



***P.E.A.K.  
2011 / 2012***

# THE TOTTLE INN CHILDREN'S CENTRE

## OUR MISSION

To provide loving and nurturing child care environments for each child's living and learning. We instill a lifelong love of learning and foster the development of positive self-esteem through family oriented, developmentally appropriate programs centered on the individual needs and interests of the children we serve.

## OUR VISION

To be community leaders in early childhood education by providing exceptional quality child care programs for the families we serve. Through innovation, continued growth and a passion for excellence, we will support the development of the whole child, including growth and development intellectually, emotionally, physically and socially.

Through our leadership, service and passion we will:

- Provide a secure, caring and enriched environment that promotes learning and the development of the whole child.
- Develop lifelong relationships, create partnerships with parents and enhance the quality of life for our families.
- Expand our business to strengthen our ability to benefit families and increase the number of children we serve.
- Support families in balancing their personal and professional lives by diversifying the programs we offer.
- Provide programs and environments that enrich the development of the children, promote respect for children and celebrate the joy of childhood.
- Enhance the communities in which we live by initiating and participating in community events.
- Focus our passion in caring for children into excellence in our programs.

## OUR CORE VALUES

\*Trust\* \*Respect\* \*Innovation\* \*Love of Learning\* \*Passion for Excellence\*

## PHILOSOPHY

*"What else in the entire world is as precious to us as our children?"*

The Tottle Inn Children's Centre believes that all children should have the opportunity to grow, learn and develop to their fullest potential. We recognize and accept each child as a unique individual with their own strengths and challenges, and having their own rate of growth and development. To assist all children in achieving their potential, our teaching team is committed to knowing the children individually, how they grow, feel and interact, which enables our educational team to plan appropriate experiences and curriculum. We believe all children have the right to feel safe, physically and emotionally. Children also have the right to express their ideas, creativity and feelings naturally and freely. We understand the needs and interests of Elementary age children can vary greatly. Therefore, we are committed to finding a balance of activities which will appeal to all children and meet their individual needs. We encourage the children to contribute to our program plans.

From this philosophy, we present the following goals:

- Assist the child in acquiring expressive (speaking) and receptive (listening) skills necessary for thinking and solving problems.
- Assist the child in developing visual discrimination and auditory perception skills necessary for interpreting the world around them.
- Assist the child in developing gross and fine motor skills necessary for maximum participation in the physical aspects of life.
- Assist the child in acquiring interpersonal (self-care) skills necessary for achieving independence and emotional security.
- Foster the development of positive self-esteem and a sense of belonging within each child.
- Assist the child in the formation of stable, caring relationships with their care providers and peers.
- Assist the child in the development of problem solving and negotiation skills as well as an awareness of equal opportunity and justice.

## INCLUSION PHILOSOPHY

Inclusion, as a value, supports the right of all children, regardless of abilities, to participate actively in natural settings within their communities. Natural settings are those in which the child would spend time had he or she not had a special need. The Tottle Inn Children's Centre supports and advocates that young children and their families have full access to health, social, educational and other support services, that promote full participation in family and community life. As young children participate in our programs, their active participation is guided by developmentally and individually appropriate curriculum. Access to and participation in the age appropriate general curriculum is

central to the identification and provision of specialized support services.

Inclusion is about community, about membership, about relationships, and about development. The goal of the programs offered at The Tottle Inn Children's Centres is to provide a positive educational experience to all children with diverse abilities in a setting that enhances the strengths and supports the needs, of all children in our programs; and provides children with opportunities to build memberships, establish relationships and develop functional skills.

The goal of our programs is to enhance the competence and confidence of the children and families with whom we work. Our programs are committed to providing children with opportunities to learn communication skills, to develop social relationships and to learn other functional skills in an integrated, developmentally appropriate environment. Families are involved in identifying the priority skills for their child and are encouraged to take an active role in the program. We believe in ensuring Parents are Partners in the care we provide for their children. We value and encourage their input and participation in helping us to ensure we meet the needs of their children.

