

Rowville & District
Neighbourhood House



Neighbourhood Houses
The heart of our community

ROWVILLE & DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE INC.

20 Fulham Road, Rowville 3178

VACATION CARE PROGRAM FAMILY HANDBOOK

Updated May 2011

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ABOUT THIS INFORMATION HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Inc. Vacation Care Program.

We strongly recommend that you read this document thoroughly before completing any paperwork as this handbook forms part of the policies and procedures that guide the Vacation Care Program.

The Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Vacation Care Program aims to provide children with care of the highest possible standard within a safe, secure and stimulating environment.

This handbook has been developed to provide families with important information about how the Program operates, and what is required of those who utilise the service. Please keep this document for future reference. A full copy of the policy and procedures that guide our staff in the management of our program is available from the office. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the office on 9764 1166 or the Vacation Care mobile on 04170374837.

We hope that this information assists in providing a positive school holiday experience for you and your child/ren.

SERVICE PROVIDED

In response to the community needs of the Knox area, the Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Inc. (RDNH), with assistance from the Knox City Council, established a Vacation Care Service. This Service is now located at 20 Fulham Road Rowville, within the Community Centre.

The Service includes a wide variety of activities that are prepared and implemented in a friendly environment, which accounts for children's social, emotional, intellectual, language, physical and creative needs; and operates to provide high quality child care in a safe, enjoyable and caring environment and is designed to meet the care and recreational needs of primary school aged children during the school holiday periods. This service enables parents to pursue options leading to employment, training, recreation and the pursuit of personal interests. Our program uses qualified staff, those working towards their qualifications, unqualified staff and volunteers and meets the National Standards for Outside School Hours Services relating to: staff ratios, facilities, administration, programming and health and safety.

In addition, parents using the service are eligible to receive a fee subsidy for having their child/ren in the program under the Commonwealth Government's Child Care Benefits Scheme (CCB). For the RDNH to provide this service, we are required to operate the program as stipulated by the Department of Family and Community Services. Further information on family entitlements under the CCB Scheme can be obtained by contacting your nearest Family Assistance Office or visiting the following website www.facs.gov.au

RDNH is a non-profit organisation. It operates the Vacation Care Program during the school holidays and during the term offers Short Courses and Activities for adults and children in areas such as Art &

Craft, Personal Development, Health, Relaxation & Wellbeing, Dance, Cooking, Computers and Special Interest & Hobby.

Membership:

Having a solid membership base is vital for the sustainability and growth of any organisation.

All participants must pay an annual (per Calendar year), non refundable Membership Fee (\$2.00) upon enrolment.

As a member of Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Inc. you will:

- Be able to be nominated and elected to the Committee of Management
- Have voting rights at the Annual General Meeting
- Be entitled to a 10% discount off our meeting/training room hire

The Vacation Care Service is provided by RDNH, which in turn is managed by a Committee of Management. The Committee is made up of local residents, house participants, and other interested Parties and Families of the Vacation Care Service are welcome to become a Committee Member.

RDNH has the responsibility for the overall financial and operational management of the Service and employs a Vacation Care Program Coordinator who is responsible for the day to day running of the service according to Policy and Procedures and Commonwealth guidelines.

The Program operates for ten weeks of the year during school holiday periods. The January Program operates during the last 3 - 4 weeks before children return to school for Term 1. Operational hours are from 7.45am to 5.45pm Monday to Friday during the school holiday periods. The Program will not operate on Public Holidays.

The Committee of Management and staff have developed this Policy and Procedures Document to provide families with information regarding the operation of this service. The Document includes policies established in line with State and Commonwealth Guidelines, legislation and quality assurance systems relating to Outside School Hours Care. The outlined policies will be reviewed by management and staff on an annual basis to ensure relevance to the service and families.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

“To provide primary school aged childcare for the Rowville and neighbouring area, meeting the needs of all children to be cared for in a creative, enjoyable, valuable, stimulating, recreational, safe and caring environment, regardless of gender, religion, disability or family background, while assisting parents who wish to pursue further training, study or employment by allowing the program to be flexible, affordable, high quality, safe and enjoyable for their children.”

