



**BETTER THAN HOME**  
Home Daycare Agency

# A Licensed Home Child Care Agency

# Parent Handbook

## 2024

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#### Legend

- Agency child- child enrolled under agency not provider
- Fee Assistance – families under fee assistance
- Private children – children enrolled under provider
- Base Fees – Agency Fees
- Non Base Fees –Additional fees that are not covered under base

## CWELCC

Better Than Home is enrolled in (CWELCC) Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care Program.

## Philosophy

To offer unified programs throughout our network of Home child care providers with the highest level of care, safety, education and development across the board of our programs.

To provide developmentally stimulating and personally adjustable programming to enhance all areas of growth and development and self-esteem for our children.

To provide flexible, accessible and affordable child care options which meet the diversified needs of the children and their families.

To offer collaborative environment in which Home child care providers operate in collaboration with the families in order to establish and develop activities that are conducive to positive adult/child interactions.

To serve as a resource for parents, caregivers, and other professionals in the area of child care.

## Our Team

### RECE Home Visitor:

Better Than Home Inc. is a Registered Early Childhood Educator who visits and inspects each home on a monthly basis. Monthly visits will be planned to accommodate the schedules of our home child care providers. Quarterly Home Visitor inspections (ministry regulated) will be completed on a drop-in basis (unannounced).

The RECE home visitor is responsible for overseeing all home child care premises. Ensuring compliance with Better Than Home Inc. policies and procedures. The RECE Home Visitor acts as a mentor to support providers with implementing Let's Grow's program statement, as a program tutor supporting both a child-led, play based curriculum and structured learning in each program. The RECE home visitor also gives support to children's individual needs. By working with their provider, together we can insure that each program environment and planned activity is modified to meet need of your child.

### Child Care Providers

Providers are our neighbours and community members who have opened their homes to provide child care. Through their partnership with Better Than Home., they show their commitment to continued professional learning, quality child care and business ethics. Providers are encouraged to use the professional resource developed by the Ministry of Education, *How does learning happen? Ontario's pedagogy for the early years* to plan activities that facilitate learning through play and provide a balanced program that supports children's optimal development. Providers are also encouraged to follow Let's Grows philosophy on a nature based learning style. We strive to incorporate as much natural materials into our programs as possible.

## **APPROACH**

"Better Than Home" recognizes and supports "How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years" as the document to be used for the purpose of guiding the development of our programs, informing our decisions regarding best practices, and building professional capacity in a quality early learning team.

"Better Than Home" educational and care programs and standards comply with the "How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years" statement and together they are intended to strengthen the quality of programs and ensure high quality experiences that lead to positive outcomes in relation to children's learning, development, health, and well-being.

## Parents/Guardians as partners

We believe mutual respect is key to developing healthy relationships with our families. We encourage and strive to make regular connections in person or by other means (e.g. WhatsApp, posting information on boards in the homes and emails,). Your child's success in our program is important. Our providers will share information with you regularly. We are eager for you to share your knowledge about your child's learning strengths and preferences and day-to day experiences. We invite you to collaborate and work together with us to ensure we are providing the best possible learning experience for your child.

## Resources for Parents/Guardians

If you wish to obtain information on a particular topic, we will attempt to provide what you require. We may inform you of a person, agency, or service that may be of assistance to you if we are not directly able to do so. We have access to a number of resources that may be of interest to you. When you enroll your child with us, we accept the responsibility of assisting with special needs in relation to your child's adjustment, growth and development. If you wish to arrange meetings with any of the providers and/or agency, we will do so upon request. Your child will be given maximum consideration as an individual. Programs are planned to meet the developmental and educational needs of children and families we serve.

## Parental Issues and Concerns Policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

### Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care location it operates (i.e. the operator).

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. Home Visitor).

Individuals that provide the child care under the operator's license.

# Policy

## General

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care agency and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff and providers are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the home child care agency and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing to the Executive Director.

Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing. Confidentiality of all parties involved will be respected.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 5 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

### Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

### Conduct

Our agency maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Executive Director.

### Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.

For more information, visit

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

## Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p><b>Program Related</b></p> <p>E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the Provider directly. If the issue or concern cannot be resolved by the Provider then please speak to the Home Visitor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 5 business days.</li> </ul> <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the date and time the issue/concern was received;</li> <li>- the name of the person who received the issue/concern;</li> </ul>
<p><b>General, Agency- or Operations-Related</b></p> <p>E.g: child care fees, hours of care, providers staff, regulations, etc</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Executive Director .</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the name of the person reporting the issue/concern;</li> <li>- the details of the issue/concern; and</li> <li>- any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staff, Parent, Director and/or Licensee-Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the individual directly</li> <li>or</li> <li>- the Director or licensee.</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Executive Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 5 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>
<p><b>Student- / Volunteer-Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the staff/provider responsible for supervising the volunteer or student</li> <li>or</li> <li>- the Executive Director</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Executive Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue(s) or concern.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g., local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators where appropriate.

