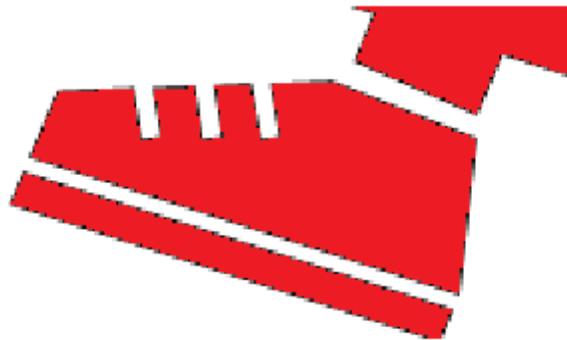


A STEP AHEAD

Child Development Services Ltd

PARENT HANDBOOK



A Step Ahead- Child Development Services Ltd **Parent Handbook**

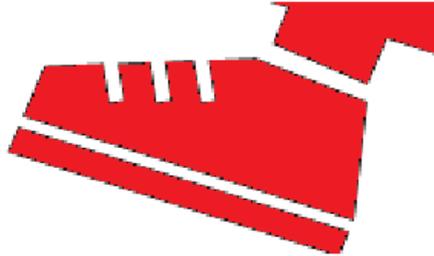


Table of Contents	.....Page 2
Location and contact information	..... Page 3
Out of School Care Programs	..... Page 4
Child Care Philosophy	..... Page 4
a) Our goals and approach	
Child Care Objectives	..... Page 5
Child Guidance Policy	..... Page 6
b) Expectations	
c) Behavior Management Policy	
d) Serious and Persistent Behavior	

Policies and Procedures

Hours of Operation	..... Page 7
Closure Dates	..... Page 7
Late pick-up policy	..... Page 8
Enrollment and Fees	..... Page 9
Fee Schedule	..... Page 10
Emergency Procedures	..... Page 10
Medication Administration and Health	.... Page 11
Attendance	..... Page 12
Field Trips	..... Page 13
Distal Supervision	..... Page 13
Meals and Snacks	..... Page 13
Program Schedule – Regular School Day	.. Page 14
Program Schedule – Non School Day	.... Page 15
Parent Responsibilities	..... Page 16
Parent Involvement	..... Page 17
Our Staff	..... Page 18

Location

Welcome to A Step Ahead – Child Development Services Ltd.

Our phone # is (403) 269 – 7837

Our Website is: www.astepahead123.com

You can email us at astepahead123@hotmail.com

Our mailing address is:

A Step Ahead
Suite 143, #315 – 5155 130th Ave. SE.
Calgary, AB. T2Z 0N3

Our phone number is 403 269-7837 (STEP)

We are located in South East Calgary in the community of Douglasdale. We offer programs to families that live in Douglasdale, Douglas Glen, Mountain Park & surrounding communities.

We strive to serve the needs of working parents who desire high quality child care for their school age children by offering ‘Out of School Care’(OOSC) programs and camps during school breaks.

We service two community schools, Douglasdale School (Grades 1 - 4) and Mountain Park School (Grades 5 & 6), and provide children with a safe place to play, relax, and make new friends.

Imaginative activities.... boundless creativity.... opportunities to explore interests and discover abilities and strengths... daily fresh-air playtime....

These fundamentals propel our child-directed/ child-focused programs. Many sports, big group games and physical activities are incorporated into A Step Ahead programs, encouraging kids to be active and healthy. We are very fortunate to have access to the gymnasium and a school yard with an innovative playground and green space galore! So much room to romp and run, fun stuff to do each day... This is an awesome place to be a kid!