A goal of our program is to promote active social integration between children with and without special needs across all parts of our daily routine. Effective and systematic assessment and instructional strategies are used to identify, teach, and support these important skills. Skills are taught within the context of meaningful activities across the curriculum. Support services (e.g. speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, E.I.B.I.) are provided in naturalistic settings (i.e. the classroom, playground etc) and use activity-based instruction to enhance skill acquisition and generalization. Data are collected to monitor child progress and instructional decisions are based on those data. Our complete Inclusion Policy document is available for parents to review.

### **COMMITMENT TO QUALITY:**

At The Tottle Inn Children's Centre, we are committed to providing a superior quality educational experience for our children and their families. We understand the significance of our influence on the children in our care as well as the enormous amount of trust parents place in our decision making processes. With this in mind, we have implemented many programs to ensure we are meeting the expectations of our families as well as to ensure we are providing exceptional quality programs, which reflect the current and proven research ideologies of the professionals within the child development field.

#### **Parents as Partners:**

We maintain an "Open Door Policy" for the families we serve. Parents are invited to phone or visit the centre at any time. Should a parent have a concern or topic they wish to discuss with the Director, advance notice may be required in order to schedule the time for a private meeting. We believe communication between parents and teachers is a key component to providing a superior quality of care for the children we serve. Newsletters are sent home each month to keep parents up to date on their child's time with us. Calendars are also sent home with upcoming special events. Parent meetings are held throughout the school year. We invite parents to join our parent committee and/or add topics to the agenda for our meetings. We encourage family and friends to attend our "Family Events" which are normally held in the evenings.

#### **Parent Information Centre:**

Our parent information centre is located near the entrance. The following information is located in the P.I.C. : Day Care Act & Regulations, Parent Handbook, License, Inspection Reports, Behaviour Guidance Policy, Current Menu, Daily Routines, Program Plans, Parent Committee members and meeting minutes and Funding notifications.

#### **Continuous Improvement Program:**

In an effort to ensure the needs of the families are being met as well as to expand upon our curriculum, we implement a Continuous Improvement Program. This is a means for family and friends to provide feedback or suggestions for our program. It is often referred to as the "suggestion box". We appreciate any feedback from families and friends and will respond to all entries.

#### **Professional Resources and Referrals:**

Through our many years in the childcare field, we have developed many relationships with professionals who care for children. We are members of many professional associations, attend seminars and workshops and often invite other professionals to come to the centre to assist us in ensuring our program is meeting the individual needs of the children. Our dedicated teachers are trained to identify issues, which may require professional referrals. Parents can be assured should we have any concerns regarding your child's development, we will discuss those concerns with you prior to making referrals to our colleagues. Some of our professional relationships include The Nova Scotia Hearing & Speech Clinic, Adolescence and Youth Services (Mental Health), Valley Child Development Association, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Association of Nova Scotia, Learning Disabilities of Nova Scotia, IWK, Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, Autism Society of Nova Scotia, local elementary schools and many other memberships and associations. We also have print materials available on a variety of topics related to issues surrounding child growth and development.

### **PROGRAM ORIENTATION:**

At The Tottle Inn Children's Centre, we encourage the involvement of parents in helping each child to become comfortable in their new environment. We understand the needs of the children will vary and we will work with parents to make the transition as easy as possible for everyone involved. We understand children may have separation anxiety and we have specific proven strategies, which we implement to help make the transition easier for the child and to help ease their anxiety...and their parent's anxiety! Please be assured separation anxiety is a normal part of the child's development and it is something we have worked through for many, many children. We have reference articles, which contain information for parents and tips to help ease your child's anxiety. During the orientation process, children will be paired with a student who has been at the centre for a longer period. This "Buddy System" often helps to ease the anxiety and give the child someone to seek out during periods of uneasiness. Our teachers are always available to ensure all children feel safe and comfortable in their new class!

### **STUDENT SUPPLIES:**

For your child's comfort and health, it is important to have clothing on hand which is suitable for our changing weather. A change of clothes and indoor sneakers or slippers with non-marking soles can be left in your child's cubby or brought each day. We ask that all children have a full change of clothes on hand each day. Appropriate outerwear must also be on hand everyday. Since some of our activities are planned to take place outside, *parents are asked to apply sunscreen* prior to drop off during the warmer months and to leave a supply of sunscreen in your child's cubby. The centre provides snacks for our after school program. Parents provide all food for the full day programs.