Contacts: Executive Director: **Ekaterina Gueletina, Tel: 416-831-1217**

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or  
childcare\_ontario@ontario.ca

## Our Program

Our home child care program is available to all children who may benefit from our service who are between 16 weeks to 12 years of age. In order to accommodate the varied schedules of the families we serve; we offer flexible hours and days of care. (According to what our providers are able to accommodate). Full-time spaces will take priority over part-time spaces.

## Application Process & Current Information

Before Choosing Your Provider, it is important for you and your child to visit the prospective Provider before your child starts care. Your Home Visitor will try to offer you more than one Provider to meet. You and your child will decide on the best fit. Have the Provider show you where your child will play, eat and rest. If you feel this is a good setting, please follow up with your Home Visitor to review your decision, start date and to complete forms.

Forms will be available through the agency via email.

**Information Changes-** Although all forms will be updated annually (approximately January 1st), **you must inform the office of any and all changes as they occur.** We must ensure that all information remains up-to-date and valid.

If there is a revised Parent Handbook will be distributed via email. A hard copy can be provided upon request. If required Better Than Home can complete updates per parental request. An email from the address on file with the required changes is acceptable. *Parents are not able to upload or remove files, edit providers notes, or otherwise change daily documentation.*

## Early Learning & Child Care Program

Better Than Home Daycare is licensed under the Childcare and Early Years Act (CCEYA) through the Ministry of Education and subject to the regulations established by the Government



of Ontario. Our child care program is geared to the age and developmental levels of the children in care. We strive to provide (daily activities both indoors and outdoors):

- Opportunities for being with other children in a setting are conducive to the development of wholesome, social relationships both with Providers and other children.
- Meaningful play experiences based on the children’s needs, interests, limitations and abilities.
- Quality care for children and provide opportunities to build important foundations for future skills and pursuits.

## Statutory Holidays

Better Than Home recognizes the following days as “Days of Closure” and will be closed for said days:

<b>New Year’s Day (Jan 1st)</b>	Family Day (Feb)	Good Friday (Mar or Apr)
Victoria Day (May)	Canada (July 1st)	Civic Holiday (Aug)
Labour Day (Sept)	Thanksgiving Day (Oct)	Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve at 2pm
Christmas Day (Dec 25th)	Boxing Day (Dec 26th)	

**Regular fees are billed for the indicated above if they fall on a regularly scheduled day-no exceptions. When a child is enrolled with Better Than Home Daycare, this condition is accepted as part of the payment policies.**

## Provider Absent

There may be days when your provider is not available (illness, appointments, vacation time). As much notice as possible will be given. Parents/guardians are encouraged to have back-up care for these occasions. Better Than Home will make every attempt to provide back-up care at the parents/guardian’s request but no guarantee can be made.

## Hours of Operation

Providers offer flexible hours of care with the standard being 7am-6pm. Providers while licensed by Better Than Home Daycare Inc. remain by legal definition “independent contractors”. their hours of care are agreed upon by Provider and agency. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their required hours are clear prior to completing an application/registration form. Hours of care will be detailed in your parent agreement.

# Program Statement

Better Than Home" programs are governed by the Child Care & Early Years Act and are licensed by the Ministry of Education. Our Program Statement is available at the head office of "Better Than Home" and at every home child care provider location. Parents and their families are welcome to attend one of our locations, review our Program Statement and provide their comments and suggestions.

Providers, students, and volunteers are required to review the Program Statement prior to interacting with children and whenever modifications are made. "Better Than Home" is responsible for ensuring that the Program Statement is being implemented in each premise offering home child care.

Providers will implement the approaches and strategies of the "Better Than Home" Program Statement with the aim of reaching our stated goals. Program Statement must be reviewed and if needed updated at least annually. Providers are required to actively implement the Program Statement and participate in various activities of "Better Than Home" intended to improve and enhance the Program statement. Any incidents of non-compliance by Home child care provider will be investigated and reported by "Better Than Home".

## Prohibited Practices

Better Than Home Daycare wants to ensure each child has a safe and positive experience that promotes their healthy growth and development. ECE Home Visitors will observe Provider interactions with children ensuring that they align with our program statement and beliefs in adult-child interactions. The following practices are prohibited at all times in our Provider's homes:

- a. corporal punishment of the child;
- b. physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- c. locking the exits of a home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement

occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;

- d. use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- e. depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- f. inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

## Volunteer and Students

Better Than Home Inc welcomes both placement students and volunteers into the various programs offered in our child care program. We believe it is a valuable part in gaining experience in a child care environment. Volunteers and students also play an important role in supporting home child care agency staff and home child care providers in the daily operation of home child care programs.

Students and volunteers will always be supervised by a home child care provider and/or home child care agency staff and never permitted to be alone with any child or group of children who receive care at a home child care premises.