The philosophy is implemented by the following goals:

- To offer a flexible service that responds to the care and recreational needs of children
- To provide an environment for children that:
 - is both safe and challenging
 - fosters individuality, recognising their needs and interests
 - promotes their physical health and well being
 - acknowledges the importance of the middle years of child development
 - values the benefit of play in both structured and self directed experiences

- fosters a spirit of equity and inclusion
- To ensure that the service accurately reflects the needs of children and parents by:
 - acknowledging the importance of parents in providing direction for the service
 - encouraging comments and feedback from all parents and children
 - acknowledging and being sensitive to the cultural backgrounds of families
- To meet the National Standards for Childcare
- To meet a standard of Satisfactory on all Quality Assurance Principles in the Outside School Hours Care Accreditation System, and continually strive to improve on these principles.
- To ensure that staff are able to:
 - fulfil the role and responsibilities they are employed to undertake
 - have their needs met

Purpose

- To respond to community needs in providing care for primary school aged children in the Rowville and surrounding areas during the holidays.
- To increase recreational and social access for children with additional needs.
- To provide children with a program that is effective, appropriate, entertaining, challenging and motivating.
- To provide learning experiences that expose children to many different and varied subjects.

Guidelines

- To establish and operate a Vacation Care Program to cater for primary school aged children.
- To provide safe, quality care and recreation in a fun, relaxed environment.
- To provide affordable childcare to families during the school holiday periods.
- To promote warm and friendly relationships with staff, parents and participants.
- To provide a program that reflects planning and a balance of activities to meet the physical, social, intellectual and emotional needs of children, including those with additional needs.
- To be an easily accessible vacation care for all children.
- All children are to be treated equally.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Service operates from: 7.45am – 5.45pm.

WHO CAN USE THE SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM?

The program is open to **all children attending primary school**, including those whose parents who are eligible under the Commonwealth Governments CCB Scheme and/or priority of access guidelines. *The CCB Guidelines states that: "The Outside School Hours Care and Vacation Care Programs are funded mainly for primary school aged children, but can assist children outside this range in special or emergency situations."* (FAO OSHC Handbook).

Due to State Government requirements, RDNH is unable to accept children who have not yet started primary school, unless a place is available. For example, if your child is due to start school in February the first program they can attend is the April program. Alternatively, if your child has

finished grade six in December they can only access the following January program and not any subsequent programs.

Children with additional needs are welcome to attend. The Vacation Care Program is committed to providing care to children from diverse backgrounds, which includes children with additional needs and those with a physical or intellectual disability. Additional support and care, in the form of additional staffing, may be available to these children to assist them in managing their day-to-day needs. Carers with appropriate skills are sourced to provide additional assistance to enable the child to be included in all aspects of the program where practically possible. Please contact the Children's Programming Manager on 9764 1166 if you are planning to enrol a child with additional needs in to the program. Children requiring an additional carer can only be accepted if Inclusion Support Funding (ISF) is available and an additional worker can be sourced.

The RDNH Vacation Care Service offers an anti-bias approach to programming, which is inclusive of all children. Consideration is given to factors such as culture, ethnicity, language, gender, social class and ability when planning the children's program. The program responds to individual needs, interests and requests can be made to increase the range of activities for all children attending the Vacation Care Program.

YOUR PRIVACY

The information collected by RDNH Vacation Care Program is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2000 and Health Records Act 2001. All of the information collected is stored securely and remains confidential. Private information regarding children and families will not be disclosed to other families within this service or to any external parties.

Staff will respect parents'/guardians' rights to confidentiality, as long as these rights do not conflict with the rights and safety of the children (e.g matters of child protection).

