

Parent Hand Book



Play Makers – Play to Learn Program

Woodlands Room - Woodcreek Community Center

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Our Program

We Believe:

- All children are natural and capable learners who actively pursue their own learning.
- Children have the innate ability to build knowledge organically through hands-on play opportunities, which are driven by their interests, curiosities, and explorations.
- Children build on, or scaffold their development in all areas, at their own individual pace, learning from both the successes they gain and challenges they face while at play.
- It is crucial that children have opportunities to progress in all areas of development (Physical, Intellectual, Language, Emotional, Social) in a secure and supportive environment.
- If children feel secure and respected, they will actively share their knowledge and challenge their abilities.
- Rote teaching methods, worksheets, pre-set lessons and testing during preschool ages, places limits on a child's natural developmental progression.

We Then:

- Work to create a supportive, and responsive play-to-learn environment, where children feel valued, and capable in their own learning experiences.
- Create challenging, thought-provoking, and engaging hands-on learning opportunities using the unique interests and abilities of each child, and each group of children.
- Build on emerging skills through all areas of Early Childhood Developmental Domains (Physical, Intellectual, Language, Emotional, Social), encouraging each child to progress at their own developmental pace, and to their fullest potential through play.
- Keep class sizes small (16 maximum) and Educator ratios high (1:8), allowing Educators to truly engage, and naturally observe all children in the program.
- Create effective learning experiences where children, using a hands-on play approach, build a solid educational foundation, without the use of rote teaching, worksheets, pre-set lessons or testing.
- Offer children the ability to engage at a pace that is right for them and their families, by offering programing in shorter sessions, rather than a full school term. Allowing families, the choice on what sessions work for them and their children.

Program Information

- Play Makers runs 5 (five), seven (7) week long, pre-registered sessions per year (14 individual days per session), at the Woodcreek Community Center.
- Program hours are Monday and Wednesday from 9:00 a.m.- 11:30 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m.- 11:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m. -3:00 p.m. Friday from 9:00 a.m.- 11:30 a.m.
- Programing is offered from September to June, following the CBE School Calendar. Therefore, Playmakers will NOT be running programs on any corresponding holidays (e.g. March Break, Christmas Break) or Professional Development Days (e.g. Teachers Convention). Program dates may be subject to change based on amendments to the CBE Calendar
- Class sizes are limited to 16 children per classroom.
- Session slots will be secured once registration is complete, and on a first come basis.
- Cost per 7-week Sessions vary based on days in class. Families are charged based on program days per session, rather than a set rate.
- No additional material costs required (e.g. workbooks, pencils, markers).
- A \$100 Deposit will be required to hold spot throughout the Sessions. It will be refunded to the last registered session, or proper notice of withdrawal.
- A one-time, non-refundable technology registration fee of \$60 will be charged at the time of registration. This charge will be applied to each new school year.
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Our Educators

- Are Certified Early Childhood Professionals, working in the field of Early Childhood Development.
- Program Leads have extensive Early Child Development knowledge and experience.
- All educators hold a current certification in Child First Aid and CPR.
- All Educators must submit a Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Search.
- Engage in professional development opportunities yearly to help expand their knowledge base and keep up to date in the Child Development Field.

The Program

What to Bring

Each day, your child will need:

- **A small manageable snack** (for group snack time). **** Nut Free Items Only****
- **Indoor shoes or slippers** (to protect feet while indoors or in case of a fire).
- **An extra set of clothing** (in case of accidents or clothing wet or soiled in play).
- **A manageable water bottle** (as there is no fountain in the classroom).
- **A backpack** (to carry these items to and from the program each day).
- **Be dressed for the weather** (as we will be both indoors and outdoors)
- **A comfort item** (blanket, stuffed animal) if required.

Please have all items labelled with your child's name to avoid confusion, or to be easily returned if lost or misplaced.

Please do NOT send:

- Toys from home (except for a comfort item).
- Clothing or items that may be upsetting if soiled.
- Items that are unmanageable for child such as, large complicated water bottles, clothing with complicated buttons or clasps etc.
- Sunscreens and bug sprays (Please apply at home prior to arrival)
- Snack items that need to be cooked or heated, as we do not have the ability to do this for your child.