## Financial Matters and Schedules

### Fees

Better Than Home operates on a fee-for-service basis. Parent/Guardian fees help to cover the expenses for children (equipment, supplies), provider wages, provider resources (including professional development) and administrative expenses. Parents/guardians must sign the **Parent/Guardian Agreement** found on the application form, accepting responsibility for the financial arrangements BEFORE we accept your child/ren's enrollment.

### Fee Payment

All families enrolled with Better Than Home Inc. are required to pay the agency directly for child care services based on your contract. Fees are billed by them on the first of every month and must be paid by the due date.

Private children enrolled with the provider are required to fill out the documents submitted by the agency on behalf of the provider. Fees are paid directly to the provider.

## Holding Fee:

Parents are required to pay for services in advance. This is to hold your spot till your child starts care. Once registration forms are submitted and the contract is signed, the agency will send out an invoice to parents with your first months payment details. This payment will cover your first month's cost once your child starts care.

## Base Fees

### **Private Children:**

The Provider/Parent Agreement specifies the Provider's fees, which are discussed prior to entering into the agreement. The Parent is responsible for paying the Provider directly if your child is privately placed.

**Fee assisted (Agency Children):** (family is under agency) Fee will be on your agreement. The Parent is responsible for paying the agency directly if your child is under agency placement. Fees are below.

## Daily Rates

## Non-Base Fees

Fees that are not included in the base are:

- Late pick up fees ( based on provider contract)
- Day trips that have a fee (varies depending on the field trip)
- Monthly fees paying late (\$100.00) see below
- Duplicate tax receipts (\$7.00)
- Mailed tax receipts (\$7.00)

Providers have the right to charge parents a late fee for late pick up past the providers working hours. Please note that late fees will not apply under the following circumstances; severe weather conditions or emergency situations such as a car accident on your way for pick up. Late fees can be found on your provider agreement.

## Vacation and Sick Days

Parents will be required to pay provider for all vacation days, sick days or other time off taken, in which the child is not attending care when scheduled. If a provider is open and able to provide child care services, parents MUST pay their provider. When provider is unavailable to provide child care services due to illness, vacation or for other personal matters, parents will be reimbursed for the days the provider is unavailable.

## Tax Receipts

A \$7 service charge will be applied to mailed or reprinted tax receipts if required. Providers are responsible for giving a tax receipt for fees paid directly to them. Tax receipts will be given annually by end of February.

## Schedule changes

For any schedule changes, parents are required to fill out and submit to (email) a schedule change form provided by Better Than Home. The form must be completed and submitted at minimum two weeks in advance with written notice for permit changes to be in effect. Changes to your child's schedule, if you are adding or subtracting days, will take place two weeks after your schedule form change is submitted. Unless these changes are requested at a later date, then these changes will take place at parents' request.

## Vacation & Sick Days

Anytime a child does not attend care due to vacation, personal days/appointment, or your child is kept home due to illness, parents are still required to pay their provider for the day.

## Privately Placed Clients

Who is a privately placed client? A privately placed client is a client whom the provider connects with and comes into an agreement with. The difference between a private client and an agency client is that the private client is allowed to remain with their provider if the provider chooses to leave Better Than Home Inc. Whereas an agency client would be placed with another Let's Grow provider if their current provider chooses to leave the agency. Providers are to follow their own pay schedule and all clients agree to the schedule of the provider. Privately placed clients must follow the same registration policies as agency clients so that no paperwork and important child information is missing.

# Wait-List Policy

This policy and the procedures within provide for waiting lists to be administered in a transparent manner. It supports the availability of information about the waiting list for prospective parents in a way that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of children. The procedures provide steps that will be followed to place children on the waiting list, offer admission, and provide parents with information about their child's position on the waiting list.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for a child care agency that maintains a waiting list to have related policies and procedures.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this plan are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

Policy

General

- Better Than Home Inc. will strive to accommodate all requests for the registration of a child at the child care home.
- Where the maximum capacity of a program has been reached and spaces are unavailable for new children to be enrolled, the waiting list procedures set out below will be followed.
- No fee will be charged to parents for placing a child on the waiting list.

Additional Policy Statements

The Director and the Designate will be responsible for managing the waiting list.

Procedures

## **Receiving a Request to Place a Child on the Waiting List**

The licensee or designate will receive parental requests to place children on a waiting list via Online Application App.

Placing a child on the Waiting List

The licensee or designate will place a child on the waiting list in chronological order, based on the date and time that the request was received.

Once a child has been placed on the waiting list, the licensee or designate will inform parents of their child's position on the list.

## **Determining Placement Priority when a Space Becomes Available**

When space becomes available in the home of request, a one month's deposit will be required to hold your spot. Deposits are per child; a discount may be offered for one than one child placed. The deposit is only refundable within two weeks of making the deposit.