### **PAYMENT, HOLIDAY & FUNDRAISING POLICY:**

Our program fees are set for the year prior to the start of the fall session. Many things are considered when setting our program fee, including the number of scheduled sessions for the year as well as the anticipated number of cancelled sessions due to the weather, in-services etc. Our goal is to provide high quality, affordable programs for families in our community. We must also ensure our financial commitments can be met when setting the program fees. In an effort to keep program fees low, maintain our quality standards and meet the increasing expenses, we sometimes organize fundraising activities. Participation in these events is strictly on a volunteer basis. We normally hold two fundraising events each year, one in the fall and one in the spring.

All accounts are due to be paid on or before the 1st of each month, in advance. Parents may choose the monthly payment plan where one payment is made for the entire month on or before the 1st of the month. Alternatively, should a parent prefer to pay in two equal instalments, a payment and a post-dated cheque dated for the 15th must be received by the 1st of the month. Accounts cannot be held for two payments per month without a post-dated cheque being left with the payment on the 1st. Late fees will be applied to payments not received by the due date. Parents are asked to be prompt when making payments as late payments increase our operating expenses.

Near the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, Invoices will be issued indicating the total due for the month, including any additional charges such as late pick up or late payment fees. Monthly rates are unaffected by absenteeism. Payment is required for all days which your child has been scheduled even if your child is absent for any reason, in order to hold your child's spot at the centre. This applies to sick days, vacation days, holidays and days when the centre is closed (e.g. storm day). We make every effort to provide care in a reliable manner. However, we reserve the right to close if weather conditions make it inappropriate and unsafe to travel with young children or if external circumstances restrict our ability to care for the children in a safe, comfortable environment. (E.g., extended power interruption-please refer to storm day policy). Parents will be advised with as much notice as possible when these days occur.

The Tottle Inn will be closed on the following holidays, payment is required for these days:

- |                 |                  |                   |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| -New Year's Day | -Remembrance Day | -Natal Day        |
| -Good Friday    | -Easter Monday   | -Thanksgiving Day |
| -Victoria Day   | -Christmas Eve   | -New Year's Eve   |
| -Canada Day     | -Christmas Day   | -Labour Day       |
| -Boxing Day     |                  |                   |

### **STORM CLOSURES:**

Every effort is made to remain open on storm days. However, we reserve the right to close if weather conditions make it inappropriate to travel with young children. On days when the local Elementary school is closed do to weather conditions, the P.E.A.K. program will be available, unless the weather conditions are so severe as to make it unsafe for our staff or the children to travel. There may be occasions when the Hantsport location is closed but the Falmouth location is open since many staff members live close to the Falmouth location. The Hantsport children will be welcome to attend at the Falmouth location during these storm days, should it occur. A prolonged power outage will force the Centre to close for the day. If the power is off in the morning and is not restored *prior to 8:45am*, the

Centre will be closed for the day Should the weather/power interruption cause the Centre to close prior to opening for the day, staff will attempt to telephone parents who do not live in the immediate vicinity. All parents should phone the Centre on these days to check for cancellations prior to leaving their home. Should there be a power interruption that lasts more than 20-30 minutes after the Centre has opened for the day, we will close for the remainder of the day. Should the Centre be forced to close after the day has begun, each parent will be notified by telephone of the impending closure. If the parents are unable to be reached by telephone, the emergency contacts will be phoned. *Parents must have arrangements in place to have children picked up quickly in this situation-i.e. within 10 to 15 minutes after contact has been made.*

#### **ATTENDANCE, DROP OFF & PICK UP PROCEDURE:**

The children have a scheduled drop off and pick up time. Fees are based on these times. Should a parent require a change in their scheduled attendance, please speak with one of your child's care providers. We will make every effort possible to accommodate changes in scheduled attendance. A change which is going to last more than 2 or 3 days, requires a minimum of 30 days notice. If this change involves a reduction in attendance, the fee set for the original schedule will be charged during the 30 day notice period. If the change involves additional time at the centre, the new fee will begin immediately on the date of the change in schedule.