Out of School Care

- **School Age Care:** Care is available for children in grades 1 to 4 [Douglasdale School], and grades 5 and 6 [Mountain Park School]. Before school care starts at 6:45 AM and After school care is available to 6 PM. Care and field trips are included on Professional/Organizational Days, early dismissals, Teachers Convention and select days over the breaks. All full-day programs during the school year are offered to families at no additional cost.
- **ECS (Kindergarten) Care:** At this time A Step Ahead does not offer any ECS (Kindergarten) programs.
- **Drop In Care:** Drop In care and Holiday Camps are available to parents whose children do not attend monthly programs. These are available only when space permits, care has been pre-paid, and A Step Ahead has been given notice. Drop In Care requires that parents have completed the registration process.

We aim to provide children with a wide array of play experiences, fostering a sense of wonder and imagination. Children will have the opportunity to engage in “free” play, with arts and crafts, dramatic play, games and puzzles, library, with construction/ building/ creation toys and challenges, computer, outside and park play, gym, and rotating stations (such as carpentry, sewing, take-apart, investigation station, music, science and nature, sculpting etc).

Children are also given structured or leader-guided activities to choose from. This may include a craft or art project, group games/challenges, drama productions, special guests and presentations, science experiments and activities, homework and reading challenges, clubs, environmental, humanitarian and community projects (promoting social awareness) and special ongoing endeavors.

A Step Ahead’s Program Philosophy

We strive to create a child-friendly environment where safety is a top priority and the developmental needs of our children are met each day. By nurturing each child’s self-worth and value, by modeling respectfulness and consideration of others, by creating conscientious programs that inspire creativity, curiosity and camaraderie; this is a place where children thrive!

Objectives

Objectives of our Before and After School Programs (OOSC) include: ensuring a physically safe place for children to be cared for outside of school hours, creating an atmosphere of respect and acceptance so that all children feel welcomed and appreciated; and by implementing programs to meet all areas of each Child's development.

We endeavor to meet the developmental needs of the children in our programs in the following ways:

- **Socially:** By giving children the opportunity to participate in individual, small group, large group, and leadership activities. Children engage in activities that hone their social skills and abilities to co-operate, compromise, and resolve conflicts with various groups of peers.
- **Emotionally:** Children are supported and encouraged by staff, peers, parents and community members, in an environment that respects each Child's dignity and emotional needs.
- **Intellectually:** Children are encouraged to participate in the development of programs, expanding on their interests or school topics. We engage children in critical thinking, problem solving, riddles, challenges and trivia and present them in a fun context. We value their curiosity and inquisitiveness and make opportunities for our kids to discover, learn and explore.
- **Educationally:** To assist with education a voluntary homework club is available to aid children with specific learning objectives, or general guidance. Homework and reading challenges provide a little extra incentive for kids to partake in these activities while at Step Ahead.
- **Physically:** Programs include gym, playground, park, and group games to meet the physical development of each child and to encourage healthy, active lifestyles. Everyday some time is dedicated to physical activity and playtime.
- **Creatively:** Creative needs are met with a variety of organized activities, such as arts and crafts, skits and drama games, music centre, special themes and free play centers such as “house” center, building toys, doll house, and dramatic free-play. Many artistic materials are available for children to use and novel items are rotated through to keep the materials fresh and inviting. Children are encouraged to create and develop their interests and opportunities and avenues for them to do so are incorporated into the program on a regular basis.

Staff and leaders facilitate a child's development by creating innovative programs, fostering a caring, respectful environment, by guiding children to make pro-social choices and by conveying a message to the children through daily interaction that they are cared for, valued and respected.