Once these children have been placed, other children on the waiting list will be prioritized based on program home availability and the chronology in which the child was placed on the waiting list.

### **Offering an Available Space**

Parents of children on the waiting list will be notified via phone call or email that a space has become available in their requested program.

Parents will be provided a timeframe of 5 business days in which a response is required before the next child on the waiting list will be offered the space.

Where a parent has not responded within the given timeframe, the licensee or designate will contact the parent of the next child on the waiting list to offer them the space.

### **Responding to Parents who inquire about their Child's Placement on the Waiting List**

The Director/Designate will be the contact person for parents who wish to inquire about the status of their child's place on the waiting list.

The Director/Designate will respond to parent inquiries and provide the child's current position on the list and an estimated likelihood of the child being offered a space in the program.

### **Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality**

The waiting list will be maintained in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families on the list and therefore only the child's position on the waiting list will be provided to parents.

Names of other children or families and/or their placement on the waiting list will not be shared with other individuals.

### **Additional Procedures**

In the event of a child's name being removed from the waiting list because the parents/guardians have not responded within the specified timeframe about the space availability notification and they contact after the timeline, their name will be added on the waiting list again, with a priority.

### **Glossary**

**Licensee:** The individual or corporation named on the licence issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the child care agency.

**Parent:** A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family (all references to parent include legal guardians but will be referred to as "parent" in the policy).

## **WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

**ONE MONTH ADVANCE WRITTEN NOTICE** is required if you plan to temporarily or permanently withdraw your child from our program. Your regular schedule will be billed to your account until this office receives this notice in writing.

## **WITHDRAWAL DUE TO SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

In the event that an individual's behaviour is causing disruption to the program, harm to others, or harm to property owned by the Centre, a family may be withdrawn from the program. This extreme measure would only take place after consultation with the child's family. All decisions that are made are made considering the best interest of all of the children enrolled in the program. A child MAY also be withdrawn because of parent's refusal or inability to abide by the policies and procedures as set out in the Parent Handbook, or due to a parent's conduct that is harassing, belligerent, abusive or in any other manner inappropriate. Outstanding fees will be required to be paid.

# Service Charges and Consequences

## **FEES FOR SERVICES**

Fees – Fees for children registered with any of the "Better Than Home" provider are set by "Better Than Home" and no additional fees for child care may be charged.

General Information – In order to maintain efficient operations, all parent/guardian fees are due in advance of receiving care or on the first day of the month, whichever is first. Alternate payment schedules may be arranged on request with the Parent Accounts Administrator. Fees remain the same regardless of absence for any reason.

Late Payments – Accounts without a payment by the fifth (5) business day of the month will be assessed a late fee of \$100.00. The parent/guardian will receive notice that their fees are overdue and that failure to pay their fees within the next five (5) business days may result in the termination of care. If after ten (10) days, the account has not received any payment, final notice will be issued including the total amount due and the date of termination of care. Fees will be assessed up to and including the two week notice period. After 60 days, if the account remains unpaid in full, the account will be sent to collections for further action.

Payment Methods – "Better Than Home" accepts personal cheques (current or post-dated). All cheques must be made payable to "Better Than Home". A service charge of \$50.00 is payable for cheques returned for any reason. Once a cheque has been returned NSF, future payments made by cheque must be certified. Alternative payments such as Visa, MasterCard, Interac, and cash are also available.



## Late Fees

**Providers may charge a late pick up.** Late fees are the responsibility of the provider to bill and collect directly from the parent/guardian. The provider is required to keep accurate records and provide a receipt for tax purposes for any late fees billed/collected.

## Non-payment Fees

You are responsible for FULL PAYMENT listed on your contract. Payments are to be made no later than the agreed payment schedule.

## Policies

Better Than Home has developed a number of policies to ensure the safety and well-being of the children registered. The policies of Better Than Home can be accessed on our website. Paper copies are available upon request.

## Anaphylaxis/Asthma/Serious Medical Condition

If your child is at risk of anaphylaxis (life threatening allergic reactions), asthma or other serious medical condition (e.g., Diabetes), you must indicate this on your child's application form and complete an Individual Emergency Response Plan. Provider must be provided with proper medication for your child (if required) upon starting care. Proper forms must also be filled out and updated (when updates occur) for both the Agency and Provider. Provider has every Right to refuse child into their care, IF parents do not provide child's medication, forget their child's medication at home, if child's medication is expired or if any information on the medication label is false (eg. name on the medication does not match the child's)

## Appropriate Dress

Provide simple clothing that is free of complicated fasteners that is washable to eliminate feelings of fear of getting dirty. Always provide at least one full extra set of clothing for your child-regardless of age. All children are involved in a variety of activities that can become quite messy. Toileting mishaps can happen at any age. **Please label everything.** Children must have appropriate outdoor wear. Provide sweaters, jackets, splash pants, boots, snow boots, mittens, caps-hats, etc. Depending on the temperature and weather conditions, we provide 2 hours of outdoor play a day, as per ministry regulations. As a parent/guardian it is your responsibility to appropriately dress your child. Providers may not have a supply of extra clothing; please be sure your child is prepared.

