

# Parent Hand Book



## Play Makers – Play to Learn Program

**Woodlands Room - Woodcreek Community Center**

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## Our Program

**Play Makers is a community preschool age program dedicated to bringing back play! We offer children explorative, play-based environments where they freely gain skills, confidence, and knowledge through self directed, experimental and natural play opportunities.**

### **We Believe:**

- All children are natural and capable learners who actively pursue their own knowledge.
- 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 for play in environments both indoors and outdoors.
- Opportunities for explorative group play with peers is the essential to progress in all areas of development (Physical, Intellectual, Language, Emotional, Social).
- 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 explorative learning opportunities using the unique interests and abilities of each child, and each group of children.
- Build on emerging skills, encouraging each child to progress at their own developmental pace, and to their fullest potential through play.
- Offer children equal opportunities for explorative and experimental play indoors and outdoors.
- 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 foundation of knowledge, 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 programming in shorter sessions, allowing families, the choice on what sessions work for them and their children.

## Program Information

- Play Makers programs run Five (5) pre-registered sessions per year, each seven (7) weeks long (12-14 individual days per session), from September to June.
- Program hours are Monday and Wednesday 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.
- Programing follows the Public-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).
- Class sizes are limited to 16 children per class with a 1:8 Ratio.
- Registration is on a first come basis, and program spaces will be secured with a \$100 deposit after acceptance. This deposit will be non-refundable if you choose not to attend or will be applied in full to your LAST enrolled session.
- Cost per 7 week session ranges from \$255-\$295 depending on the Session. (Approx. \$150.00 per month).
- No registration fee is required.
- No additional material costs required, materials will be provided (e.g. pencils, markers, art supplies).

### Each program 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 on outdoor days** (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 times for child arrivals.
- Children will 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 for both indoor and outdoor days. 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 at the end of class time into the care of a parent/guardian or adult authorized for pick up only.
- Late Fees may apply for late pick ups, starting 5 min after dismissal.

<b>Daily Routine</b>	
<b>Day 1 – Indoor Day</b>	<b>Day 2 – Outdoor Day</b>
Child Arrivals Sign in	Child Arrivals Sign in
Open Centers	Open Centers
Clean Up Time	Clean Up Time
Hygiene Routines Group Snack	Hygiene Routine Dress for Outdoors
Group Play - Carpet	Outdoor Group Snack
Music and Movement	Outdoor Activities & Free Play
Closing Group	Clean Up Time Closing Group (outdoors)
Child Dismissals	Child Dismissals

## 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.
- Allows them opportunities to discuss daily events with educators and peers.

## 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.
  - 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.
- Group Play/Carpet Time  
An unstructured group activity/ or individual activity in group area, while snack is being finished. Children can participate as much or little as they wish. This allows children flexibility, empowers them to make choices for themselves, building self esteem.
- 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.
  - Closing Group  
This is the only Educator directed time of the day, where children will be asked to sit and participate in pre-planned group activities (songs, games, sharing, books etc.). This is a short period (10-15 min) and will end with our “Goodbye Song” to indicate the end of the day. Children learn social, emotional, and self regulation skills in group times, learning to work within group, how to take turns, pay attention, and follow instructions.

## Our Educators

- Are Certified Early Childhood Professionals, working in the field of Early Childhood Development.
- Have extensive Early Child Development knowledge and experience.
- 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.

## Child Guidance

Educators understand their role in encouraging positive behaviour within the program. While they model appropriate behavior, offer clear boundaries, and try to anticipate possible problems, 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, or its 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 to 911. Note\*\* 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, during hygiene breaks, 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 will be supervised during bathroom times, they should be able to independently:

- Move on and off the toilet (assistance devices provided).
- Remove and replace clothing.
- 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, educators will assist, and parents/ guardians will be notified. This is to protect both the child and Educators from any questionable encounters.

Soiled clothing will be sent home with the child in a separate plastic bag.



## 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. Records will be kept in a locked location.

### Program Portable Records

Play Makers will gather information from our Registration Packages to create a Portable Record which will always be accessible to educators. These records will ensure the program has relevant information in case of an emergency. 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, 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.

## Registration and Withdrawal

### Registration Process

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

- Completed Registration Package
- \$100.00 Deposit to secure space, which is non-refundable if you choose not to attend or will be applied in full to your LAST enrolled session.
- Session Payments will be due in full before the start of each session.

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

### Session Receipts

Receipts are given out twice yearly, at the end of the year in December, and the end of the program year in June, or will be given out during your child last session.

### Session Cancellation

- Session cancellation for a full refund, requires that written notice of withdrawal is 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 cancellation fee of up to half the session cost.
- Sessions cancelled after the first day of the session will be non-refundable. Days missed 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. As 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 program 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 absolute 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, and may result in removal from the program. If you feel you can not be respectful, wait to engage or submit your concerns in writing, or through email.

## Program Management App

Our Program Management App Bloomz, is secure way for our program and families to stay connected, share information and media, communicate effectively, and reduce our paper consumption. Bloomz is very secure platform, all shared information is available for viewing by group members only, our page cannot searched without a provided code, and can only be accessed after program authorization. Bloomz is our programs main information sharing tool, and all families must agree to use the App if enrolled in the program.

***"Thank you for taking the time to read our Parent Handbook!"***