We understand sometimes unforeseeable circumstances arise which cause parents to be late; we appreciate any notice you are able to provide. Additional fees will apply for parents who are late picking up their children. Parents who arrive late, after the scheduled closing time for the day will be charged \$5.00 for every 5 minute interval or part thereof. Our staff members have family and other commitments after their work day has finished. We ask that parents please be prompt when picking up your children. We are required to record all attendance information each day. If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please contact the centre to advise. This also helps us when preparing for the daily activities.

Should parents require someone else to pick up their child on any occasion, written authorization must be at the Centre. In situations when this is not possible, a parent must phone the centre to give verbal authorization. Adequate identification must be shown to the Centre's staff prior to releasing the child. We reserve the right to keep the child at the Centre and contact the parent or other designated person if we are not comfortable with any person who has arrived for pick up.

Parents are asked to be prompt when picking up your child. Many aspects of the day are affected by unexpected late pick-ups or early drop offs. Please advise centre staff of any anticipated variations in scheduled attendance. Additional charges may apply for changes in scheduled attendance at the Director's discretion.

#### **PARTICIPATION:**

The Tottle Inn Children's Centre plans a variety of activities based on the interests of the children. The Centre is not responsible to provide staff to care for any child during activities, which the parent does not want their child to participate. Should there be an activity scheduled which the parent does not want his/her child to participate in, the parents have the option of keeping the child at home or joining the child during the activity. (E.g. field trip).

#### **NUTRITION POLICY**

Our snack menu is designed to meet nutritional requirements while introducing the children to a variety of foods each month. The food is served in such a way as to be appealing to the children. All children are encouraged to try every item unless they are unable to eat a particular food for medical reasons. Should a child dislike something after tasting it, the teacher may substitute something the child is known to like. Should this be a regular occurrence for a particular child, a parent teacher meeting will be arranged to discuss possible solutions. Each snack contains a serving from two different food groups. Policies for children who have specific nutritional needs will be dealt with on an individual basis. Through discussions with parents centre staff will strive to ensure each child's needs are met with regards to nutritional requirements. The centre may or may not be able to accommodate the needs of children with severe food allergies. Concerns will be discussed with parents prior to enrolment. Please request a copy of our "Special Nutritional Requirements" policy should you have concerns regarding your child's diet.

There are times when parents wish to send a "special treat" with their child to share with the other children (e.g. parties etc). Food brought in from outside the centre must have a list of ingredients attached. Parents who do not want their children to be given these special treats are asked to advise the centre staff upon enrolment.

#### **COMMUNICABLE ILLNESS POLICY:**

To help prevent the spread of communicable illnesses within The Tottle Inn, the following policies are **strictly enforced**. Parents are asked to adhere to the guidelines below. It is very difficult to prevent the spread of communicable illnesses when contagious children are in a preschool setting. In order to minimize absenteeism for all

children, your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

#### Immunization:

Since immunization offers permanent protection against all preventable childhood diseases, all children and staff should have all immunizations as recommended by the appropriate authority up to date. Parents must provide the centre with the dates of all immunizations for their child upon enrolment. The Centre must receive written verification from the child's parent confirming the appropriate vaccinations have been administered as they become "due". A list of the immunizations can be provided to parents upon request.

#### Exclusion Policy:

One effective control measure available to caregivers is to identify and remove sick children from the group setting. This eliminates the immediate source of infection. However, since many communicable illnesses are infectious before the symptoms appear, additional cases may still develop. All employees are instructed to check children on arrival for signs of illness. The Tottle Inn's exclusion policy involves children who the staff identifies as not feeling well. In order to protect the entire group of children, as well as the individual child, **we ask that parents keep children at home if they have experienced any of the following symptoms in the twenty-four hours prior to attending one of our programs:**

- A fever over 100 F (37.8 C) orally or 99 F (37.2 C) auxiliary.
- Signs of a *newly developing* cold or cough.
- Diarrhea, vomiting or an upset stomach.
- Unusual or unexplained loss of appetite, fatigue, irritability or headache.
- Any discharge or drainage from eyes, nose, ears or open sores.