Our Day

- Doors will open promptly at program time for child arrivals, children will need to find their hook, hang their items, change their shoes, and “sign into” the classroom.
- Children will be free to explore the learning centers in the classroom on arrival.
- We will follow a daily schedule. Please remember this schedule is a GUIDELINE for our day, and may change based on interest, need, weather, or spontaneous learning opportunities.
- Children will be dismissed and “sign out” at the end of their program time. into the care of the parent/guardian or adult authorized for pick up. Late fees may apply for pick ups starting 5 min after dismissal.

Day 1 – Indoor Day	Day 2 – Outdoor Day
Child Arrivals Open Centers	Child Arrivals Open Centers
Group Time- Optional	Clean Up Time
Clean Up Time	Hygiene Routine Dress for Outdoors
Hygiene Routines Group Snack	Outdoor Group Snack
Music and Movement	Outdoor activities and Free Play
Closing Group	Clean Up Time Closing Group (Outdoors)
Child Dismissals	Child Dismissals

Although the Daily Schedule is created to be developmentally appropriate and with school readiness in mind, the daily schedule may change without notice, based on the needs and ability of the group.

Why use a Schedule/Routine?

- The repetition allows children to predict what comes next, allowing them to feel secure and prepared.
- Helps children understand a sequence of events, and better prepares them to transition easily.
- Helps prepare them for stricter schedules in school.

Understanding the Schedule

➤ Open Centers

This is self-directed open play, where children can freely explore and engage in the learning centers available. Learning centres will be set up to allow children to engage with little assistance, will be developmentally appropriate, and promote all areas of developmental growth. Centers will change as interest and ability change. During this time Educators will act in a support-provocation role, helping where needed, expanding play when appropriate.

➤ Group Time – Optional

An Educator will create an unstructured group activity during this time. Children can join/leave the group whenever they choose or continue working within the learning centers. This allows children flexibility, empowers them to make choices for themselves, building self esteem.

➤ Clean Up Time

Children will have the expectation of tidying up after themselves and be offered time to do so throughout the day. This builds self-confidence and classroom community, through accomplishable tasks, and caring for their environment. This “clean up” is also a good transition point, helping children know we are moving to something new.

➤ Hygiene Routine

While washroom breaks and an in-class hand washing station will be available at all times in the day, we schedule hand and face washing breaks within our day, before and after snack, or when coming indoors as part of our self care routines.

➤ Group Snack/Outdoor Group Snack

A group snack time will take place each day. This gives children the opportunity to replenish their bodies, as well as an opportunity for social interactions and experiences with their peers and educators. This helps build a sense of community, language skills, and social skills.

➤ Dress for Outdoors

Children will be encouraged at this time to dress themselves for outdoor activities, with assistance when needed. This builds competence in self care, and self esteem in being in control of their self care. It is also important for school preparedness.

➤ Closing Group

This is an Educator directed group time, where children will be asked to sit and participate in pre-planned group activities (songs, games, sharing, books etc.) and will end with our “Goodbye Song” to indicate the end of the day. Children learn social and emotional skills and self regulation skills. Learning to work in a group, how to sit, take turns, pay attention and follow instructions, are important skills for school preparedness.

Child Guidance

Educators understand their role in encouraging positive behaviour within the classroom. While they model appropriate behavior, offer clear boundaries and try to anticipate possible problems in the classroom, conflicts do occur, and child guidance will be needed.

Educators use various developmentally appropriate methods to support and guide children through difficult times. These child guidance methods will be reasonable, focus on keeping self esteem intact, while offering tools for building long-term social/emotional competency.

Possible Guidance Methods

- **Communication** - Support children in learning to effectively communicate difficulties, boundaries, and needs.
- **Repetition** - Repeating expectations, ensuring expectations are clear, have child repeat back expectation to prompt understanding.
- **Redirection** - Supporting children in seeing choices/alternatives.
- **Positive Reinforcement**- Acknowledging and encouraging positive results during or prior to difficult situations.
- **Mediation** - Help children express and discuss the problem, then suggest solutions.
- **Respectfulness** - Support children's respect for themselves, each other, the Educators, and their environment.
- **Natural consequences** - Explaining the series of events, so children can see the natural consequence to an action.
- **Negotiation** - Helping children negotiating while respecting each other.
- **Modeling** - Educators model ways for children to discuss and find solutions.