## Arrival and Departure

For obvious safety reasons, ALL children must be escorted into and from the provider's home. Inform the provider of your arrival and departure. Upon arrival, inform the provider of any relevant information concerning your child's well-being. The provider will make every effort to keep you up-to-date on your child's progress, adjustments, difficulties etc. on an ongoing basis. Do not hesitate to discuss any matters of importance to you and your child (e.g., perhaps he/she did not have a good night's rest, etc.). Parents, please inform your providers if someone other than parent or guardian will be picking up your child from care on any given day. Any new adult arriving to pick up your child must be made known to the provider by the parent ahead of time. If the adult is not on the emergency contact form, then another form must be filled out and signed by the parent ahead of time giving this adult permission to pick up your child. Any new and unknown adult must have ID on them upon pick up **OTHERWISE ACCESS TO YOUR CHILD FOR THIS ADULT WILL BE DENIED AND THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.** (SEE POLICY LAST PAGE)

### Important

If no parent/guardian has arrived to pick-up your child within a half hour of your expected time and we cannot reach you, the persons on your child's emergency contact list (on the child's application form), will be contacted to pick up your child. If Better Than Home Daycare cannot reach you or your emergency contact at a half hour after your expected arrival time, we will contact the local authorities (CAS).

## Bullying, Harassment & Violence in the Workplace

Better Than Home Daycare is committed to providing a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, free from any form of bullying, harassment or violence. To that end, workplace bullying, harassment and violence will not be tolerated from any person in the workplace. Better Than Home Daycare will take all reasonable measures to prevent incidents and protect workers.

### Zero Tolerance

Although clients and members of the public are not governed by this policy, Better Than Home does not tolerate any behaviour constituting bullying, harassment and/or violence to be exhibited by clients/public toward any member of Better Than Home Daycare. **Any client or public person displaying any of these behaviours may be restricted future access to the properties affiliated with Better Than Home. The authorities will be contacted as required for protection issues.**

## Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017

The child and family services act states that every person who has reason to believe that a child is at risk has a legal obligation to report his or her suspicions immediately to the Children's Aid

Society. Better Than Home is committed to meeting the legal and professional responsibility of the Child and Family Services Act and to ensuring the safety and protection of each child enrolled. Let's Grow RECE Home Visitors are trained to spot signs of child abuse or neglect, they are required to file a report. It will be the responsibility of the Children's Aid Society to investigate suspicions and evaluate the situation. Failing to report a situation can result in a \$1000 fine.

## Custody

Please be advised, in situations where there are custodial concerns, the Home Child Care Agency may not refuse the release of a child to a parent/guardian at the request of the other parent/guardian unless we have a legal document on premise in the child's file, specifically outlining the custodial arrangements to this effect. We cannot legally refuse the pick-up of a child by a parent/guardian without custody arrangement stating this at our disposal. With the safety and well-being of the child in mind, please be prompt with providing all necessary documents.

## Emergency Contacts

In case of accidental injury, every attempt will be made to contact a parent/guardian. If we cannot reach a parent/guardian, we will contact the emergency contact person(s) you have noted on your child's registration form. It is imperative that the agency and the provider are informed immediately of any changes in the numbers where you or your emergency contacts can be reached. It is for your child's benefit and safety that you keep the child's file up-to-date at all times in regard to phone numbers, emergency contact person's, change of address, new place of employment and all other pertinent information. This information can be sent via email or WhatsApp. We may ask for you to fill out a new emergency form. No fee amendments will be applied when updating forms.

## Extreme Weather

Extreme situations & weather that affect our services are considered "acts of God" and are out of our control. Situations involving intense heat, extreme wind chill factors, electrical storms, ice storms, heavy rainfall, etc. do keep us from participating in outdoor activities on occasion. At times, our outdoor periods are simply reduced to allow for some outdoor active play. Please ensure your back-up contact people indicated on your child's application form are current and can be reached in the event you are not available.

Note: fees WILL BE adjusted if Better Than Home has NOT warranted a change of service but your provider closes anyway. In this situation the providers closure will be viewed as a provider "sick day" and no fees or a lessened fee will be billed.

# First Aid and Emergency Response

Minor accidents and illnesses are common occurrences with children. Providers have valid Standard First Aid Certification. When a minor occurrence happens, parents/guardians are notified of and asked to sign an incident report form at pick-up time. The parent/guardian is given a copy of the report. Serious accidents or illnesses will be reported to parents/guardians immediately. Parents/guardians will be requested to pick-up their child at the earliest convenience and seek medical attention if needed. If during program time, there is an emergency requiring immediate medical attention, Better Than Home providers will call 911 and if possible, accompany the child to the hospital. Parents/guardians will be notified and requested to meet the child at the hospital.