The person responsible for accessing files is the Vacation Care Program Coordinator. Information that is required for the daily operation of the service, the wellbeing of the children and staff, maybe exchanged between staff members in the normal course of work and will be treated confidentially.

MANAGEMENT

- The Sponsor of the Service is the Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Inc. The Neighbourhood House is managed by a volunteer Committee of Management who guide the operations of the Organisation.
- The Vacation Care Program Coordinator is employed to ensure that the day to day operation of the service meets with the requirements set by the Commonwealth's Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and legislation set by State and Commonwealth Governments' under the direction of the Rowville & District Neighbourhood House, House Manager and Committee of Management.

The Committee of Management has the responsibility to ensure that:

- All aspects of the service, including policy, program and budget development, approval of all expenditure of the budget, staffing decisions and management of staff meet with legislation.
- The incorporated status is maintained including updating rules of association and having a certificate of incorporation.
- Representatives are elected at the Annual General Meeting

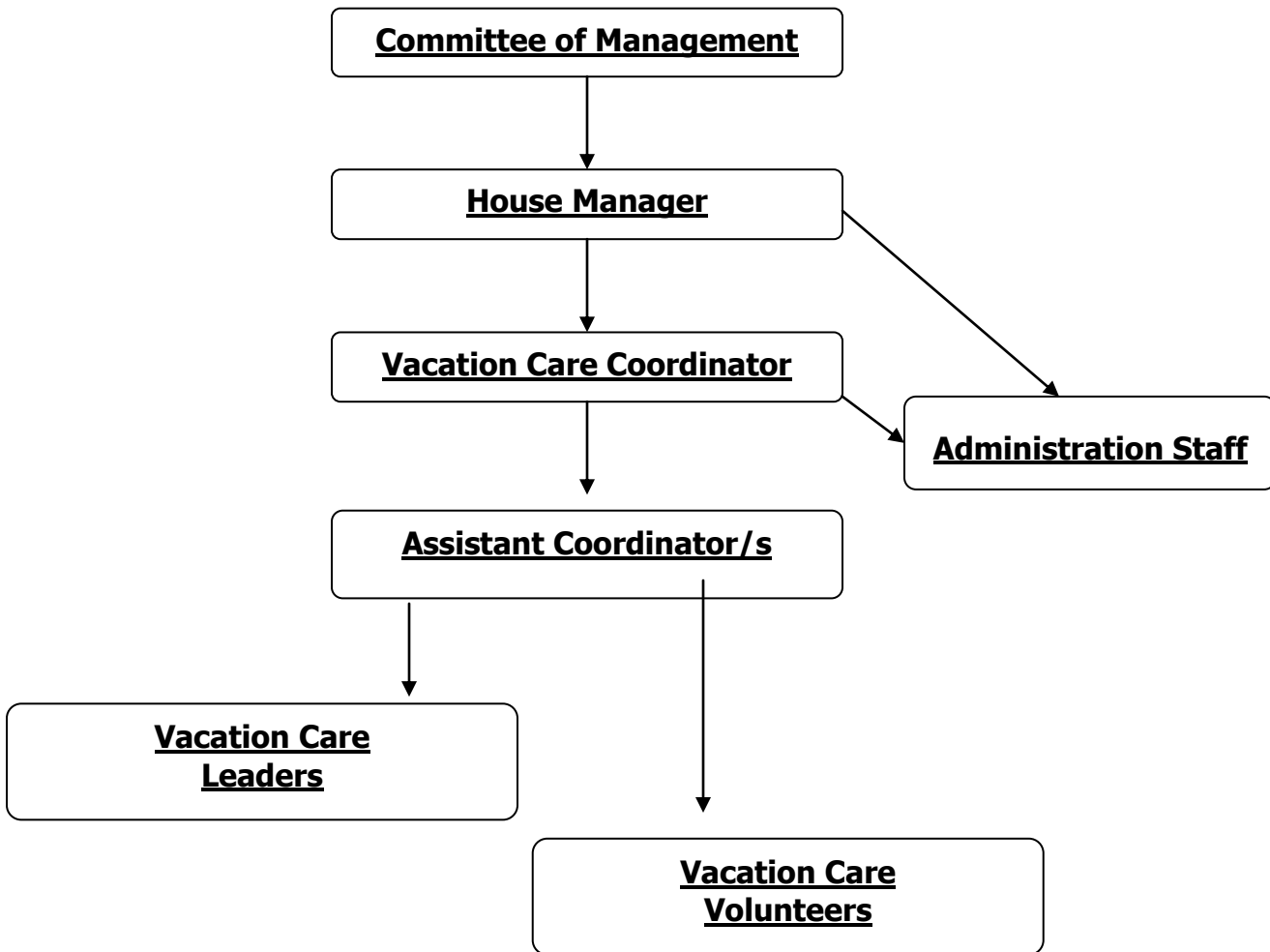
The Vacation Care Coordinator is responsible for:

- The day-to-day operation of the Program and to implement the policy in relation to the service.
- Other roles and responsibilities are as follows:
- To encourage participation and suggestions from parents and staff regarding decisions to be made about the service operation, its policies and the fulfilment of its philosophy and goals.
- To regularly review parent and staff needs in relation to service operation and where appropriate to lobby groups to ensure that these needs are met.
- To be actively involved in staff recruitment and the development of a positive work environment.
- To assist in the development and management of the finances of the Service, and to be responsible to the Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs for funding.
- To report directly to House Manager and to the Committee of Management.
- To ensure that the service meets all legislative requirements as set by the State and Commonwealth Governments in relation to child care services, staff, financial management and health and safety.

REFERENCES:

FACS - Quality Practices Guide 1st Edition 2003 – Quality Area 8 - Managing to Support Quality – Principal 8.1- Management ensures the service operates within relevant legislation.
FACS, 2000, Community Based – Outside School Hours Care Handbook July 2000

MANAGEMENT: FLOWCHART OF RESPONSIBILITY



ENROLMENT PROCESS

Enrolments are on a first come first served basis. Priority will be given to children of primary school age in accordance with Priority of Access Guidelines; enrolments for children outside these ages must be discussed with the enrolment officer prior to enrolment. The service maintains a waiting list for care in application date order and in accordance with the Commonwealth Government's Policy on Priority of Access Guidelines.

Brochures and an enrolment form are sent to families who have used the program within the last 6 months. Brochures can also be collected from the office only once they have been posted to all families on our current mailing list.

The following timetable guide will apply for all programs except for the January programs where the date worked back from will be 23rd December. **As this is a guide only; please refer to each specific holiday program brochure for exact enrolment dates.**

1. Brochure mailed out, and then made available from Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Office

2. Office opens for enrolments/payments at the Early Bookings Discount Rate during office hours stipulated on the cover of the activities brochure. Please note that excursions & special In-Centre activities will incur an additional levy, this will be noted on the program of activities.
3. **Early booking discounts cease** (see Activities Brochure for specific date and time). Any enrolments **and** payments received after this date/time will be charged at the maximum (Casual) daily rate, less CCB.

Completing and submitting an application does not guarantee a place on the program. Your enrolment is only confirmed once payment is received.

During program:

1. Enrolments and payments can still be made, but these will be charged at the maximum daily rate, less CCB plus any additional activity levies.
2. All places are subject to availability and *Priority of Access* guidelines.
3. Any child suffering Asthma or other performance affecting disability must have an advice sheet completed on enrolment.
4. **Please Note that staff at the Program are not able to accept children unless an enrolment form has been completed and signed.**
5. For families to receive reduced fees through CCB, the RDNH must be listed as a carer for your child/ren. If RDNH has not received official notification from Centrelink as to your child/ren's eligibility before booking, families will be required to pay the full daily fee for the child/ren until official notice is received from the FAO. (This can take up to 4 weeks after you contact them)
6. If official notification arrives within the required time frame, RDNH will write a refund cheque for any over paid amounts after the program has finished.