******The program, and Educators will NEVER use ANY form of physical punishment; Deny or threaten to deny any basic need; Use any form of physical confinement or seclusion; Use any physical, verbal, or emotional disciplining or threat, harmful to the child's development. Physical restraint is not acceptable, except in instances when the child is at immediate risk of seriously injuring themselves or others.******

Child Illness & Injury

Illness

To protect the health and well-being of all, we ask that children not attend the program if they are showing any of the following signs/symptoms of illness:

- Vomiting within the last 24 hours.
- Diarrhea within the last 24 hours.
- Coughing that is constant and productive.
- Continuous runny nose needing wiping.
- Fever.
- Pink eye.
- Showing signs of illness/symptoms that the child might require more care than can be provided at the program.
- Displaying illness/symptoms which prevent full participation in the program.

If children begin to show signs/symptoms while in the program, the Educators will contact Parents/Guardians to pick up their child. If Parents/Guardians cannot be reached, Educators may attempt to call emergency contacts.

Injury

In the case of an injury, Educators will assess the injury, and will determine what action needs to take place.

- Apply first aid treatment, Educators will complete an incident report, explaining incident and first aid taken. Incident reports for parents to be presented at the end of the day's session (if possible).
- Apply First aid treatment, call Parents/Guardians for child pick up and request medical assessment. Educators will complete an incident report, explaining incident and first aid taken. Incident reports for parents to be presented at the end of the day's session (if possible) If Parents/Guardians cannot be reached, Educators may attempt to call emergency contacts.

Serious Illness or Injury Requiring Emergency Medical Assistance

- Once an Educator determines emergency medical assistance is required, a call will be placed immediately. Educators will always err on the side of caution.
- When safe to do so, a call to Parents/Guardians will be made. If Parents/Guardians cannot be reached, Educators will attempt to call emergency contacts.
- An Educator may accompany the child if needed but will not consent/deny any medical procedures.
- An incident report will be completed and given to parents/guardians within 72 hours.
- Any and all costs incurred from child's emergency medical treatment will be the responsibility of the family.

➤ Medications

Play Makers Program will not administer any form of medication other than emergency or lifesaving medication (where time is of the essence).

Some examples may be:

- EpiPen
- Anaphylactic Medications
- Asthma inhalers
- Diabetic Corrections

Parents/Guardians will need to fill out a medication form describing what the medication is used to treat, when it should be administered, how it is administered.

It is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian to notify the Program immediately should any changes occur to the administration of the medication, and to ensure medications are within their expiry dates.

Educators administering medications will hold a valid Child First Aid & CPR Certificate.

Bathroom & Toileting

All children must be toilet trained and independent in the washroom prior to starting the program. There is no scheduled bathroom time during our program, although educators will offer prompts to the group throughout the day, and children will be taken to the bathroom when they ask. It is highly recommended that before the first day of program parents/ guardians teach their child to ask for the washroom.

While children are supervised during bathroom times, they should independently with little assistance:

- Move on and off the toilet (assistance devices provided).
- Remove and replace clothing with minimal assistance.
- Wipe after bathroom use.
- Wash their hands.

Toileting Accidents

Children will never be reprimanded for any toilet or bathroom accidents.

Should a toileting accident occur, educators may guide children through independently changing into fresh clothing and clean up, if it is reasonable the child can do so. If the child is soiled and it is unreasonable to expect the child can independently clean up and change, parents/ guardians will be notified.

Educators will NOT perform any toileting or toileting accident clean up without expressed permission at each encounter or with a blanket permission given. This is to protect both the child and Educators from any questionable encounters.