Child Guidance Policy

- a) **Expectations for Behavior:** Each child is responsible for making their own choices. Children are expected to make choices that are safe (for themselves and others) and respectful (of themselves, their peers, the staff, and the property).
- b) **Behavior Management Policy:** To guide behavior staff will implement a number of practices, varied by the behavior or the escalation of behavior. In all situations, the leaders (staff) are conscientious to treat the child respectfully and to communicate the reasons that behavior is not allowed, and what consequences (natural and/or logical) may result.
Practices to guide behavior include:
- Positive reinforcement of good behavior.
 - Re-direction to new activity if poor choices accompany present activity.
 - Renewal time, to allow the child to regain control and contemplate an acceptable resolution.
 - Imposed consequences; IE loss of a privilege, limited choices, or an appropriate activity to address the behavior.
 - Behavior will be communicated to parents verbally or via incident reports.
- c) **Serious and Persistent Behavior:** Should unsafe behavior or extreme disrespect persist then a *Serious and Persistent Behavior Plan* will be implemented, which includes 5 steps. The progression from one step to another is the result of the continued behavior.
- 1> Written notification outlining the severity of the behavior and that a Serious Behavior Plan is being implemented and will detail the steps involved should the behavior continue.
 - 2> Parent meeting with director to discuss behavior as well as assist parents in establishing other community supports to help deal with the child's behavior.
 - 3> Parent and Child meeting. Written contract is established with the child outlining expected behavior and the consequences should the child deviate from expected, acceptable behavior.
 - 4> Suspension from program. Between 1 and 5 days as determined by the director.
 - 5> Termination of care may result if the behavior continues and is deemed to be a serious threat, or the parent refuses to acknowledge the situation. A Serious Threat is defined as physically harming staff or children, using loud, abusive derogatory language in a continual manner, sexual assault or highly sexualized behavior, intentionally leaving the areas designated to be the boundaries.

Policies and Procedures

Hours of Operation:

A Step Ahead is open at 6:45AM to 6PM weekdays.

Child Care on REGULAR SCHOOL DAYS is limited to the non-school hours of:

Monday to Fridays: 6:45am to morning bell & afternoon dismissal to 6:00 pm

Full Day Programs : 7:00 am to 6:00 pm

Closure Dates:

We are closed select dates throughout the school year. The following is a list of general dates we are closed. Please refer to the ‘Important Dates’ document for a more comprehensive list detailed to that particular school year.

General Closure Dates -between September 1st to June 30th A Step Ahead is closed:

Labour Day
Thanksgiving
Remembrance Day
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day through to New Years Day
Family Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday
Victoria Day

Tentative Closure Dates – Depending on the circumstances of the school year and when school breaks occur, A Step Ahead may be closed the following dates.

Days between New Years and the 1st day students return to school in January.

SUMMER DAY CAMPS: Due to the need to relocate in summer time, information regarding summer day camps in July and August and if A Step Ahead will be offering them, will be made known and available to parents as soon as possible after the New Year and no later than March 1st. Summer information can be found at www.astepahead.camp. Currently A Step Ahead offers a July summer camp from the Queensland Community Association, with a pick-up location in Douglasdale in the evening. Camp hours are 7AM-5:30PM.

Important Dates – Yearly Update

Each year, an additional document will be available on our website, and posted on our parent bulletin board, that provides parents with a detailed schedule of closure dates, full-day programs and camp dates. Please be aware that this document often requires occasional adjustments over the course of the school year, due to changes made to school calendars and events.

Parents are requested to print and update this document each year, and at intervals throughout the year. Parents are responsible for keeping apprised of school events and their child's individual activities and schedules at school and relaying any relevant information to A Step Ahead in a timely manner.

Late Pick-Up Policy

There are no provisions for early drop-off or late pick-up at A Step Ahead.

Parents or guardians unable to pick their children up on time, due to unforeseen circumstances, should immediately phone the staff at A Step Ahead.

A late fee of \$1.00 per family per minute is charged to parents arriving later than 6:00 p.m. Parents are required to pay the late fee to Centre within 24 hours.

Parents are required to sign a registration contract which states they have read, understood and agree to abide by all A Step Ahead policies. Should a parent refuse to pay the late fee they may face immediate termination of their child's enrolment in the program forfeiting any balance of fees paid for that month (for the portion of the month unused).

If late pick-up becomes reoccurring and problematic, all incidents will be documented and the Director will become involved in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution culminating in an additional signed agreement between all parties. Should a satisfactory resolution not be reached, all Centre services will be terminated for that family effective immediately.

