



6.01 FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS

Purpose Statement

Windermere's Family Day Care recognises that the families are the child's first and most influential educator. Collaborative relationships with families are fundamental to achieve quality outcomes for children. Community partnerships that focus on active communication, consultation and collaboration also contribute to children's learning and wellbeing.

Scope

This policy applies to all salaried full time and part time staff (including casuals), educators and contractors.

Policy Statement

ACTIVE COMMUNICATION, CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION ARE INTEGRAL TO A CHILD'S LEARNING AND WELLBEING. THE PROCEDURES HERE WITHIN DEMONSTRATE WINDERMERE'S COMMITMENT TO PROMOTING FRIENDLY, COMFORTABLE AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FAMILIES, EDUCATORS AND PROGRAM STAFF.

Procedures

Sharing Essential Information with Families

Timely and regular information can prevent misunderstandings and difficulties arising between families and your setting. Staff and educators are jointly responsible for providing information to families on:

1. Policies and procedure - assists families in understanding 'program rules' (designed to ensure a child's safety, health and well-being)
2. The philosophy, values and beliefs of the service
3. The importance of play in supporting a child's learning and development
4. The family day care residence/facility (shared during the orientation phase)
5. Educator to child ratios
6. The team at Windermere and who they can talk to about their child.

NOTE: *Windermere is committed to providing information to families in alternative ways (ie engaging interpreters, using photographs) where families have limited English. Windermere is a culturally competent service and acknowledges the diversity of its community.*

Building Partnerships with Families

1. Strong partnerships with families are based on:
 - a. Trust
 - b. Open and respectful communication
 - c. Shared information about child/ren in care



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- d. Involvement in children’s learning and development
- e. Shared decision making.

2. The following practices support the development of strong partnerships with families:

PRINCIPLES	PRACTICES
TRUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All information shared is treated as strictly confidential. • Families are not judged • Information is shared with families about the service including the names of staff, their qualifications and philosophies. • Educators ensure access to the service for families during the hours of operation • Educators provide regular updates to families regarding the child’s education and care program • Educator displays knowledge of child development and education and care needs when conversing with families. • Staff and educators are professional at all times and never discuss one family with another • The service complies with all funding and legislative requirements
OPEN & RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect is shown for the lifestyle choices and cultural traditions of families attending the service • Using positive language when engaging in conversation with parents/guardians about a child’s social, behavioural and/or emotional needs • Treating all families with a smile and in a courteous manner which demonstrates to them that their child is your most important concern
SHARED INFORMATION ABOUT CHILDREN IN CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed enrolment forms are maintained allowing families to share information about a child’s health needs • Opportunities exist at the beginning of each day to share information with educators about a child’s needs • Educators will make themselves available for meetings with families to ensure that their needs are met • Different mediums are used to share information – email, verbal, communal signage/notice boards, newsletters, hand written notes
INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN’S LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators share with families a child’s art and craft work • Families are provided with verbal and written feedback about their child • Developmental records are made available to families and the opportunity to consult with the educator about the record is offered • Current program is displayed within Family Day Care residence



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where able, educators explore opportunities to visit local libraries, playgroups and/or recreational facilities with children enrolled in care • Information is provided to families about community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing
SHARED DECISION MAKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families are invited to have input into reviews of policies and procedures • Families are encouraged to be actively involved in planning cultural experiences for children and other interest based activities • Families are actively encouraged to share in decision making about a child's education and care program

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Two-way communication is vital to friendly, comfortable and cooperative relationships. Parents/guardians are responsible for:

1. Sharing with educators a child's interests/hobbies
2. Providing educators with information about special events in a child's life (ie cultural celebrations, arrival of a new baby, moving house, new pet)
3. Reading communications as provided by the service and/or educators and where necessary, acting on the information provided
4. Informing the educator of the child's arrival at the Family Day Care residence enabling the educator to greet the child and invite him/her to participate in the day's activities.

Relevant Standards/Legislation

- National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care Services including:
 - Education and Care Services National Law 2011
 - Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Related Policies & Links

- *Respectful Relationships with Children Procedure*