



PARENT HANDBOOK

March 2016

PANDA CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

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w pandachildcare.com

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The Panda childcare program

Panda's philosophy of child care

We believe that high quality, developmentally appropriate programs should be available to all children and their families and should be applied to the four components of Early Childhood programs: curriculum, adult-child interactions, relations between the home and program, and developmental evaluation of children. We believe children learn through play and a good program will provide opportunities for all levels of development and types of play.

Every child is treated with respect and consideration. Panda staff listen to the children and respond to them in a respectful and appropriate manner. We support children's respectful peer interaction, acknowledge children's expressed feelings, and treat their feelings as valid.

Objectives and goals

At Panda, our goal is to provide a high quality early childhood program within a safe and nurturing environment, allowing children to develop independence, confidence, and a positive sense of themselves and the world around them. We will challenge and stimulate each child through a variety of developmentally appropriate activities to enhance language, literature, music and movement, creativity and socialization. We will encourage warm social relationships to develop through interactions with adults and other children. We establish daily routines to ensure a secure and healthy environment.

Our program

Panda programs are designed to meet the individual child's basic developmental needs: social, physical, emotional, intellectual, creative, and self-concept, while responding to the needs of families. The child's world is expanded mainly through appropriate staff-peer interactions and by staff picking up on children's cues. Themes are used to expand the child's knowledge of their own world and they are integrated within the learning activity centres whenever possible.

Panda's approach to meeting children's needs

Social needs

Panda children interact with peers and adults; they learn to function as a group member and learn appropriate social behaviour through self-directed activities in all centres.

Physical needs

Panda children are given the opportunity to use a variety of physical skills in the gross motor and fine motor centres. The program ensures the child has the opportunity for adequate nutrition and rest as required. The centre provides a healthy and safe environment through extensive and observant supervision to ensure safe play. We follow the Alberta Government Health Regulations for Day Cares.

Intellectual needs

Panda children are given the opportunity to explore, observe, to know and understand objects and events in their environment. They are given every opportunity to develop language skills, both in the use of words and in the skill of listening. These are integrated with the development of social, intellectual, creative, and emotional skills.

Creative needs

Panda children are given the opportunity for creative expression, creative problem solving, invention, discovery, and experimentation in centres with sand, water, art, science, discovery, carpentry, dramatic play, and manipulative toys.

Emotional needs

Panda children are respected as individual and unique beings. They are encouraged to develop independence, to take initiative to express their anger appropriately and to cope with frustrations.

The role of the preschool educator

Panda understands the importance of the early years in a child's development. Consistency and continuity of care, by way of primary caregivers, enhances support to the developmental appropriateness of an early childhood program.

This consistency and continuity develops secure and trustworthy relationships between parents, children, and staff. Therefore, we implement the primary caregiver system and the forming of consistency groups within the rooms.

Children's play interests are respected. All activities within activity centres are selected, directed, and ended by the children. Adults observe the children's activities and offer additional ideas for play, encouraging the children's engagement in the activity.

Language is a vital, lively form of communication. Panda staff – on an ongoing basis – talk with, sing to, and read to children. Children are praised for their accomplishments and helped to feel increasingly competent.

By encouraging each child's self respect and respect for others, our primary staff help the children develop self-control and sensitivity in their interactions with others.

Guiding children's behaviour is an important part of each primary staff member's role and one that takes place continually throughout the day. Appropriate behaviour management methods guide the children's behaviour while protecting and enhancing their self-esteem.

The Out of School supervisor has developed a program to meet the needs of children six to 10 years of age, according to the Community and Child Care Standards.

Daily routines are posted in each room as a guide to your child's/ children's activities.

Panda staffing standards and requirements

All staff at Panda Child Development Centres are qualified educators, in accordance with the Alberta Day Care Staff Qualifications. We require that all staff obtain a First Aid Certificate within six months of employment. All staff are required to submit to a criminal reference check at time of hiring.

Your role as a parent

We believe that parents play an important role in supporting their child in our program. We encourage all parents to become involved.

