



Althea PROJECTS

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Wee Care

(A program of Althea Projects Incorporation)

Funded by

The Department of Children, Youth Justice &
Multicultural Affairs



**Queensland
Government**



Althea PROJECTS



WEE CARE

PARENT / CARER

PLAYGROUP HAND BOOK

**Playgroup Enables Families to Learn, Develop and
Socialise Within our Community in a Fun, Relaxed
and Safe Environment**



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FEEDBACK

Althea Projects welcomes any feedback you would like to provide about your experience with Playgroup and our service. We welcome compliments, suggestions and any concerns to assist us with continuous improvement of our services. You can request a Feedback form or you can complete a feedback form electronically on our website at www.altheaprojects.org.au. You can remain anonymous however in doing so we wont be able to provide you with feedback about your suggestions or concerns. This is up to you.

COMPLAINTS

All parents/carer's have a right to complain about the program without fear of retribution and can expect complaints to be dealt with fairly and promptly. A complaints process can occur in two different ways, through an internal process directly with our service or through an external process. Firstly we encourage parents/carer's and children to try and resolve complaints with us initially. This involves:

- Parents/carers raising their complaint directly with the staff member concerned if appropriate. If not, consider meeting/contacting the Program Manager.
- If the parent/carer is unsatisfied with the response they receive they can then contact the CEO. The CEO will respond in writing within 14 days.
- If the parent/carer is still unsatisfied they can contact the Management Committee of Althea Projects in writing who will make a binding decision. The Management Committee will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 14 days and will seek to resolve the issue within 60 days, including any remedies or suggestions.

Alternatively, a parent/carer can also make an external complaint such as through our funding body the Department of Children, Youth Justice & Multicultural Affairs, or Office of Public Guardian, Qld Ombudsman, Qld Family & Child Commission to name a few. For further information ask for a copy of our Client Service Charter, or for a copy of our Public Complaints Policy Statement. These can also be accessed on our website at www.altheaprojects.org.au.

OUR STAFF

Our Direct Care staff are childcare qualified/experienced and are here to support you and your children during your attendance to Wee Care’s playgroup.

Our staff are trained in First Aid, Infant & Child CPR, Anaphylaxis and Asthma Training.

There is always two staff members present during Playgroup. Wee Care’s Program Manager is also present to answer any questions you may have.

WEE CARE IS A STAFF SUPPORTED PLAYGROUP

We hope your Playgroup experience is interactive, and a fun opportunity for you and your children to play, learn, and make new friends. We focus on strengthening connections between families and communities, improving early child hood development and parenting skills, and encouraging healthy development and mutual support. Our program includes free play, age appropriate art and craft activities, outdoor play, story/music time, and snack time. Baby change and breastfeeding facilities are available.

These sessions are facilitated by Wee Care staff .
Times: **Thursday mornings during school term. 9.30am to 11.30am**



Mission Statement

To support and strengthen individuals, families, children, and young people so they experience social, emotional, physical and mental wellbeing and reach their full potential.

Our Values We demonstrate our values by:

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|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Human Dignity & Respect | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respecting the human dignity of all people in our community• Treating everyone with tolerance, patience and goodwill• Being non-judgmental and authentic in our engagement |
| Fairness & Equity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone is welcomed and valued for their diversity, beliefs and experiences• Sharing information, insights and experiences |
| Cultural Mindfulness & Diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting cultural awareness & benefits of diversity• Collaborating with cultural groups, elders & families• Embedding cultural principals into our practice frameworks• Respecting the importance of culture & place• Embracing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, places, lore, language, and history past, present and future |
| Accountability & Transparency | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simplifying & improving the way we work• Being open and honest in all actions and interactions• Communicating openly and effectively• Being accountable for our actions & inactions |
| Innovation & Excellence | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivering evidenced informed best practice• Being flexible, creative and willing to consider new concepts and opportunities |
| Partnerships & Collaboration | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leading by example• Supporting & listening to each other• Teamwork & appreciating a diversity of ideas• Supporting one another to be successful |

WELCOME

Dear Parents/Caregivers

May we take this opportunity to welcome you and your children to Wee Care's Play group. Wee Care is a program of Althea Projects Incorporated and is funded by the Department of Children, Youth Justice & Multicultural Affairs. This booklet contains information about our Program and services and to help answer any questions you may have during your attendance to Playgroup. The staff at Wee Care is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and creative environment for you and your children. We welcome any feedback from you or your children in regards to your visit with us.

Kind regards

Althea Projects– Wee Care Program Manager and Staff

OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of our Playgroup is to provide an educational, recreational and social playgroup in a discrimination free environment that will meet the needs of families, caregivers, and children within our community and to be responsive to their changing needs.

AIM

We aim to provide you and your children with a safe, friendly and stimulating environment. Together we will provide a balance between structured and unstructured, child initiated and adult supported experiences for you and your children to share. This will include using a range of equipment and materials both indoors and outdoors. Our staff are here to support our playgroup families however we encourage all parents/caregivers to actively participate in the preparation and implementation of activities.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT WHILE ATTENDING PLAYGROUP YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY AND SECURITY

FOOD HANDLING

All staff and parent/carer's preparing food need to follow food handling regulations. Gloves are provided and need to be worn when preparing food for the children. Knives need to be kept out of the reach of children. Hot drinks are not permitted in the vicinity of children. There is a kitchen where hot drinks can be consumed (Children are not to have access to kitchen).

TIDY UP TIME

It is expected that ALL PARENT'S/CARER'S help tidy and clean up at the end of each session. Please assist by:

- Cleaning the art and craft supplies
- Wiping down the tables and sinks
- Putting the toys and equipment back into the storeroom, and
- Stacking and putting the chairs away.