Children who become ill with any of these symptoms will be returned home. Parents are asked to have an action plan in place for occasions when your child may become sick. Sick children must be taken home "immediately". If your job prevents you from being able to pick up your child promptly in the event of illness, please find a friend or family member willing to assume this responsibility. **Children who are sent home sick may not return to the Centre until a period of twenty-four hours has passed, symptom free.** If a parent/guardian has any questions as to whether or not a child should attend on a particular day, please call the Centre before bringing your child. Licensed facilities are required to maintain a record of symptoms for children who are absent due to illness. Should your child be ill, please advise staff of his/her symptoms. Caregivers are instructed to follow the same guidelines as above for their own personal health. We have a very strict exclusion policy concerning head lice. Information is posted in the Parent Info Centre.

#### Notification of Exposure to Disease:

Parent/Guardians will be notified in writing when their child may have been exposed to a communicable illness. The letter will include the possible time of exposure and symptoms to watch for in their child. Information about the illness will be provided by the Centre to the parents. Should your child show signs of the symptoms, please keep him/her at home to prevent further infection. The guidelines for readmission will be outlined in the information letter given to parents. If a parent/guardian is aware that his/her child has been exposed to a particular communicable illness outside the Centre, please inform the Staff as soon as possible so we are able to watch for symptoms. Parents must provide detailed symptoms on any occasion when a child is absent due to illness.

#### Administration of Medication:

Medication will not be administered by a caregiver without written consent of the child's parent or guardian. In addition, the written directions of a licensed physician must be received by The Tottle Inn prior to the administration of the medication. The label on a prescription drug is acceptable directive from the physician. Non-prescription medicines must be accompanied by written instructions from the child's physician stating the date, the child's name, the name of the medication to be given, the dosage, the frequency it is to be administered and any special precautions which may be necessary. Non-prescription medications will not be administered to any child without written instructions from a licensed physician. All medicines must be received by The Tottle Inn in the original container with the labels attached. Prescription medications must also be accompanied by a physicians note verifying that your child is not contagious.

A permanent record will be maintained to record each dose of medicine that is administered. It will include the following information:

- The date and time the medicine was administered.
- Name of the caregiver administering the medication.
- Dose of medication given.
- Any unusual physical changes or behaviours observed after the medication was administered.

Parents will be informed of the information within their child's permanent record.

#### Environmental Control...Hand washing:

Hand washing is perhaps the single most effective control measure against the spread of communicable illness and infectious illness in childcare environments. Caregivers will be trained to use effective technique for washing their hands and will wash their hands often. Children will be taught to model their caregivers.

#### Environmental Control...Sanitary Procedures:

All staff will follow strict sanitary procedures. A disinfecting solution will be used to wipe off various items in the Centre. Play equipment and mats shall be cleaned with this solution not less than three times weekly. A strong solution will be used to wipe off surfaces contaminated with blood, urine, stool or vomit. Care will be taken to ensure these surfaces are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Toys, which have been placed in a child's mouth, will be removed from the play area for cleaning and disinfecting immediately. These items will be washed in a soap and water solution, rinsed in a disinfecting solution and allowed to air dry. Other items such as tabletops, chairs etc, will be washed and disinfected daily. The air quality of the Centre will be monitored and rooms will be well ventilated. The humidity level will be monitored since extremely warm, dry air increases the chances of respiratory infection. The water play and sand play areas will be cleaned regularly.

#### Education:

Teachers and caregivers make a valuable contribution to the control of communicable illnesses through education. Continuous instruction on subjects such as personal health habits, exercise and nutrition can be a key factor in improving children's resistance to infectious organisms and shortening the length of convalescence. Topics of special value to young children include:

- Appropriate technique and times for hand washing.
- Proper method for covering coughs and blowing noses.
- Sanitary use of drinking fountains.
- Not sharing personal items.
- Dressing appropriately for the weather.
- Good nutrition.
- The need for rest and exercise.

For this reason, special attention will be taken to education children and parents on some topics of interest and concern. This education will be ongoing in the Centre during the day. When possible, special educational information will be passed onto the parents.