Here are some possibilities:

1. Visiting the program.
2. Volunteering in the playroom.
3. Helping the classroom staff on a field trip.
4. Bringing in materials for arts and crafts.
5. Bringing something of your culture or language to the program (stories, songs, dances, foods, words)
6. Lending your support to fundraisers.
7. Bringing in a birthday cake to help us celebrate your child's special day.
8. Participate in dinners, teas, Stampede Breakfast and Christmas Celebration.

Research shows that parents who are involved and show enthusiasm for their child's preschool programs promote their child's self esteem and reduces discipline problems both at home and at the centre.

Your monthly calendars will be posted on the web site. If you require a paper copy, please contact your Centre Director. Parent newsletters are published quarterly to inform you of upcoming events. A parent information bulletin board is located in each room. These are used to post weekly program, menus, field trips, notices and reminders.

Your Centre Director and staff are encouraged to communicate daily with you to inform you of your child's experiences during the day.

You are welcome to express any concerns or expectations you may have, via meetings with the Centre Director and staff. We believe that open communication between you and our staff is essential at our centres.

Panda policies and procedures

Parent orientation

When you register, we'll give you a tour of the facility, so you can see for yourself how the environment has been designed to ensure that children can be safe and supervised at all times. You will be given a copy of the Panda Parent Handbook, as well as other information including child guidance practices, health, medication/herbal remedies, accident/ incident, release of the child, etc. This information will be discussed with you and you will be asked to indicate your understanding by signing a copy of the policies and a parent contract.

Children use the outdoor play space on a daily basis, year-round, providing the weather conditions permit and children have proper attire.

Panda supports all families in their child-rearing role and is respectful of their beliefs, home culture, and language. We are inclusive and strive to validate everyone. We work to be culturally relevant in all our activities.

Children with diverse abilities

Panda is happy to accept children with individual, intellectual, or physical challenges; providing the specific centre is equipped to meet the unique needs of the child, and appropriate staff support is available.

Panda accepts children with diverse abilities, providing any additional costs for care are borne by the parent.

Supported Child Care is available within the centre, as well as referrals to other services.

Attendance, arrival and departure

It is the parent's responsibility to accompany their child into the centre, to assist them with removing outdoor clothing and to ensure that the teacher is aware of the child's arrival.

Each day upon arrival to the centre, the parent or guardian will record the child's 'time in' by signing in with ink. On departure the parent signs the child out with ink and signs their signature to verify times.

Please have your child at the centre by 9.30 am or before, as the events of our program begin then. Should your child be absent, please notify us the day prior if possible, or that morning before 9.00 am.

Studies in child development have shown that for the well being of your child, it is beneficial for them to not be away from the family setting for more than 10 hours a day.

Fee Policies

Fees are due on the first working day of the month. If fees are not paid, in full, by the fifth of the month, a late fee of \$25 will be levied. If payment is not received by the 10th of the month, childcare will be suspended until full payment is received. Fees are a flat rate, irrespective of days missed for illness or vacation. Monthly fees are determined by the age of your child. In accordance with government regulations, your child's age is determined on the first of each month. The age groupings are as follows:

- 12 – 18 months;
- 19 – 35 months;
- 36 months – ECS;
- 6 – 10 years of age.

All centres accept payment in interac direct payment or cash.

Statutory Holidays

Panda Care Centres are closed for the following statutory holidays. Please see the parent bulletin board for exact dates.

| | | |
|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| New Year's Day | Alberta Family Day | Good Friday |
| Victoria Day | Canada Day | Heritage Day |
| Labour Day | Thanksgiving Day | Remembrance Day |
| Christmas Day | Boxing Day | |

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited while at Panda Child Development Centres.

Cleanliness

Cleanliness is a high priority in our centres. All toys, equipment and furnishings are washed and disinfected weekly, or more often if needed. Cribs and all mattresses are disinfected weekly or when needed. Baby toys and all mouthed toys are disinfected daily.

In order to minimize the spread of germs and illness, Panda staff practice the following hygiene policies:

- we ensure children and staff wash their hands with warm water and soap after using the washroom. Younger children are given assistance turning on taps and drying their hands;
- hands are also washed after activities, coming in from outside, after wiping noses, and before and after meals. Washcloths are provided for each child to assist in washing faces and hands after eating;
- follow the diapering procedure from the Calgary Health Services when diapering young children. This is posted by the change tables for your information.