## Food & Menu

Menus are planned based on the guidelines outlined in the Canada Food Guide and in consultation with the RECE Home Visitor and the parents/guardians. If your child has limitations with regard to any food, be sure to inform the provider and note them on your child's registration form and emergency card. The parents/guardians are asked to supply food for a child who has nutritional requirements, as specified in writing by the child's physician, that are not provided by the home child care provider. Children under 1 years of age- parents must supply the food and formula etc with written details of the child's schedule . For those children in care a full day and who eat table food: the provider will supply a mid-morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack. If a child is in attendance for more than one meal time, a meal is provided at each meal time). Parents/guardians are notified by the provider about the snacks and meals that will be served to the children during the day, including during extended hours of care. Children are never forced to eat and privileges are never taken away. Children are encouraged to try what is provided.

### **Rules for Parents Who Provide Food /Drink from home**

1. Parents cannot bring food that contains any allergens (follow up with the Home Visitor/Provider for the list)
2. Parents must provide written instructions for all children with dietary needs.
3. Food/drink provided by parents must be clearly labelled with the child's name and the dates the food/drink was sent to the home.
4. Food/drink is stored in a manner that maximizes their nutritive value and minimizes the risk of contamination or spoilage. Parents must provide ice packs for times when a refrigerator is not present. (e.g. trips)

## Infant Feeding

Bottles and food supplied by the family must be labelled even if your child is the only child in care – this is a Ministry licensing requirement. The gradual introduction of solid foods, beginning sometime between four to eight months, is recommended for optimum growth and development. The parent/guardian, in consultation with the child's doctor, will determine when to introduce solids to the infant's diet. This information will be provided and recorded on the Infant Feeding Chart. If you have not received one with your registration package, please ask for one. Your provider will need this before care begins in order to keep the child on his/her regular schedule. Feeding instructions will need to be updated on a regular basis in consultation with your provider.

## Health & Safety

It is our policy to make every attempt to make the workplace safe and without risk to the health and safety of any person. We will endeavor to:

- Ensure the safe use, handling, storage and transport of chemical products.
- Provide information, instruction, supervision and training to providers.
- Ensure safe systems of work are in place e.g., hygiene practices, safe use of equipment.
- Ensure children, parents/guardians, visitors and members of the public are not exposed to activities or agents which may present risks to their health and safety
- Establish directions and procedures for children, providers, volunteers, parents/guardians and members of the public to ensure health and safety.

Regular inspections are performed to help identify health and safety risks. Strategies are developed to address any identified potential hazard.

## Illness

Better Than Home is not equipped to provide care for children who are ill. Parents/guardians are asked to keep their children at home if they show symptoms of contagious illnesses. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, and discharge from the eyes, skin rashes or itching, lethargic, severe or croupy coughs. A daily health check is completed by providers in order to minimize the spread of illness in the home. If a child becomes ill during the day, parents/guardians will be notified and asked to pick the child up. When a child is sent home due to illness, infection, fever is present, or medication is required (antibiotic, eye drops, etc.), the child must be free of fever and/or using the medication for not less than 24 hours before returning to the program. If your child is ill with the flu or flu-like symptoms during the night, the child must be kept home the following day. In some cases, a Doctor/Nurse Practitioner note may be required for readmittance. If your child is too ill to attend elementary school, he or she is also too ill to attend our program.

## Immunization

Your child's health is of major importance to all of us. Upon enrollment, a copy of your child's immunization record or a signed Ministry-approved affidavit form excluding your child from immunization must be submitted for our files. An update must be submitted after every immunization booster. You can email a scanned copy to the office Attn: Immunization, or a copy can be made for you at the office.

**Note:** your child cannot attend care until we have an up-to-date immunization record or affidavit on file.

## Medication

Whenever possible parents are encouraged to administer medication to their children at home, if this can be done without affecting the treatment cycle. If medication must be administered while receiving child care then a completed Medical Administration Form must be completed by the parent/guardian. No medication may be administered until this form has been completed and signed.

Better Than Home strives to create childcare that is inclusive of all children regardless of their abilities or conditions. In circumstances where medication is to be given to child receiving care that requires professional knowledge Better Than Home will work diligently to ensure the provider receives necessary training (e.g., insulin, epinephrine).

### IMPORTANT!

Providers do not supply medication of any kind. Supplying medication for a child is the parent/guardian responsibility. Never leave medication of any kind in your child's bag. Always hand deliver medication to the provider.

Medication procedure:

- Completed Medical Administration Form Medication is in the original container.
- Prescription medication states the child's: Name, date filled, medication name, dosage, time(s) to be given, length of time to be administered, expiry and method of administration on the pharmacist's label.
- Providers are required to fill out a Provider's Medication Administration Form for each treatment term as well as making a note on the child's daily record that medication was administered.
- If medication is administered "as necessary" (e.g., asthma medication, allergy medication topical steroid creams), the parent/guardian must state, on the medication

form, the types of symptoms/reactions that could be observed during a period when the medication is required and being taken.