If a parent should fail to pick up their child, staff will attempt to reach the Childs' guardians and emergency contacts and will notify the Director. Should staff be unable to reach anyone, the Director will contact Alberta Child and Family Services to notify them of the situation and be advised as to the next course of action.

Enrolment and Fees

- a) Fees are established by the Board of Directors and are reviewed annually.
- b) **Fees are due on the first day of each month**, and are payable by **post-dated cheque**. Any fees not paid by the **5th working day of the month** are subject to having the child's enrolment suspended until all fees are paid in full.
- c) **A \$40.00 service charge will be charged on all NSF Cheques.**
- d) Any fees and fines in arrears must be paid by the first day of the following month. Failure to meet this deadline may result in termination from the Program.
- e) Parents are required to give **one full month** written notice when withdrawing their children from the program.
- f) New parents are required to pay a \$100.00 non-refundable registration fee for each child registering in the program.
- g) Refunds or credit are not given for days absent regardless of the reason.
- h) Receipts for fees paid will be given out in January/ February of the following calendar year for tax purposes. Should parents require a copy of their receipts prior to this time we ask that they submit a written request.
- i) Drop-in fees during the school year are to be prepaid at the beginning of each month for time booked or at the time of booking. Any money left over will be credited to the next month's fees. If a child attends drop-in unexpectedly or short-notice, drop-in fees for that day must be paid the day of by cash or cheque. Any fees left outstanding will result in termination of this service until paid.
- j) Parents who receive subsidy must fill out and sign a separate form agreeing to subsidy policies regarding payment of parent portion or the loss of their subsidy due to an accumulation of unexplained absences. Parents must sign a form agreeing to allow A Step Ahead to access their subsidy information. Parents must pay the first month of care in advance, and will be refunded upon withdrawal.

Fee Schedule

Douglasdale Students:

Registration Fee - \$100
 Full Time School Age Care - \$475
 After School Care - \$475
 Before School Care- \$275

Mountain Park Students:

Registration Fee - \$100
 Full Time School Age Care - \$475
 After School Care - \$475
 Before School Care - \$275

Drop In rates:

- Regular School Day AM - \$20
- Regular School Day PM - \$35
- Regular School Day AM + PM - \$40
- Early Dismissal - \$50
- Full Day - \$65

During Non-School days such as Professional Days and Early Dismissals A Step Ahead is usually open for care.

Parents enrolled in monthly programs do not have to pay extra for Professional Day/Organizational Days and Early Dismissals. Care and field trip costs are covered in monthly fees. However, please be aware that pre-registration (sign-up) is required for all PD days and early dismissals and registration may be capped. Registration/Sign up sheets are posted prior to all PD days. It is the responsibility of parents to be aware of any upcoming PD days, to look for registration/sign up sheets, and to sign their child up in advance if they will be attending.

Emergency Procedures

The Director, staff and volunteers will be familiar with the procedures that our current location follows regarding fire drills and emergencies. The following evacuation procedure is to be followed during the programs normal hours of operation.

Evacuation Procedure:

1. Children quietly line up at the designated place.
2. Staff will collect all pertinent information such as the emergency binder and attendance sheets.
3. Staff will ensure that all windows are closed and that doors are closed upon exit from the building
4. Staff and children then proceed in an orderly manner to the nearest exit door.
5. All people move well away from the building, to a pre-determined meeting place. (Currently this is the far garbage can locate beside the playground.)
6. Staff will take attendance to ensure that all children attending the program are safely outside.
7. Staff and children do not re-enter the building until it is safe to do so. The Fire Department will give the all clear.
8. In the event that staff and children have to evacuate the building and relocate, they will move to an alternate location. (Currently this is Mountain Park School). Parents will be contacted from the relocation site to pick up their children.