Illness

If your child becomes ill while at Panda, you will be notified immediately. In some cases you may be required to have your child picked up.

If we feel your child has a contagious disease, or any of the following criteria applies, he/she will be placed in a separate space set up within the centre, under staff supervision, and you will be responsible for picking your child up immediately:

- child has a temperature of 100°F (38°C) or higher;
- child vomited one time;
- child had diarrhea one time;
- child is in distress (in this case your child may return to the centre upon providing a doctor's note);
- we request that your child remains at home until they have been cleared of symptoms for 24 hours

Parents are encouraged to tell staff when their child has been in contact with someone who has a communicable disease. Panda will post written information regarding any communicable disease going through the centre, describing symptoms, incubation period, and possible exclusion if warranted.

In a case of an accident/incident, a report is completed by Panda staff and you will be provided with a copy of the report.

In a case of a serious accident/incident or illness, to ensure that the child receives medical attention, staff will contact the parents without delay and take whatever action is appropriate.

Medical information and staff training

- Emergency contact and parent's phone numbers are accessible near the telephone;
- Medical emergency information about each child is accessible on site;
- Arrangements for emergency transportation are available if needed;
- Epi-pens, puffers, and other medications/herbal remedies are stored according to regulations;
- Panda staff are made familiar with children with medical concerns and appropriate first aid interventions;
- Panda staff are trained in first aid and the use of epi-pens, and puffers, and will provide medication only with the parent's written permission.

Medication/herbal remedies

If your child requires medication/herbal remedies, you will need to complete a 'Medication/ Herbal Remedy Form' at the centre and provide the medication/herbal remedy product to the staff. If the form is not completed, we are unable (by law) to administer the medication/herbal remedy to your child. A staff member with a valid first aid certificate will administer all medicine/herbal remedies.

Medication/herbal remedies are locked and stored out of the reach of children. The medication/herbal remedy product must be in the original bottle and the label must indicate the child's name, the date and the dose to be administered. If any further healthcare needs are to be provided, please contact the Centre Director.

Emergency medications such as epi-pens and puffers are not to be locked – for easier access – but they must be stored in the child's room and out of reach of children.

Nutrition

Panda employs a cook who prepares nutritious home cooked meals. We work with a four-week rotating menu, consisting of morning and afternoon snacks and a hot lunch. Menus are posted in each room and by the front entrance.

If your child requires a special diet for cultural or medical reasons, we will do our best to accommodate you. However, please be advised that we may not be able to supplement everything.

Please speak to the Centre Director and she will advise you as to what Panda is able to provide and what you must supply yourself. Also, please keep in mind that the food you supply should be nutritious and follow the Canada Food Guide.

Peanut-conscious program

Panda has eliminated peanuts and peanut-based snacks from our menu. We also use non-peanut alternatives wherever possible.

While Panda makes every effort to ensure that meals and snacks are free from peanuts or peanut byproducts, we cannot guarantee that all food purchased from suppliers is completely free from peanut contamination. We cannot be responsible for children or families who may bring peanuts to our centres, or for any residue that may remain on surfaces.

It is extremely important that parents of children with peanut allergies notify the centre in writing, and provide an epi-pen in case of emergencies.

First aid

First aid kits are provided and properly equipped to meet the approved list of the Calgary Health Region. Each room has a mini portable first aid kit.

Toys and equipment

Panda ensures that our toys and equipment are properly maintained on an ongoing basis, and that all equipment complies with applicable federal and provincial requirements and CSA Standards. Toys, equipment and outdoor spaces are checked daily by senior Panda staff before children use areas. Unsafe equipment or furnishings are removed or repaired.

Release of child

No child will be released to a person not authorized by the parent to pick the child up. We must have written authorization for changes in this respect. In cases of custody restraint, a legal letter of terms must be given to the Centre Director.

In an unusual situation where it is not possible for the parent to give written permission, a password (agreed upon by the parent and the Centre Director at registration time and marked on the registration card) will be used in order to verify that the person who phones to make an alternate arrangement is the parent.

Field Trips

Panda plans trips to special places for children aged three years and older. A release form for each field trip or excursion will be provided to the parent/guardian to authorize their child to engage in the event.