### **BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY:**

A developmentally appropriate, well-planned program, which is implemented in a stimulating environment, is the most effective means of behaviour management. When situations arise which require teacher intervention and or support, the following guidelines will be used:

- Fair and reasonable limits shall be set clearly and consistently enforced.
- The adult's style of guidance has an effect on several parts of the child's personality development and their approach to life. The staff of this Centre will adopt a positive attitude towards the children at all times which includes enjoyment of and respect for the children as individuals.
- Staff shall sustain activity with the child and listen to the child during times of upset behaviour.
- Giving children real choices helps to encourage appropriate behaviour. Equally important is not offering a choice when there really is not one.
- Transition times are very often times when conflict occurs. Advance warnings and cues will be used to help reduce the potential of these times for behavioural problems.
- Teachers shall be accepting and support the development of positive self-esteem within each child. Encouraging autonomy, self-responsibility and credit taking, acknowledging pleasant and unpleasant feelings, expressing genuine interest in the children and their activities and avoiding sexism and not judging physical attributes are ways in which the teachers will support the development of positive self-esteem.
- The teachers shall NOT implement "Time-out" unless it is a part of a behaviour management program prescribed by the child's health care professional. The teachers if required may implement a brief period of quiet time. No child shall be placed alone in a room or be removed from a situation in any way, which is disrespectful of the child.

- Adults within this Centre shall implement only positive behaviour management strategies. (See Attached).
- The following forms of discipline shall NOT be used:
  1. Corporal punishment, including but not limited to the following...
    - Striking a child directly or with any physical object.
    - Shaking, shoving or other forms of aggressive physical contact.
    - Requiring or forcing a child to repeat physical movements.
  2. Harsh, humiliating, belittling or degrading responses of any form, including verbal, emotional or physical.
- All teachers will work with each child as an individual. Should a particular behaviour become an "issue", teachers will work with each other and with parents to find an acceptable solution. Our resource Library can be used by parents at anytime.

As parents, you have the right to choose how you will discipline your child(ren). However, since other children attending The Tottle Inn may be able to hear or see the interactions of their peers with their parents, while on the premises of The Tottle Inn, parents are asked to please follow the guidelines outlined within this policy therefore modeling positive behaviour guidance techniques for all children within the Centre. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask.

#### Positive Behaviour Guidance Strategies:

The following information has been taken directly from: Guidance of Young Children, 4th edition. 1995 Prentice-Hall Inc, Columbus Ohio.

1. Limit Setting
2. Identifying Problem Ownership.
3. Teaching More Appropriate Behaviour.
4. Giving Signals Or Cues For Appropriate Behaviour.
5. Teaching New Behaviour That Is Self-Rewarding.
6. Identifying Mistaken Goals And Using Encouragement.
7. Using Effective Praise.
8. Using Tokens.
9. Extinction-Ignoring Behaviour When It Is Appropriate To Do So.
10. Redirecting Young Children's Behaviour: Diversion/Distraction.
11. Redirecting Older Children's Behaviour: Substitution.
12. Active Listening.
13. Using I-Messages.
14. Using Logical Consequences.
15. Resolving Conflict Through Problem Solving.
16. Managing Strong Emotions Responsibly.
17. Withdrawing From Certain Situations.
18. Helping Children Preserve Their Dignity And Save Face.

A detailed description of the above strategies can be obtained ay any time from centre staff.

#### **CELEBRATION OF BIRTHDAYS & HOLIDAYS:**

The Tottle Inn Children's Centre maintains an anti-biased, multi-cultural environment for the children it serves. A diverse range of holidays is celebrated/acknowledged and every attempt made to educate the children and support their anti-biased development.

Each child's birthday is celebrated in the same manner. Parents are asked to refrain from bringing in cakes, treats or other party favours for their child's birthday as every attempt is made to celebrate each child's birthday in the same manner to avoid hurt feelings and confusion among the children. Birthday invitations may not be brought to the Centre to be distributed unless all children are being invited. This is also to avoid hurting the feelings of any children who may not be invited. We have a "family contact information" sheet which parents are invited to complete upon enrolment. Due to "Privacy Act" concerns, we are not able to provide personal information to other families such as phone numbers, addresses etc. However, the "Family Contact Information" which is completed on a volunteer basis will be made available to interested families. The purpose of this form is to provide a means for families to communicate away from the centre for things such as parties, play dates etc.