Medication Administration and Health

- a) Parents must sign an authorization form if they need the program staff to administer any medication to a child including over the counter medications such as Tylenol or cold remedies.
ALL MEDICATION MUST BE IN ITS ORIGINAL CONTAINER. STAFF WILL NOT ADMINISTER MEDICATION WITH VERBAL PERMISSION.
Provincial legislation allows for parents to provide written authorization to the Centre allowing a child nine (9) years of age and up to self-administer prescription medication.
- b) The program staff will administer medication as required, and document the time, date and dosage.
- c) Staff members are at liberty to remove a sick child from the program and contact the parents to arrange for the child to be picked up (as soon as possible and must be within 2 hours) for the following illness – related events:
- 1> The child has obvious symptoms of illness (IE vomiting, diarrhoea, high fever, presence of new and unexplainable rash or cough.
 - 2> The child requires greater attention and care than can be provided without compromising the supervision of other children in the program.
 - 3> Staff believe the child displays symptoms that may indicate they pose a health risk to other persons on site.
 - 4> A child is unable to participate in daily activities, for an example: **If a child is too sick to go outside to play, please do not send them to the program, as they are too sick to attend.**
- d> License holder/Director will determine if the child has sufficiently recovered and may return to the program without further intervention. Typically, this will be evident by a parents' verbal report that the child has been symptom-free for 24 hours, or a physician has cleared the Child's health and provided a note. If the license holder/Director determines that a child has returned prematurely and still displays symptoms, parents must provide a note from a physician stating the child has been to the doctor and is healthy enough to return to full activities at school and A Step Ahead and does not pose a health risk to any others they encounter.
- e) In the case of a severe medical emergency, EMS will be alerted, an ambulance will transport the child to the nearest clinic or hospital. The child will be accompanied by a staff member to the hospital. Parents will be contacted immediately. If there is any uncertainty about whether EMS should be summoned, A Step Ahead will err on the side of caution and call EMS.
- f) Parents will be fully responsible for any fees incurred.
- g) Alberta Child and Family Services child care licensing will be contacted and informed and a report shall be submitted, in the event there is any need to contact EMS, a child is hospitalized overnight or a serious medical event has occurred.
- h) In all cases where an accident occurs at the program, which does not require emergency aid as above, parents will be notified on their arrival at the program and may be asked to sign an accident report form to confirm their awareness of the incident.

Attendance

- a) **Parents are required to inform A Step Ahead directly if their child will not be attending after school** that day or will be arriving late after school. The school does not relay this information so parents **MUST** be conscientious to call us personally. Likewise, parents must inform the school separately if their child is absent, as we do not inform them on your behalf. The staff are required to phone parents if a child is unaccounted for.
- b) Should a child fail to arrive at A Step Ahead after school, staff will endeavour to contact parents. As this process takes time and impedes our ability to run programs and interact with children, it is imperative that parents are diligent about providing A Step Ahead with absence information prior to the program beginning. If A Step Ahead should need to contact parents regarding a missing/possibly absent child, parents must be prompt about returning our calls so that we can quickly determine if your child's whereabouts are known. In the event a child has failed to show up at A Step Ahead and is not supposed to be absent, valuable time that could be spent searching for that child is at jeopardy if parents cannot be reached by their emergency contact numbers. Please report absences by phoning 401-269-7837, phoning or texting 403-921-4711, or emailing us before noon. We only require afternoon absences to be reported to us by Douglasdale parents, however we require both morning and after noon absences to be reported to us by Mountain Park parents, to ensure we are not missing or waiting for an MPS child to arrive prior to departing for Mountain Park School.
- c) Children wishing to go to a friend's house after school must have **written consent from their parent** and parents are required to phone and leave a message with A Step Ahead. Children will not be permitted to leave A Step Ahead without this information.
- d) Parents are required to detail in writing, any upcoming absences, change in care-givers, schedule fluctuations or any relevant information in the "Communication Pages" within the Sign In/Out book, when passing along this information in person at A Step Ahead. This is to prevent any miscommunication and to ensure staff have all the relevant information they need. Please do not pass this information on verbally without recording it the communication book.
- e) Parents receiving a government subsidy are strongly advised to carefully review the program's policy regarding attendance for their children. Unexcused accumulating absences may result in an additional fee due to a reduction in the fees subsidised by the province. Please refer to the program's subsidy policy. If your child is sick it is important that you get a doctor's note to be submitted to subsidy to reduce the amount of inexcusable absences.