Toys and food

Panda provides an extensive assortment of educational toys and activities for your child, so extra toys from home are not necessary. No toy weapons such as guns or swords are allowed in our centres.

We discourage children from bringing food, candy or gum into our centres.

Nap and rest times

Recent studies have suggested that children of all ages are not getting enough sleep.

Infants' schedules are adjusted according to the child's eating and sleeping rhythms. Children between the ages of one and four-and-a-half years are very active and need rest, but they show their autonomy by objecting or delaying when it is time to sleep. Adults cannot make children sleep, but they can be matter-of-fact in requiring restful breaks in children's activity. For many young children, an afternoon nap or rest provides the proper amount of quiet during the day.

Older children, four-and-a-half to five years old, do not necessarily have a sleep/rest time, but if the child is tired and asks for a rest time, he/she will be accommodated as per their request.

Required Items

Your child will require the following:

- indoor shoes, a change of clothes, a crib sheet and a blanket for sleep time;
- toddlers who are being potty trained require two or three extra changes of clothes. Your child may bring their favourite cuddly toy for sleep time, also;
- please take your child's soiled laundry home at the end of each day and return any clothing that was borrowed from the centre.

The role of Panda staff in facilitating children's development

Panda uses two types of methods in guiding children's behaviour: preventive and intervention strategies. Our preventive strategies are based on the knowledge of child development. The intervention strategies are used to stop or redirect undesirable behaviour when it occurs.

Panda staff respect each child's individual needs and interests to encourage the development of children's self-esteem.

Guiding behaviour and setting limits

Panda staff encourage positive behaviour with words or gestures. They establish clear limits that are understandable to children and are consistent. Rules must be consistent and cannot be changed from day to day. We believe children should receive attention when they are behaving well, not just when they are misbehaving.

How we keep you informed

It is very important that any concerns or questions you or your child may have be communicated to us, as it is only through the exchange of information that understanding can be reached. The centre and home share an intense interest in the well-being of your child/children. We are truly in partnership and the more active the participation, the more effective the results.

We have an open-door policy and parents are encouraged to call at any time during the day. To keep you current, Panda staff are responsible for communicating with you regarding your child's day. Communication books are used in each room for day-to-day information and concerns. For sensitive matters, we use individual communication booklets that can go home at night with the child and be returned to Panda the following morning.

In case of accidents/incidents, Panda staff will fill out a report. For example, an incident report is filled out if a child has caused harm to another child, deliberately broken equipment, or lost control and had to be removed from the group. An accident report would be filled out if the child has been injured.

When undesirable behaviour occurs and if it becomes excessive, a meeting will be set up with the parent, staff, and the Centre Director to address the problem. The Child Guiding Behaviour Policy will be reviewed with you upon registration at the Centre and you will be required to sign it.

Guiding child behaviour policy

When undesirable behaviour occurs and a child needs to be stopped or redirected, the following intervention methods will be used:

- toddlers and infants will be redirected or distracted with a new toy or activity to resolve the behaviour problem. If necessary, they will be calmly removed from the situation and guided to another activity;
- an older child will be offered a choice of appropriate alternative activities.

Panda staff will help the child become interested and settled in the new activity, We encourage older children to problem-solve for themselves on a verbal level – rather than physical level – to develop self-discipline and self-control.

If an older child loses control and is unable to reason, he/she will immediately be removed from a particular activity or group since he/she would be causing disruption or harm to others around him/her. When composure is regained, the staff will help the child back into the play area. Once the child is calm, the caregiver will let the child know that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable, and not the child.

We feel that if a child is given ‘tender loving care’ and the attention that they require, there is rarely a problem. Physical punishment, harsh words, and humiliation are prohibited.

Fire drill procedures

Panda conducts monthly fire drills, where all children and staff vacate the building from the closest emergency exit. The fire drill chart, including date and exit times, is posted in the office for your information.

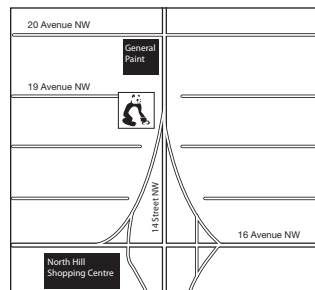
The emergency and evacuation procedure is approved by the local fire department. Both forms are posted at all fire exits. The local fire inspector inspects the centre annually.

