of ways to solve this, i.e. provide more than one plasma car or use a timer to encourage turn taking.

- **Provide limits that are clear and concise and provide periodic reminders:** The rules for Family Matters include:
 - We use walking feet and indoor voices
 - We use kind actions and words
 - We play safely
 - We sit while we eat
 - We use our hands for helping not hitting

Intervention:

In some cases children need intervention from adults to show them how to handle a situation or to keep everyone in care safe. It is important to remember to speak in a calm, controlled voice, acknowledge the children's feelings, get the children's attention and stay close to them offering appropriate physical closeness and touch.

Some methods of Invention include:

- Reminders: Children need to be reminded of which behaviours are appropriate. For example "use your walking feet" and "hands are for helping"
- Redirection: Assisting a child to replace inappropriate with appropriate behaviour demonstrates respect for the child and teaches the child the expectations of them. For example if a child is throwing toys, explain to them that there are some toys that are ok to throw like bean bags in a target and some that are not ok to throw because we could hurt our friends. Staff or care providers who are observing consistent inappropriate behaviours should document details on the behaviours to ensure that other factors not encouraging the undesired behaviour (ie: environment, program, and medical/physical)
- Communication: Of why the behaviour is not acceptable. The staff or care provider explains why inappropriate behaviour is not acceptable. Discipline statements are expressed in a way that is positive and guides the child as to what is acceptable and appropriate. For example "Hands are for helping. We want to keep our friends safe."
- Assist with Problem Solving: Oftentimes staff or care providers act as a mediator between children, it is our goal to have children able to solve problems on their own. Encourage children to listen to each other's point of view and then help them to brainstorm how to solve the problem.
- Supported Consequences: In extreme cases, where all other guidance techniques are ineffective, the staff or care provider may need to use supported consequences. This may consist of limiting or removing materials. This should only be done after a clear, calm and consistent explanation of the appropriate use of materials has been offered to the child and is ineffective. The other supported consequence that may be used is a removal of the child from the situation. This is only to be used in extreme cases where a

child is putting the safety of the other children (i.e. hitting, biting) or themselves at risk. This will consist of the staff or care provider removing the child from the situation, while still trying to keep the child in close physical proximity to the staff or care provider. When the child has regained control of their behaviour, they will be transitioned back to their chosen activity.

Techniques that are not acceptable in a child care setting include time out and magic 123

No operator shall permit:

Corporal punishment, including but not limited to the following:

- Striking a child directly or with any physical object
- Shaking , shoving, spanking, or other forms of aggressive physical contact and requiring or forcing a child to repeat physical movements.
- Harsh, humiliating, belittling or degrading responses of any form, including verbal, emotional or physical i.e. saying “You don’t know how to listen”, putting a child in the corner.
- Confinement of, or isolation of a child or children.
- Deprivation of a child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding, i.e. withholding meals, snacks, or desserts, taking a child’s blanket away at nap time.

In accordance with section 11.1 in the manual for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Setting:

- Staff , volunteers and care providers do not offer food to reinforce positive behaviours.
- Staff, volunteers and care providers do not withhold food as a consequence for inappropriate behaviours .
- Food is not to be used as a reward for completing a task or finishing a meal (i.e. dessert will not be withheld if the child does not finish the main meal).

Definitions:

Redirection- This is the most developmentally appropriate and effective guidance technique for young children. Redirection is replacing an inappropriate behaviour with an appropriate one. For example, if a child is throwing sand from the sandbox, the staff or care provider will help or her find another, more appropriate way to play with the sand.

Time away- The child is asked to leave the activity or area where he or she is exhibiting inappropriate behaviour. The child is able to choose something else to play with.