- Medications must be stored by the child care provider in the manner specified on the pharmacist's label and must be inaccessible to children at all times. With the exception of life saving medication that must be quickly administered: asthma/allergy medication (Ryan's Law). Emergency medication should be easily accessible at all times but kept out of children's reach.
- If a parent/guardian has written on the medication administration form that their child is to carry their life saving medication it must be securely placed on their person via: belt pouch/pack. If the provider is responsible for carrying the lifesaving medication, then it must always be with the provider. (e.g., a provider would not necessarily have time to run into the house and get medication from a secure place if the child is outside having a serious asthma attack).
- Medication should be dispensed in a well-lit area, where possible, it is preferable to remove child from the activity area to administer medication in a quiet environment with the least possible interruption.
- Leftover medication or surplus medication must be returned in the original container to the parent/guardian to properly dispose of.
- If adverse symptoms are evident upon accidental administration of medication, home child care providers should call local emergency medical services immediately and notify the agency. Any accidental administration of medication (e.g., medication administered to the wrong child or wrong dose given) might be considered a serious occurrence and must be recorded/reported to the Home Visitor at Better Than Home who should then notify the parent of the child, Providers note in the daily written record and if life is threatened this will be reported to the program advisor as a serious occurrence.

#### Nonprescription medications:

- Due to the frequency and longer-term daily usage, sunscreen, diaper creams and lip balms will require a one-time signature of authorization to be completed with enrolment form. They can be administered without a medication administration form provided they are non-prescription. These items must be provided by the parent/guardian if/when necessary.
- The administration of over-the-counter medication is highly discouraged (e.g., Tylenol, Tempra, Benadryl, medicated ointments: nonprescription).
- Parent's must complete a Medication Administration Form for nonprescription medications to be administered to their child while at child care. The form must include

information pertaining to cause, dosage, signs and symptoms requiring medication. Also must submit a doctors note for reasons for administering it.

IT IS THE PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY TO ASK FOR THE CHILD'S MEDICATION AT THE END OF THE DAY. It is not the provider's responsibility to remind the parent to take medications home.

## Masking illnesses

If a child is suspected of being medicated to "look well" so they can attend daycare a note will be placed on the child's file and the Director will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the illness policy. Children who suddenly develop a fever after lunch or tell their child care provider "they had medicine this morning" will be closely monitored. As an agency we understand that parents are required to work and we empathize with the financial requirements of having a home and family. However, it is completely inappropriate to mask a child's fever/illness with medication to make it appear as though they are well. If a pattern of hiding illness is suspected child care may be terminated. This behaviour is not fair to the child, other children at the program or the child care provider.

## Safe Sleep Supervision Policy

It is the policy of Better Than Home Daycare to ensure that:

- Infants' sleep and rest periods are based on their own schedules
- Each toddler and preschool child enrolled is permitted to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on the child's needs.
- children will be assigned to individual cribs or cots in accordance with this regulation.

This policy and its procedures meet the mandatory Ministry of Education requirements regarding sleep and supervision of sleep.

### Intent

While not all children need a midday nap, young children benefit from periods of quiet relaxation to balance their active play. Some children who are tired may take a relatively long time to relax and sleep, while others only require a short rest period. Children's needs may also change from day to day or week to week.



The need for rest and sleep varies greatly at different ages, and even among children of the same age; however, rest is an important part of the day for all children. This provision allows for a period during which quiet activities are encouraged and children can nap if required.

## For children who sleep

Toddlers and preschoolers who regularly sleep have a rest period not exceeding two hours in length.

Monitoring sleeping children reduces the risk of harm/injury as Providers can look for”

- Signs of distress
- Behaviours during sleep
- Changes in sleep patterns

## Special instructions

Sleep and rest time should be of such duration that normal sleep patterns at home are not disrupted.

Programs should take into consideration instructions from parents regarding their children’s sleep and rest period. These instructions should be followed as closely as possible but the provider also needs to take into consideration the need of the individual child.

If a parent has provided instructions for the child not to sleep during the day but the child is falling asleep at the table, the provider should provide a rest period for this child. The provider can explain to the parents that the child required a nap that day because the child was unable to stay awake.

## Supervision

Daytime hours:

All children that regularly sleep and rest at the home child care setting will:

- Be monitored by the provider, including direct visual checks four times throughout each two-hour sleep and rest period. The number of daytime sleep and rest periods applies to the age and need of the child.
- Be monitored ensuring sufficient light in the sleep/rest area to conduct direct visual checks.
- Have the direct visual checks documented by initial on the sleep monitoring form. The completed sleep monitoring form is submitted with attendance forms to the agency office bi-weekly.