### **CURRICULUM STATEMENT:**

All employees of The Tottle Inn will work together as a team to provide the support and guidance required so the adult and child share control of the learning environment. The Centre layout and activities will be planned in such a way as to support active learning and the child's right to make choices. Positive adult-child interactions will support the belief the child's power to learn comes from within. Together as an Early Childhood Education team, daily assessments will take place and be reviewed by teachers so appropriate plans can be implemented to further support the child's growth and learning.

(\*Reference: Active Learning Practices For Preschool & Child Care Programs. Educating Young Children; High Scope Education research Foundation. High/Scope Press-Ypsilanti, Michigan USA. Mary Holman & David P Weikart @ 1995.)

The Elementary child's day is full of structure and commitments. Our goal is for our environment to provide Elementary age children the opportunity to make choices and decisions with regards to how they spend their time with us. Teacher guidance will always be available to help the children find ways to enjoy their time at the centre. Activities will be organized and led by the teacher each day which the children will have the option of participating in. The children will also have lots of opportunities for outside play time. Outside time provides ample opportunity for social play. Children are encouraged to use their energy in ways, which may not be safe indoors. The outdoors provides a healthy and unconstrained classroom for the children as they have contact with nature. The children play, converse and solve problems they encounter. Many gross motor skills are practiced during outside playtime. Outside time is an important part of the daily routine. When weather permits, field trips to various parks, playgrounds, nature trails and other locations are planned to add variety to the outside playtime.

We also offer a *Homework Assistance Program*. The children have the opportunity to work on homework assignments in a quiet environment for a specified period of time. The teachers are available to assist the children at any time. Parents may discuss this program with staff to ensure each child's individual needs are being met. Many parents enjoy picking up their child at the end of the workday knowing homework assignments have been completed allowing time in the evening for other activities. Other parents prefer for their child's after school time to be spent away from the structure of completing homework assignments. This program is very flexible and can be individualized to meet the needs of everyone involved.

### **FIELD TRIP POLICY:**

A variety of field trips and outings are planned and information will be posted on the Parent Information Centre. Trips, which require transportation other than walking, also require an individual field trip consent form to be signed by each child's parent. Outings to areas within walking distance of the Centre fall under the guidelines of the general consent form. Every attempt is made to give advance notification to parents of these local outings. However, often times a local outing is a last minute decision and no notice is given. In all cases, a note is posted on the Centre door giving details of the trip while students and teachers are away from the Centre. During all outings adequate supervision will always be a number one priority. Parents and other volunteers are invited to attend many of our field trips.

### **OUTREACH PROGRAM:**

The Elementary Outreach Program is designed to provide children with the opportunity to be exposed to a variety of activities, sports or cultural experiences. Through field trips, special visitors and a variety of projects, the children are able to explore talents and interests which they may not otherwise experience. All children are encouraged to participate in these experiences, however, we also understand and respect the personal preferences and uniqueness of all of our students by providing choices whenever possible. Our Outreach Program is a huge success and very popular among the Elementary Age children.

### **HOMEWORK ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:**

In an effort to help support each child's development, we have developed an optional Homework Assistance Program. Many parents prefer for their children to complete school assignments prior to being picked up from their child care arrangement. Our care providers are available to ensure children complete their assignments, with support and guidance. Parents may discuss any concerns they have regarding their child's homework commitments. Our teachers are very happy to assist the children and reinforce the concepts covered at school.

### **PEER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM:**

At The Tottle Inn Children's Centre, we believe the success of our P.E.A.K. program depends upon input from the children in our care. We encourage the children to participate in our program planning activities. There are also occasions for the children to lead activities for their peers. These types of leadership opportunities help support the development of positive self-esteem as well as a sense of ownership in the program. We also encourage the children to assist each other when social situations arise requiring problem solving or negotiation.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS & PARENT MEETINGS:**

Communication among teachers and parents of children enrolled in the Elementary program is vital in order to ensure each family's needs are being met. Parents will be regularly informed of their child's progress with an emphasis on each child's social interactions while at the centre.

Group meetings will also be held on a regular basis in order to provide the opportunity for parents to meet with each other and Daycare staff. A meeting agenda list will be posted providing parents the opportunity to add topics of interest to be discussed at upcoming meetings. Parents are also invited to join our parent committee.