“APPENDIX B”

Family Matters Family Home Child Care **Family Communication Plan**

How parents and families will have access to information about their children’s experiences in the Family Home Child Care program and where parents and families can visibly access pertinent information regarding the program's operations

- The Parent Handbook and welcome package will give families an understanding of how the program operates. These forms are given to care providers as needed by the consultant to hand out to new families.
- A bulletin board will be in each family home center with current information provided by the agency
- The agency has a bulletin board with information posted regarding the family home child care program
- Verbal communication at drop off and pick ups allow families an opportunity to hear how their children are doing by care providers
- Daily infant and toddler reports for families to access by care providers
- Further communication with parents by care providers as needed through phone calls and social media ie; text messages, emails, Facebook, etc.
- Agency hosts a Facebook page for parents of children in care. This keeps families updated on events at the agency as well as gives families an opportunity to learn and ask questions. The consultant along with Family Matters support staff will keep this page updated.
- Progress reports are completed twice a year for parents and are kept in the children’s files. These are completed by care providers.

Information on the opportunities for parents and families to engage in the childcare program and develop an authentic connection to their child’s learning, development, emerging interests and competencies

- Registration forms for childcare include an opportunity for families to share skills they would be willing to share with agency or in their children’s family home child care center
- Parent Agency Committee (PAC) meetings are held twice a year. These meetings give families the opportunity to share skills and support their FHCC/Agency. The consultant will advise families when these meetings take place.

Information on how parents and families are notified of scheduled events, resources, and provided with information regarding inspections and regulatory/ministerial requirements

- Seasonal newsletters created by the consultants include any events for families, parent resources available and any pertinent information from regulations/ministerial requirements
- The agency Facebook page will be updated on a regular basis by the consultant, directors or Family Matters staff
- Family Matters including FHCC send out a monthly calendar with events and resources available. This will be given to care providers by the consultant to hand out. It is also published on social media
- Letters are given out to parents when care providers are on a leave of absence, in non-compliance or they are leaving the agency. Each letter includes contact information for the agency

Information to access the parent handbook which includes key information with respect to the programs policies

- Parents receive a copy of the parent handbook upon registration from the care provider. The consultant ensures copies are available either by providing a hard copy or by providing paper/ink to print.
- A digital copy of the parent handbook will be made available on the agency's Facebook page for parents to access.
- A paper copy of the parent handbook will be posted on the care providers bulletin board.
- Information on the bulletin board in each of the care providers home will give contact information for the agency staff to ask questions. The consultant is responsible for making sure the information is up to date

Information on the program's parent committee PAC

- The newsletter will give the date for families to attend. The consultant delivers it to the care provider and families
- Invitations will be sent to the families through the care providers

- The invitations will be posted on the agency Facebook page along with Family Matters social media forums by the consultant, directors or Family Matters staff
- An email one week prior to the meeting will be sent to the families within the agency from the consultant
- Minutes from the meeting will be posted on the care providers bulletin board

Information on daily records for infants and toddlers completed by the care providers

- Care providers will inform families they they fill out daily infant and toddler reports
- The parent handbook will also let families know to check out infant and toddler daily reports
- Daily reports are available to view any time



- Welcome to FHCC!! **Please fill out these forms in this package and return to your future Care Provider.**
- Please retain your Parent Handbook, Behaviour Guidance Policy and Family communication Oplan for future reference.
- All files are kept confidential.
- If you have any questions or concerns please contact your County Consultant:
Colleen: Annapolis County 902-824-4249 or fhdcfamilymatters@gmail.com
Katharine: Lunenburg County 902-521-2757 or fhccfmlunco@gmail.com

Parent Contract

It is mutually agreed and understood that the following Child/ren

_____ will be accepted at _____ with the following schedule (check one):

- Full time: Monday through Friday
- Part time: (As defined below)
 Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

The start date will be _____ at a rate of \$ _____.

This rate includes the Government Fee Reduction dependent on the age of your child.

Fees include child sick days, absent days, vacation days and statutory holidays. Your Care Provider will let you know when fees are due.

1. Registration forms and Parent Contracts must be completed upon enrollment and before your Child/ren attend.
2. Two weeks written notice is required to withdraw your Child/ren.
3. Parent/Guardians must keep the Care Provider informed of any changes in contact information.