Our licence is for 80 children, if this number is reached, a waiting list will be established and vacancies will be given to the next family on the list in order of entry, according to Priority of Access Guidelines.

HOW TO BOOK

Booking is easy: We accept enrolments via mail, fax and in person and payments can be made via credit card (phone or in person), EFTPOS, cheque and cash.

- If you are having difficulties completing the application form or understanding your responsibilities please contact the coordinator on 9764 1166.
 - To be eligible for care your child/ren must be currently attending a primary school or equivalent.
 - All enrolments will be taken according to the Commonwealth Government's "Priority of Access Guidelines" in date received order.
 - Completing and submitting the application form does not guarantee a place on the program.
- Places are only guaranteed once paperwork and full payment has been received, unless otherwise specified on program brochure.**

STEP 1 – Complete Forms

- Complete **all** details on **both sides** of the enrolment form. **Please print clearly** using a dark blue or black biro.

- Please read the information contained on the reverse of the enrolment form and on the back of the Activities Program, then sign and date to confirm you have read these points and understand them.

STEP 2 – Lodge Forms and Payment of fees

- *Bring in* forms during office hours to:

Rowville & District Neighbourhood House
20 Fulham Rd, Rowville
(2nd office in Community Centre)

- *OR Post* forms to:

School Holiday Program

PO BOX 2193, Rowville 3178

- *OR Fax* enrolment form to (03) 9764 1215

- Payment can be made by via Cash (do not post), EFTPOS, Visa, MasterCard or Bankcard. To receive Early Booking Discount, the account must be paid in full by the specified date on the front of the Activities Brochure.

Families posting or faxing forms must contact RDNH to arrange payment.

FEES

Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Inc. Vacation Care Program operates on a non-profit basis. Any surplus will be expended on equipment and resources for the children's program, minor upgrades and service improvements as specified by the Committee of Management. Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Inc. Vacation Care Program aims to provide a quality service which is accessible and affordable to families.

Fees are charged on a per child per day basis and **must be paid before commencing care**. Care is charged per session where each session is equal to one day (7:45am – 5:45pm). An after hours session is available from 5:46pm until 6:00pm at an additional cost, but is not entitled to fee reductions through the CCB scheme. Discounts are not given for attendance for half a session.

Early Enrolment Discount \$43.00 per day:	Booked before the program starts and in conjunction with dates provided by the Coordinator.
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Regular Daily Fee: \$45.00 per day	Book during the program or after date specified by the Coordinator.
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Payments can be made by cash, EFTPOS or via Credit Card (VISA, MasterCard or Bankcard only).

Childcare Benefit is based on the income each family earns. **The amount families are required to pay may change and is subject to the information received from the Family Assistance Office. If you notify the Family Assistance Office of a change in income before, during or after the School Holiday Program, your fees may change even if you have already paid your account.**

Parents who do not want to apply for CCB must pay full fee.

Parents/guardians who have not paid their account will not be able to access the program until their account has been settled in full.

Parents/guardians experiencing extreme financial hardship should contact the Vacation Care Coordinator.

CANCELLATIONS, REFUND AND ABSENCES

Refunds will only be given to cancellations if written notification is received 24hrs prior to the day in question. If a written cancellation is not received all monies will be forfeited. This includes, non-attendance due to sickness or other reasons, or if your child/ren has been suspended from the program for any reason.

Any refunds will incur a \$10 administration charge per child to cover the cost of time needed to alter computer records, invoices, attendance sheets, staffing etc. Families can choose to receive a cheque refund or have the refund credited for enrolment in the child/ren's next program. RDNH will write any refund cheques and post them to families at the address on file.

SIGN IN AND OUT REGISTER

All children attending the service must be signed in and out by the parent/guardian/authorised person each session. ***This procedure is a legal requirement under the services' conditions of Commonwealth funding.*** An authorised person must not be under the age of 18 and their details must appear on the enrolment form. Written consent, on the day in question, shall be required from the parent/guardian if the child is to be collected by any other person.