Field Trips and Off-Site Outings

An off-site release is included on the child's registration form and a release form is not necessary for each field trip or out-of-community excursion. Parents will be notified of day trips prior to the intended day of the trip by a 'sign-up sheet' posted as the front page of the Sign In/Out book. Parents are required to sign-up their child if they will be attending, and initial that they understand what activities are planned, and grant permission for their child to attend and participate. If a parent does not wish to send their child on a field trip, it is the parent's responsibility to make alternate arrangements for their child's care.

From time to time children may accompany staff on special outings within the community, which may include going on a walk, going to a park, picking up other students, or going to the recycling depot, etc. These activities are included in off-site trips and are covered under the permission form on the child's registration form.

Distal Supervision

Children 9 and older may earn the privilege of distal supervision. They may take part in individual or small group activities while on-site that are time, activity, and location specific while within intermittent direct supervision of a leader. This will be an activity and location approved by the leader, who will periodically check on the children. This allows children the opportunity to earn greater responsibility and trust. If a child demonstrates that are not yet capable of making responsible choices while on distal supervision, this privilege will be revoked.

Meals and Snacks

Parents provide snacks and lunches, and each individual child brings their own in accordance with the Canada Food Guide. On occasion, we will provide the children with a supplementary snack. Healthy eating practices and guidelines will be made known to parents to ensure appropriate nutrition. If a child comes to the program without adequate snacks, parents will initially be notified verbally and then in writing. Extra snacks will be available in the event a child does not have a snack or lunch. If the lack of proper nutrition persists, a meeting will be held with parents to determine a reason, and endeavor to rectify the situation. If lack of proper snacks/meals appears to be indicative of an ongoing situation, efforts will be made to make connections with family supports. If the nutrition seems to staff to be neglectful on the part of the parents the situation will be brought to the attention of Family Services. Children eat snack shortly after they arrive, and are reminded to wash up before hand. Children will eat snack in the designated program space or wash up and take their snack outside with them for the 'after school recess' play break, out in the school yard. On special occasions the Centre may provide snack, however children are still required to bring their own snacks and meals. Children are encouraged to bring a "freggie" snack (fresh fruit or vegetable) to be eaten for the first snack of the day during full day programs.

Program Schedule – Regular School Day**Morning:**

6:45 – 8:30 am	Children arrive at the program and participate in supervised “free play” which consists of a variety of centre based activities, gym activities, crafts and outdoor activities. Towards the end of free play, leaders may run a variety of circle games to wind down free-time, and prepare children for transitioning to school.
8:30 – 8:35 am	Children put away their activities and toys, help tidy the centre.
8:35 – 8:40 am	Children have a washroom break, wash up, and prepare to go outside to play.
8:40 - 9:00 am	Children head outside with staff to play on the playground. As Teachers and other DDS children join the school morning supervision, A Step Ahead DDS children are dismissed to join school supervision and go directly to their classes with their classmates when the school bell rings. Mountain Park students remain with A Step Ahead supervision until it is time to walk or bus to Mountain Park School. A Step Ahead leaders sign out all children from A Step Ahead.

After school:

PM Dismissal	Grade 1-4 children arrive from school and are signed in. Mountain Park students are dismissed from School and walk or are picked up with the program bus and return to A Step Ahead where they sign in. If a child fails to arrive or check-in with A Step Ahead within 15 minutes, parents will be contacted.
4:00 – 4:30 pm	Children wash their hands and are encouraged to have their home-snack. Depending on the weather and season, children will go outside for ‘after school recess’ or choose from various inside activities. (centres, craft, gym, etc.)
4:30 – 5:30 pm	Various activities are planned for children including arts and crafts, gym activities, drama, games, outside play and music. Usually, children will have a choice of which activities they wish to engage in.
5:30 – 5:50 pm	Children have quiet centre choices. The Centre is tidied up and the children prepare to leave.
6:00 pm	A Step Ahead closes.