* Please Note * Care Providers will need immunizations when Child/ren are enrolled in the Day Home, if they must be obtained or your child is not immunized for religious or personal reasons, please fill out a waiver on Page 28.

It is understood that by signing this form you are agreeing that you have read and understood the above contract with your care provider.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date



Permission Slips

I hereby grant permission for my Child/ren to use play equipment and participate in activities

I hereby grant permission for my Child/ren to participate in field trips, walks, and outings

I hereby grant permission for my Child/ren to be included in pictures taken in the Day Home

I hereby grant permission for my Child/ren to be given Medication, in the understanding that I signed a Medication authorization form

I hereby grant permission for my Child/ren to be transported (By Ambulance) to the Hospital for treatment if necessary

In case of accident/injury, I hereby grant permission for the Care Provider to administer First Aid to my Child/ren

I hereby grant permission for my Child/ren to be Transported by Vehicle to Playgroups, field trips with the understanding that the Care Provider has proper Insurance coverage (Check with your provider)

*** Please Note *** Family Home Child Care Agency, or Care Provider will not be liable if by chance an accident may occur while transporting my Child/ren

I have read and understood the following that was given to me upon enrollment of my child/ren.

- Parent Handbook
- Behavior Guidance Policy
- Family Communication plan

It is understood that by signing this form, I agree that I have read and understood all of the above permissions and that I have read and understood the Parent information Package that was given to me. If I have any questions or concerns, I can contact my Care Provider or the Agency Consultant

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Registration Form

Section #1-Basic Information

Child's Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Age _____

Start Date: _____

Guardian 1 Name _____

Address: _____

Telephone Numbers: Cell _____ Work _____

Home _____

Email _____

Guardian 2 Name: _____

Address Check if same as above

Telephone Numbers: Cell _____ Work _____

Home _____

Email _____

Emergency Contacts

Primary emergency contact (other than parent/guardian)

Name _____

Number _____

Secondary emergency contact (other than parent/guardian)

Name _____

Number _____

Persons authorized to pick up child:

Name and Relationship _____

Persons authorized **NOT** to pick up child:

Name and Relationship _____

Section #2 Child Health and Medical Information

Child's name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Health Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Physicians name _____

Address _____ Phone Number _____

Please attach Copy Of Immunizations

Does your child require any medication? Yes No

If yes, please describe: _____

Does your child require any special requirements?

Does your child have any allergies to foods, medication or other items such as dust? Yes No

If yes, please describe the allergy and reaction: _____

Does your Child have any Dietary or Cultural restrictions? _____

Section # 3 -Development History

Does your Child have any particular attachments or habits?

What are some of your Child's favorite activities?

Are there any fears your Child has demonstrated?

What is an ordinary day/routine for your child? Please include activities, meals, and naps.

Morning:

Afternoon:

Evening:

PLEASE NOTE:

- Children will be released to the parent(s) who register their children in the dayhome and to those on the pick up list.
- CHILDREN WILL NOT BE NOT BE RELEASED TO ANYONE NOT LISTED ON THE FORM UNLESS THE PROVIDER IS ADVISED OF THE CHANGE OF PERSON BY A PARENT (Including taxi services)
- **It is important that parents read, complete and sign all the information and forms given before being registered in Family Matters Family Home Daycare.**

I hereby recognize that the above information is factual and complete to my knowledge.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

For Provider & Office Use:

Withdraw Date	
------------------	--

*Attach Copy of Withdraw notice.



To be included in Child's File

Date: _____

Re: Immunizations Waiver

Please check the following option in regard to immunizations if you cannot include a copy with your child's registration forms.

- I requested a copy of my child's immunizations from our family doctor/nurse practitioner on _____.
- We do not immunize our child for medical/religious or personal beliefs
- No Family Doctor
- I have attempted to get my child's immunizations from my doctors office with no response from them.

Signature of Parent: _____.