Children must not be dropped at the Centre prior to opening times and will not be accepted until the official opening time of 7.45am. RDNH will not accept responsibility for children arriving or leaving unaccompanied outside operating hours.

On Excursion days children are requested to arrive 15 minutes before the stipulated time on the activities brochure. We will not wait for latecomers, nor will we contact them, as this may jeopardise our booking with the excursion operator.

Children must be enrolled and payment made before receiving care. If your child is new to the program please inform the staff at time of signing-in. Staff will ensure that your child is oriented to the program; this includes showing them where bags are kept, areas they may play in whilst at the service, telling them about snack times, expectations and linking them with other children in the program if they do not know anyone else.

LATE COLLECTION AND CHILD PROTECTION

Parents/guardians who pick up their child/ren after the program's operational closing hour of 5.45pm, but before 6pm will be charged an additional fee of \$5.00 per child. **Parents/guardians that collect their child/ren after 6.00pm will also be charged a late collection fee of \$1 per minute per child.** This charge is to cover the additional staff wages and the extra expense of keeping the venue open. This must be paid prior to the start of the next day of care for that child.

Parents/guardians who are unavoidably detained are required to telephone the centre immediately and advise of their lateness and expected time of arrival. If a parent/guardian is unable to collect their child prior to closing time they should arrange for another responsible adult to collect the child and advise the RDNH of this arrangement. This advice should be in writing if at all possible.

1. If by 6:10pm, no contact has been received, staff will attempt to contact them parents/guardians.
2. If contact is unsuccessful, staff will contact the nominated emergency contact person to arrange collection of the child/ren.
3. House manager will be contacted and notified of the situation which is occurring.
4. If after 60 minutes, no contact has been made with the parents/guardians or emergency contacts the police will be notified and be asked to take responsibility for the child's immediate collection.
5. Child/ren will be reassured and made comfortable whilst this process is taking place.
6. If no contact has been made after 2 hours, the Police will contact the Department of Human Services' Child Protection Unit.

The health and welfare of all children in care is paramount. The Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Vacation Care Program will act on behalf of children to protect their right to safety and security in accordance with Section 64 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1989. Staff working with children have a duty of care to ensure that all children are safe from harm.

CUSTODY AND ACCESS

Child/ren will only be released from care when an authorised person has signed the child/ren out of the program. This is a Commonwealth Government requirement. An authorised person is a parent/guardian or any other person nominated on the enrolment form.

In order to appropriately manage the care of children in custody situations, a copy of all court orders in relation to custody must be provided to the Service upon enrolment. These documents will be attached to the child's records and treated confidentially. Parents are asked to notify the Service of any changes to these documents. In the event that a parent breaks a custody order and tries to access the child, the parent with custody entitlements will be contacted immediately, the staff will attempt to stall the parent from taking the child and then the police will be contacted.

If the Service is not provided with a copy of the court order, it will assume that both parents have equal custody of the child and therefore both have access.

ILLNESS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Please do not send your child/ren to the Program if they are unwell. It is unfair to them and other children and puts added pressure on staff. Staff may be able to provide care for children with some minor illnesses (eg. a mild cold); however, staff reserve the right to refuse access to the program if they deem a child to be unwell.

If a child becomes ill at the centre, staff will contact the parents/guardians to make arrangements for the child to be taken home as soon as possible. The service will ensure that the child is made as comfortable as possible while they are waiting for the parent.

RDNH will ensure that parents/guardians are notified of any infectious diseases present at the venue. Where a child develops symptoms at the service, parents will be asked to collect the child ASAP and seek medical diagnosis. RDNH will advise families of the potentially infectious disease by a large sign displayed at the sign in/out table. If your child develops symptoms or is diagnosed with an infectious disease after attending the service, please notify a staff member so that procedures can be put in place to notify other families.