Program Schedule – Non-School Days / PD Days

Morning:

7:00 – 9:00 am	Children arrive at the program and are signed in by parents. Children have the choice of participating in a variety of supervised free play activities and centres.
9:00 – 9:30 am	Children tidy up play areas, group meets to discuss the day's activities, then children wash hands and have a snack brought from home (freggie snack encouraged).
9:30 – 11:30 am	Various structured activities are planned for the children that include arts and crafts, drama, music, gym activities, outdoor play, games, special events, and off-site activities.
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	Children start finishing morning activities and clean up. Meetings with the entire group often occur at this time.

Lunchtime:

12:00 – 1:00 pm	Children wash hands and eat lunch and have free time.
1:00 – 3:00 pm	Various structured activities are planned for the children, which include arts and crafts, drama, music, gym activities, outdoor play, games, special events, and off-site activities.
3:00 – 3:30 pm	Children wash up and have a snack brought from home or occasionally one is provided by Centre
3:30 – 5:30 pm	Children participate in a variety of free play activities, play outdoors, complete unfinished projects.
5:30 – 5:45 pm	The Centre is tidied up and the children prepare to leave. Parents sign children out at pick up.
6:00 pm	A Step Ahead's Centre closes.

Parent Responsibilities

- a) Parents must inform A Step Ahead if their child will be absent, or if any changes to their usual routine are expected. Children may leave with another adult (other than their parent) if prior written consent has been given. In unforeseen circumstances, parents are asked to phone A Step Ahead and advise the staff that another adult will be picking up their child. Please be aware we will require photo identification from the person you have requested to pick up your child if we are unfamiliar with them. If due to custody reasons, you do not wish your child's other parent to collect him or her, a copy of the legal order must be given to A Step Ahead to be kept on file.
- b) Parents are required to sign their child in and out of A Step Ahead each day. Parents are responsible for **carefully** and correctly filling out sign in/out sheets to prevent any errors that may compromise the accuracy of these records. A Step Ahead requires these records be accurate in the event they need to be referenced in an emergency. Parents must communicate with the staff (wave, holler, chat etc) and receive an acknowledgement from staff when picking up their child after school (in addition to signing their child out). If a child departs without the staffs' awareness, staff will be required to contact the parents.
- c) A Step Ahead must be informed of any changes to home or work addresses or contact phone numbers as soon as (or before) they change.
- d) Parents are required to pay close attention to A Step Ahead postings on the bulletin board, sign in desk/cupboard and in newsletters/emails. These notices may contain information relevant to your child-care, our services or community alerts and may be time sensitive. These notices and may change regularly so please check every day.
- e) Parents must sign up their child for full-day programs on sheets posted (usually 1 week) prior to the day. A Step Ahead uses these to adjust staffing, transportation and program needs and to attain parental permission for the listed activities. Please sign up at least 2 days before the full-day program to give us time to make any changes required. If parents do not wish for their child to participate in the full-day activities, it is the responsibility of the parent to make alternate arrangements for the care of their child.
- f) Parents are responsible for the timely payment of fees and any additional charges.
- g) Douglasdale students are welcome to assist teachers or stay late in class for various reasons, so long as they will be on their way to A Step Ahead within 30 minutes, and A Step Ahead has been informed by the student or teacher directly. If a student informs A Step Ahead, staff will confirm this with the teacher. Mountain Park Students who wish to stay late at school, must have parental permission, and parents must either call to inform A Step Ahead of this plan, or have a standing arrangement to have the MPS child contact A Step Ahead directly, as well as their parents. MPS students who attend after school, are expected to arrive/check in with at A Step Ahead in a timely manner. When walking, MPS students are expected to follow the

arranged walking route without detours or distractions, making safe and respectful decisions on that walk, behaving just as they would be expected to while at A Step Ahead.