### **ACCIDENTS & EMERGENCIES:**

Any child who receives a minor cut or bump while playing is tended to by staff. A report of such accidents is completed by the staff member in attendance and signed by both the teacher and the parent. One copy of the report is given to the parent and one copy is placed in the child's file.

In the event of a serious accident, injury, or illness, staff will attempt to contact the parent(s) and/or other designated person immediately. Should it be impossible, impractical or imprudent to contact the parent immediately, given the nature of the emergency and risk of peril the child may be subject to by taking the time to attempt to make contact, or when the time necessary to contact a parent or guardian indicates a delay in securing proper attention, emergency medical treatment will be administered to the child as deemed appropriate. Should 911 be required, local authorities will transport the child. Should 911 not be required, a responsible person as designated by The Tottle Inn shall transport the child so he/she may receive medical attention.

### **CHILD ABUSE:**

All caregivers are required by law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

### **TERMINATION OF CARE:**

The goal of The Tottle Inn Children's Centre is to provide quality care for the families we serve. Every effort is made to personalize our care to suit each child as individuals. Because we pride ourselves on quality care for all of the children, and this is our foremost goal, there may be times when the care we provide is not suitable for some children or families. Should we deem the care inappropriate for the child or parent for any reason, we will decline from providing that care. If, regrettably, we must decline the provision of care, we will do what we can to help the parent find alternate care. However, the ultimate burden of finding alternate care rests solely with the parent. Respectively, if a parent feels the care we provide is not suited for their child or family, the parent also has the right to terminate care. For the **termination of care**, both the caregiver and the parent agree to submit **thirty (30) days written notice**. The first two weeks of care is considered a trial period and only a two-day notice of termination is required during this time only. In lieu of thirty days written notice, a charge equivalent to the session fees due during the thirty days will be paid by the parent immediately upon withdrawal. No notice will be given by The Tottle Inn if termination of care is due to non-payment of delinquent fees by the parent. The parent acknowledges responsibility to pay their account up to date in addition to the thirty day notice fee requirement which would also be due beginning on the date of termination of care by The Tottle Inn for non-payment. The same thirty-day notice is required for parents who wish to reduce/change their child's scheduled attendance. The Tottle Inn makes no guarantee it will be able to accommodate such changes. Fees for the original attendance schedule shall be charged during the thirty-day notice period when the change involves a reduction in attendance. Reason for withdraw must be provided by parents and is recorded on the child's admission documents as per our licensing regulations. As part of our Continuous Improvement Program, we ask that all parents who decide to remove their child from our program for any reason complete an exit survey. This survey is designed to help us understand ways in which we can improve our programs to meet the needs of a greater number of families in the community. We also ask that parents complete this survey when their child graduates from our Preschool program. We appreciate any feedback parents are able to provide

### **NEW CENTRE**

We are preparing to build a new centre in Falmouth. The timeline for completion has not been set. Our Falmouth programs will move to our new centre once construction is complete. The location is Dyke Road Falmouth, not far from the current location. We will be introducing several new activities and events once the new centre is open. We are very excited for the opportunity to provide additional services to the community. New centre policies will be added as required – parents will be advised in advance.

## NOVA SCOTIA CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

The Nova Scotia Child Care Subsidy program provides financial assistance to working parents or parents attending school. The program is designed to help parents afford licensed child care. Funding is provided to reduce the daily fees for each child. The maximum income level has increased significantly. The following information is from the NSDCS web site:

“Income Eligibility:

Effective April 1, 2008 the maximum allowable income levels are as follows:

<i># Children</i>	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	4 Children	5 Children
<i>Net Income</i>	\$62,731	\$62,731	\$76,461	\$93,200	\$108,200

Income eligibility will be based on net income as defined by line 236 of the T1 general income tax form. For example, an applicant who reports net income up to \$62,731 with 1 child could be eligible for subsidy. The daily subsidy rate will vary depending on the income of the family.”

Normally, a copy of your most recent tax return is required for income verification. However, if your situation has changed significantly since your last return was filed, then recent pay stubs can serve as verification.”

We encourage all families who may qualify to apply for subsidy funding. The level of funding will be based on the financial information provided. Complete information about the program as well as application forms are available at : <http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/childcare/ChildCareSubsidy.html>