The service will hold information regarding immunisation schedules, providers of immunisations. Upon enrolment your child's immunisation status will be requested to ensure that you are notified of any outbreak of infectious diseases which may affect your child. Children suffering an infectious disease will be excluded from the service in accordance with appropriate guidelines.

BEING SUNSMART

The Service adopts a Sun smart policy. All children are required to wear suitable hats (wide-brimmed or legionnaire style), appropriate clothing (no singlets) and covered footwear and sunscreen when outdoors between 10:00 and 2:00, and 11.00am and 3.00pm during Daylight Savings.

Staff will adhere to these practices to set an example for children such as wearing hats when outdoors in the summer. Staff will provide programs, where possible, during the warmer months that incorporate Sunsmart ideals and encourage the parents to follow the policy of Slip on a shirt, Slap on sunscreen and Slap on a hat and slap, during the Summer program.

Parents/guardians are to provide children with hats, sunscreen and appropriate clothing to suit the weather conditions and activities that the children are doing. Where children do not have the necessary sun protection items, they may be excluded from participating in the outdoor activities or attending excursions. RDNH may make available to a child, with no sunscreen of their own, some sunscreen deemed suitable by the Vacation Care Program Coordinator.

WHAT TO BRING

1. Lunch and snacks for morning and afternoon tea
2. Refillable drink bottle and with water (or the like) at the commencement of each day's care.
3. Appropriate clothing and **covered footwear** (no thongs) and **no open toed shoes**.
Due to Occupational Health & Safety concerns failure to do so may result in your child being excluded from activities that are provided.
4. Wide brim hat and sunscreen.
5. Anything else stipulated on the program of daily activities
6. **No money, toys, computer games, mobile phones or other item of value are to be brought to the program.** We understand children often want to bring special things from home but these treasures can be lost or broken and may also create competition between children. Any treasures/items from home brought to the Vacation Care Program are the children's responsibility and staff are not liable for any losses. Included in this is makeup because sharing is a health risk and cross infection may occur.
7. Refer to the Activities Brochure for other specific items that may be needed for excursions or activities
8. *Please be sure that all clothing and equipment, such as bags, clothes and lunch boxes are clearly **labelled with your child's name**.*

MEDICATION PROCEDURES

Medication includes all prescription **and** over the counter drugs. Good practice with regards to the dispensing of medication is essential. In the interests of staff, children and parents/guardian safety, medication will only be administered with explicit permission from parents/guardians or in the case of an emergency, with permission of a medical practitioner (of which evidence will be kept on file). Parents/guardians **must** fill in a Medication Form at the centre for each day the child is in care. Notification, in writing, will also need to be obtained from parents/guardians where a child self-administers the medication.

Medication will only be given from the original container with the child's name stated on the label and the required medication levels provided, and it is within the expiry date. An appropriate staff member will supervise the child when taking medication and a second staff member will check. Both staff will complete the required fields on the Medication Form.

Where staff have been notified all personal medication, including asthma pumps, will be stored in a safe place to ensure against access by other children.

POSITIVE GUIDANCE OF CHILDREN

The Rowville & District Neighbourhood House is committed to developing a secure, safe, caring and stimulating environment, which enhances children's self esteem and encourages them to interact positively and to co-operate with others. Staff will provide children with a role model that reflects values and attitudes of the local community and encourage positive behaviour.

The Vacation Care Program supports staff in implementing a Positive Guidance of Children policy that aims to promote, in children, the development of self-discipline, self-direction, awareness and respect of self, other people, their belongings and the environment. It should take into account children's individual levels of development and understanding, including self-esteem and dignity. RDNH supports a family centred approach where families are considered, respected and reflected in the Vacation Care Program.