- h) Parents are required to ensure that their child is adequately and appropriately dressed for both indoor and outdoor play. MPS students who attend A Step Ahead are expected to be prepared for all seasonal weather and to dress themselves appropriately for the walk to MPS or A Step Ahead.

In winter: boots, mitts, hats, snow pants, and a winter coat are essential for daily outside play. In warm weather, sunscreen, hats, water bottle and appropriate clothing and footwear are required.

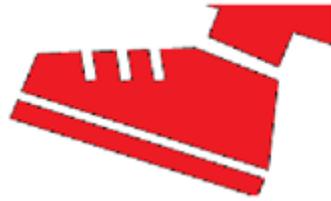
All children are required to change into **indoor shoes** when they come inside.

- i) Parents and children are required to remove wet, dirty, or snowy footwear when entering or within the school. We are very privileged to be situated in a school, please help us remain here by respecting school rules and help us keep our play environment safe and clean.
- j) Parents are responsible for providing their child with an adequate and nutritious lunch and snacks on a daily basis. Candy and gum are discouraged. Every day after school all children are encouraged to eat a snack brought from home. Due to allergies, we request that parents do not send any products containing peanuts to Centre.
- k) Please label your child's belongings with initials or last name. A Step Ahead is not responsible for clothing, personal belongings or toys brought from home that become lost, broken or misplaced.

Parent Involvement

We have an open-door policy that means that parents are encouraged to actively participate in our program. Please feel free to discuss any concerns that you may have with the staff at any time. Individual meetings can be set up with the Director if required. Telephone calls and emails are also welcomed.

Parents are encouraged to get involved by spending time with their child at Centre and by attending parent meetings and special activities. Parents are welcome to volunteer or to participate as a special guest in our program. To keep parents informed about Program happenings, items will be posted on the bulletin board or the first page of the sign in/out book. Parents are expected to check the bulletin board and the front page of the sign in/out book regularly and take note of any postings that may be relevant to field trips or other program information. Parents are welcome to bring ideas to the attention of the staff regarding program activities, volunteering, child-related practices and strategies etc. We welcome the opportunity to learn from the experience of others, and sometimes to explain the reasoning behind why we may do things a certain way.



Our Staff

All Staff are minimum 18 years of age and are required to have Standard Child Care First Aid certification. Staff and volunteers must complete a Security Clearance Check from the City of Calgary verifying they do not have a criminal record within Canada.

The ratios of staff to children are 1 staff to 15 school age children.

Staff are required to attend training and encouraged to partake in regular professional development and further their knowledge and education in child development, child care practices, children's programming and various child-related subjects.

A Step Ahead requires staff to receive their 'Qualification Level' certification through the province of Alberta Child and Family Services child care licensing standards.

Our three primary staff include Sandi Crowdis, Amanda Gillis, and Chris McCrimmon.

Amanda Gillis and Sandi Crowdis founded A Step Ahead and together they have countless hours of professional development in the arena of school age care.

Amanda brings many years' of experience programming and directing in Out of School Child Care. With post-secondary education specifically addressing the developmental needs of school age children, and the operation of Child Care facilities, Amanda brings a wealth of knowledge, as well as her love of sports, to A Step Aheads' programs.

Sandi serves as the Program Director at A Step Ahead. She has 18 years of experience as a Director, programmer, and Teacher's Aid and operates as the Child Development Supervisor at A Step Ahead. Drawing on a BA in Psychology and Art, Sandi's background with special-needs children and challenging behaviors, brings caring consistency to our program.

Chris (Christine) McCrimmon, also known as 'Auntie Chris' is our primary activity programmer. Her crafty nature as an avid scrap-booker, textile artist and chef enrich our program with her eclectic skill set. Her quick smiles and warm greetings welcome everyone to A Step Ahead.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to bring them to our attention. If families have any concerns that may require more time to discuss, we respectfully request that an appointment is made outside of our regular program hours so as not to interfere with staff supervision of children. Thank you!