Personal Information

Play Makers collects personal information from our families as part of the registration process, to provide the best possible care to the children within our program. We are committed to upholding privacy and confidentiality of all our families' information, which means we will not use, collect, or disclose any personal information about you, or your child, for any purpose other than use within the program, without expressed permission. All records kept with our App are fully secure, and accessible by our program only. Paper Records will be kept in a locked location onsite.

Program Portable Records

Playmakers will gather information from our registration packages to create a Portable Record be taken with the Educators anytime the children leave the facility. These records will ensure the program has relevant information in case of an emergency outside the classroom or during an evacuation of the program premises. Portable record information will include updated parent/guardian contact information, emergency numbers, and relevant health information about the child. Portable records will be kept locked onsite, located in a backpack, when not in use.

Information Updates

We ask that parents/guardians inform the program of any changes or updates to personal information. Keeping information up-to-date will ensure that educators have all relevant information to keep the children safe and parents well informed.

Brightwheel App

Play Makers uses the Brightwheel App to assist us in collecting, housing, and sharing information with our families.

Parents can share and have access to pictures and information in a convenient and secure location, which also allows them access to their personal information and billing, and direct messaging to the program or individual educators.

This is a closed and secure Application, and access is only granted on completion of registration.

Registration and Withdrawal

- Programs run from September through June.
- Program registration will take place during scheduled registration in March of the year prior, Open House dates, and throughout the program year (if spots are available).
- Each session runs seven (7) weeks and holds 14 individual days before holidays and closures
- Class sizes are limited to 16 children per class.
- Session slots will be secured on a first come basis, following COMPLETION of the Registration Process, including securing deposit and Technology Registration fees.

Registration Process

The following items will need to be completed, submitted, and approved to secure a spot within the program:

- Completed Registration Package
- \$100 refundable Deposit
- \$60 non-refundable Technology Registration Fee

Multiple sessions may be secured by selecting them in the Registration Package or sessions can be added throughout the year (based on availability).

Session Fees and Receipts

Upcoming Fee statements and due dates, deposits and tech fees will be sent to families via the Brightwheel App. Families can access their fees and receipts through the app, and print as needed.

Payments can be made through cheque to Play Makers, or Email Money Transfer to admin@playmakerscalgary.com. Once payments have cleared, they will reflect as paid on the app.

Late payments and NSF charges are subject to additional charges.

Session Cancellation

Session cancellation for a full refund of deposit, requires written notice of withdrawal be submitted in person or by email one full calendar month before the first day of the cancelled session.

Sessions cancelled before session start, but without one full calendar month notice will be subject to a forfeit of \$100 Deposit.

Sessions cancelled after the first day of the session will be non-refundable.

Days missed, sick days, or absences within a session are also non-refundable.

Parental Concerns

We believe that parenting is one of the greatest and most difficult experiences, and understand that parents want, and will advocate, to provide the very best for their child. We also understand that concerns, mistakes and misunderstandings happen. Just as we hope parents will share their positive experiences within the program, we also hope parents will share any concerns they may have, and work with us to try and resolve them. Our goal is to provide our families with the best program possible.

But please remember:

- **Choose an appropriate time to discuss your concerns.**
Choosing an appropriate time (outside of class time) or booking a time to discuss your concerns, will ensure you have the Educator's full attention, and have an uninterrupted opportunity to work towards a resolution.
- **Talk directly with the Educator about your concerns.**
Having concerns is natural, if you feel comfortable, talk directly with the Educator. Allow them a chance to explain, resolve the issue or improve performance.
- **Be respectful when approaching Educators with concerns.**
Our educators are trying to provide the very best program for your child, but we are all human, and mistakes or misunderstandings can happen. Be respectful and fair when addressing issues.
- **We are on the same team.**
We are all working towards the same goal to provide an amazing environment for children to develop, remembering this can help when conflicts arise.
- **Disrespectful behaviour will not be tolerated.**
Our Educators will work with families in a respectful manner to address any issues that arise. Disrespectful behaviour, verbal or physical abuse or threats will not be tolerated, and communication will end immediately. If you feel you can not be respectful, wait to engage or submit your concerns in writing, or through email.

Thank you for reading though our Parent Handbook, and welcome to the Play Makers Community!