Your assistance with this is greatly appreciated.

WE HOPE YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN ENJOY YOUR TIME WITH US!

PHOTOGRAPHS

The Wee Care staff will occasionally take photographs of parents/carers and children for the purpose of evaluation, promotion and publications. As we take your privacy seriously your acceptance of release of photographs will be requested on the Membership Form you complete. If you do not wish for us to use photo's of you or your child please ensure you indicate this on the Membership Form and notify staff. If circumstances change around the taking of photographs please notify the staff. Playgroup parents are not permitted to take photographs of any children other than their own without parental consent. Please do not take photographs of any child who is in the care of Wee Care. If you have any questions regarding this please speak with the Manager or Wee Care staff.

ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

Parents/carers of a child at risk of anaphylaxis must adhere to the following:

- Inform staff, either on enrolment or on diagnosis of their child's allergies.
- Provide staff with an anaphylaxis action plan and written consent to use the EpiPen in line with this action plan.
- Be responsible for their child's EpiPen kit.
- Regularly check the EpiPen expiry date.
- Assist staff by offering information and answering any questions regarding their child's allergies.
- Notify the staff of any changes to their child's allergy status and provide a new anaphylaxis action plan in accordance with these changes.
- Communicate all relevant information and concerns to staff, for example, any matter relating to the health of the child.
- Comply with Althea's policy that no child who has been prescribed an EpiPen is permitted to attend the service or its programs without that EpiPen.

MANAGING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to direct and encourage positive behavior in their child/ren. If you have a problem with someone else's child please speak to Wee Care Staff or the Program Manager.



Although we want to create and maintain a casual and relaxing atmosphere during your time at Playgroup, it is important that participants understand and make their best efforts to adhere to the following guidelines in order to ensure the safest and most positive experience for everyone.

- Exit and entry is via office door – Not the Foyer door.
- All new parents/carer's need to complete the Playgroup Intake forms before a child can participate in Playgroup
- Dress your children in comfortable Sun smart clothing suitable for out door play - no sleeveless shirts/dresses
- Children to have sturdy shoes or barefoot—NO THONGS OR SLIP ON SHOES
- Children are not allowed in the storeroom or building without adult supervision
- Children cannot be left at the center without a parent at any time
- Children must be supervised by the parent/caregiver at all times. It is your responsibility to watch your children and to play with them. This includes mixing with other children, as well as when they are using equipment, toilets and supplies.
- Playgroup is free but a gold coin donation would be appreciated. Children enjoy putting the gold coin into the cow money box on the reception desk.

PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

Much of the information Volunteers/Visitors encounter while attending an Althea Projects/Wee Care program is confidential and by publicly disclosing this information may have serious legal implications for Althea Projects and the person disclosing the information. It is critical that what is seen and heard on the premises stays on the premises.

A large portion of clients who attend Wee Care Residential program are emotionally and/or physically distressed which is why the need for privacy and confidentiality cannot be overstated. All information relating to Althea Projects/Wee Care Residential, clients or any involved service is strictly confidential and can cause extensive legal proceeding, further emotional or physical distress on Wee Care clients. These terms and conditions will apply to your time on the premises and thereafter.

SIGNING IN/OUT BOOK

Each child must be signed in at the commencement of playgroup and signed out at the end of each session on the playgroup attendance sheet.

YOUR FIRST DAY AT PLAYGROUP

Become involved. Get down and play with and talk with the children. Some children may cling to their parents for the first few sessions. Let your children choose what they want to participate in so that they can go to an activity table and get busy immediately upon arrival.

FIRE AND EVACUATION

We have set procedures in place to ensure everyone in the centre is evacuated in case of emergencies. There are also signs and fire extinguishers placed around the centre. If you are in the centre and you hear the emergency siren please follow procedures carefully and follow instructions from Wee Care staff who are in charge.

If inside the building children will be evacuated through the front playroom to the outdoor play area adjoining our assembly point. Parents must not leave the assembly area until notified by authorised persons eg: fire officers-police. If the fire is outdoors the children will be led up the side of the building and through the gate to the assembly point.

Office staff will collect the sign-in book and bring it to the evacuation point. Parents should make themselves familiar with our evacuation point posters. There is one located in the outdoor kitchen.

SUNSMART

Our sun smart policy has been developed to ensure that all the children attending this centre are protected from skin damage caused by harmful UV rays. This is to be implemented throughout the year.

Children and parents/caregivers will be required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears whenever they are outside. Children who do not wear their hats will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun.

SPF 30+ should be applied before you come to playgroup for added protection.

HEALTH

It is the responsibility of parents to notify us if a child is ill or has an infectious disease. We will notify parents when there has been an infectious disease at the centre, verbally or placing a notice near the sign in sheet. It is always in the best interest of your child and other children at the centre for sick children to stay away. Some illnesses that require exclusion are: Fevers, Flu and/or Flu like symptoms, Diarrhea, Vomiting, Conjunctivitis, Impetigo (School sores), Head lice, Cold Sores, and Hand, foot and mouth disease. If your child appears to become unwell during the session we advise you to take them home or to the doctor.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING A CHILD WHO YOU KNOW IS ALREADY ILL.

ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

There is a first aid kit in the pantry and outdoor kitchen in the event of minor accidents. (Please ask staff if you require first aid treatment).

There is always a staff member on shift who holds a current Senior First aid certificate.

An ambulance will be called in cases of serious injury from an accident (or sudden serious illness).