Panda's fire drill procedure:

1. Sound the local alarm.
2. Call 911, giving the correct address.
3. One designated staff member in each room collects attendance sheets and emergency cards and waits at the nearest exit until all children have evacuated the building. All other staff members in the room direct children through the closest exit and away from the building, to a designated area.
4. The cook or cleaning staff assists the infant room in safe evacuation procedure.
5. The Centre Director checks the washrooms and play centres to ensure all children have evacuated, then closes all doors and switches lights off.
6. All children remain with their group in a designated area away from the building until:
 - i. Attendance is taken.
 - ii. The director has inspected the building.
 - iii. The alarm has been shut off.

Evacuation Locations

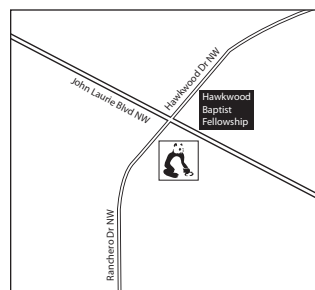
In the event of a fire, or for any other reason that an evacuation from the centre is required, Panda has made arrangements with the following locations. See maps below for directions from your centre. We will attempt to contact you if such an event occurs.



Panda – Capital Hill

General Paint & Wall Paper
2015 14th St. NW 403 289 4442

North Hill Shopping Centre
1632 14th Ave. NW 403 289 2516



Panda – Ranchlands

Hawkwood Baptist Fellowship
20 Hawkwood Dr NW 403 239 6200

Should you have a concern

You are encouraged to express any concerns or expectations you may have. Your Centre Director has an 'open door' policy. We believe open communication is essential at our centres, between you, Panda staff and the Centre Director. If you have a concern or complaint, please contact your Centre Director. If your issue cannot be resolved to your satisfaction, you may contact our Head Office at 403 543 7353, to speak to the Executive Director.

Receipt of handbook

We request that you initial your registration card to confirm that you have received this handbook. If you downloaded the handbook from our web site, please take a moment to fill out the form on the following page.

Receipt of Handbook

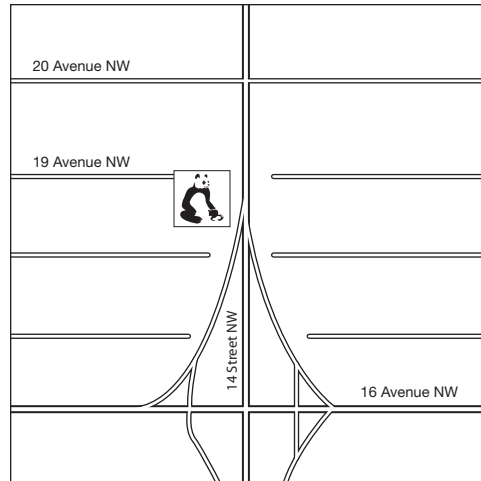
Once you have downloaded your copy of the Panda Handbook, please fill out the attached form and return it to your Centre Director.

Name (please print)

Signature

Panda location Capitol Hill Ranchlands

Contact Panda



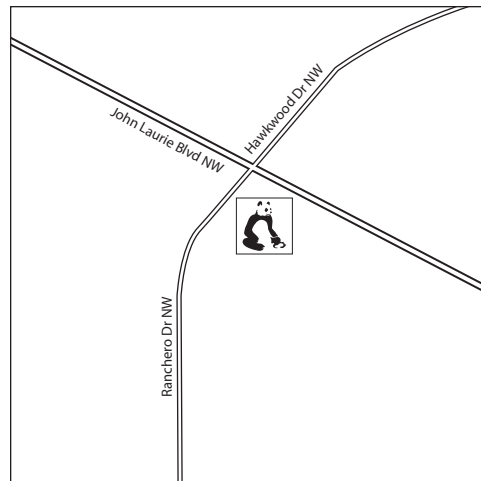
Panda – Capitol Hill

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Centre Director: Pamela



Panda – Ranchlands

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