- Have any significant change in sleep pattern or behaviour observed while the provider is conducting the direct visual checks documented on the “sleep monitor” form and communicated to the parent/guardian. Adjustments, if applicable will be documented on the child’s application form and the provider will be notified by the ECE home visitor.

### Important!

Electronic sleep monitors cannot be used in place of direct visual checks of sleeping children during daytime sleep and rest periods.

## Safe Sleep:

Children aged 0-12 months of age are placed for sleep in a manner consistent with the recommendations set out in the most current version of the “Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: preventing SIDS in Canada (attached), a document endorsed by Health Canada.

Requirements relating to sleep positions may only be waived if a medical doctor advises a different position in writing. The recommendation must be submitted to Better Than Home Daycare.

## Smoke-Free Policy

As of May 2006, Ontario developed a Non-Smoking Bylaw that includes Home Child Care Facilities. There shall be no smoking in the home where child care takes place and smoking shall not happen in the yard or garage outside when children in care are present. During the providers personal time (hours/days of closure) no one shall smoke within a 10-foot radius of the home.

## Sunscreen

**PROVIDERS DO NOT SUPPLY SUNSCREEN DUE TO COST AND ALLERGIES.** They are, however, responsible for ensuring that sunscreen is applied before any outdoor play or excursions during seasons of high ultraviolet rays. All children **MUST** come in a **SUNSCREEN** and a hat in summer weather and a warm hat, extra mittens in winter weather.

## Toilet Training

Children who are in the process of toilet training or those prone to accidents must come to the provider's home prepared with an appropriate number of changes of clothing. Please remember to consider your child's comfort as well as the convenience of your child's Provider. The provider does not provide extra clothing or launder soiled clothing. When you begin toilet training your

child, speak with your provider. It is important to be on the same routine and somewhat the same procedures. (I.e., Readiness can make all the difference in success and using the same procedures). Working together with the provider may help the process be less challenging for your child, you and your provider. Providers do not rinse soiled clothing or diapers as this causes the spread of bacteria and germs by way of splashing. Soiled clothing will be placed in a tied plastic bag and returned to you at pick up time.

## Diapers, Pull-ups & wipes

Parents/guardians are responsible for supplying/restocking diapers, pull-ups and wipes at the provider's home. Consider purchasing an extra package to leave at the provider's home. Your provider will inform you in advance when the supply is getting low.

## Toys from Home

It is our policy to discourage children from bringing toys from home. Aside from those special "things" needed during a child's adjustment to his/her new Home Child Care experience, all other treasures should not come to the provider's home. Problems with missing or broken toys and sharing situations quite often arise. If the child has a special blanket or toy, he/she likes to rest with, it is acceptable. Please consult with your provider before bringing any items from home. \*Our providers are not responsible for lost or damaged items from home. \*

## Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures

### **Purpose**

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide The Providers, staff (e.g., home child care visitor, home child care agency administrators, etc.), students and volunteers with a clear direction as to what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the home child care premises as expected, as well as procedures to follow to ensure the safe arrival and dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

### **Policy and Procedures**

### **Accepting a child into care**

The Provider is responsible for signing children in on the attendance record as children arrive at the home premises where care is provided.

The Provider is responsible for ensuring any communication from parents/guardians related to drop-off or absences is noted on the daily written record and marked absent on the attendance sheet

### **Where a child has not arrived in care as expected**

1. Where a child does not arrive at the home child care premises and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off or that the child will be absent (e.g., left a voice message, WhatsApp message or advised the Provider at pick-up) the Provider must:

**o contact the child's parent/guardian not later than 10:00am The Providers shall use Text, Phone calls, WhatsApp or email to try and find out if they are coming to daycare.**

2. **Once the child's absence has been confirmed, The Provider shall document the child's absence on the attendance sheet and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.**

### **Releasing a child from care**

The Provider shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or another individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child may be released to on the emergency form.

Where the Provider does not know the individual picking up the child, the Provider must ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization provided by parent/guardian. **Written authorization must come from the parent/guardian before the child is released.**

### **Where a child has not been picked up as expected**

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by regular pick-up time the, The Provider shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. The provider will notify he agency to advise that the child is still in care and to ask for assistance to locate the parent or guardian to inquire their pick-up time.
3. Where the Provider is the person contacting the parent/guardian and they have been unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the Provider shall report to agency and look for guidance and support to the situation.

4. Where the Provider and home visitor, are unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., emergency contacts) 30 minutes after the closing time of the agency shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS).
5. The agency shall provide CAS the home provider's contact details to follow CAS's direction with respect to next steps. The Provider shall also advise the agency of the information gathered from CAS.
6. Once the child is picked up either from authorities or parent/guardian/ authorize persons the provider will notify the agency and the provider will make a note on the attendance of time picked up.

#### **Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures**

The provider will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. **Under no circumstances will children be released from care to anyone else or allow a child to walk home on their own (school age children).**