Procedure

- Staff will use positive behaviour guidance strategies at all times;
- Staff will develop rules, boundaries and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour in consultation with the children;
- Staff will recognise and manage inappropriate behaviour in accordance with policy and the program's guidelines;
- Staff will label the behaviour and not the child and give clear and appropriate reasons when directing a child's behaviour;
- Staff will encourage children to respect and support each other and acknowledge all positive attempts made by children to resolve disputes and behave appropriately;
- Staff will provide an environment that considers minimising potential difficulties, including positive role modelling in their interactions with children, families and other staff;
- Staff will recognise when they are unable to manage a situation and seek advice and support from the Vacation Care Coordinator

PROGRAM PLANNING & EVALUATION

Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Inc. Vacation Care Program will offer a planned, flexible and balanced program which will respond to children's interests, needs and stages of development.

The Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Vacation Care Program is committed to nurturing and extending each child's social, physical, emotional and intellectual development in a child-friendly, supportive and fun environment. This plan is developed in collaboration with children, parents and staff.

Children will be provided with ample choice and opportunity to do things on their own, to accept appropriate responsibility and to use their free time creatively. Experiences offered will be both active and passive within the indoor and outdoor areas. Experiences provided are developed to suit the age and developmental ranges of children attending the service. Games and activities are altered where appropriate to ensure all children are able to participate fully.

The Rowville & District Neighbourhood House acknowledges that celebrations and festivals assist children to celebrate and learn about various cultures and festivals. The Vacation Care Program is supportive of all cultures, and implements an inclusive approach towards creating a complementary program that reflects our growing multicultural society.

Environmental awareness is encouraged through everyday experiences, and specific activities. Recyclable materials are used at all available opportunities including the use of natural materials where possible.

The Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Vacation Care Program believes continual assessment and evaluation of the service by the committee, parents, staff and children is an integral part of program planning. Children and parents will be surveyed regularly to ensure the program offered reflects their needs and interests. A variety of evaluation techniques will be used with children which may include informal discussion, pre-enrolment surveys, suggestion box, younger children drawing what they like in the program, written surveys, and children's interest checklists.

Staff will regularly evaluate activities, the program, excursions and incursions informally and at staff meetings.

Parents and staff will work collaboratively towards continuous improvement via service evaluation including suggestion boxes, parent surveys, informal discussion, and formal discussion at parent and committee meetings.

OTHER INFORMATION

ANAPHYLAXIS RISK

The safety and well being of children who are at risk of Anaphylaxis (serious allergic reaction) is a whole community responsibility. **We ask that families refrain from packing food items which contain nuts**, to help minimize the exposure to those children attending our program who are at risk.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AND EXCURSIONS

There are times where special activities and excursions are provided for the children. At times there are additional costs for these special experiences. When this occurs, parents will be advised in writing via the activities brochure. These additional charges do not attract CCB and will be included on invoices and must be paid for at the time of enrolling. On excursion days, no other care/activity options are available for families. All children enrolled on that day are booked to attend the excursion.

Transport on excursion days is via the Knox City Council's Community Transport Department or via Private Charter Bus. Buses are accredited and meet safety standards as set by the Department of Transport. Families should note that buses are not required by law to have seat belts; therefore, buses used by the RDNH program may not always be fitted with lap restraints or seatbelts.

On Excursion days children are requested to arrive 15 minutes before the advertised bus departure time on the activities brochure. We will not wait for latecomers, nor will we contact them, as this may jeopardise our booking with the excursion operator.

COMMUNICATION

The role of families in Vacation Care is paramount to its success and outcomes for children. Family members have a great deal of knowledge about their child which can be shared with the service. Staff will tell families about their child's time in the program. Families are encouraged to share relevant changes, issues, needs and interests of the child with the staff. This ensures the best possible care is provided to each individual child within the program.

The Vacation Care Coordinator will provide information to families via the white board, in the foyer of the Neighbourhood House, and via face-to-face communication with parents. At enrolment, families will be provided with a Parent Information pack.

The Vacation Care Coordinator is available to discuss the program and activities during the Vacation Care period. Families wishing to discuss matters of a more confidential nature are encouraged to make an appointment to meet with the Vacation Care Coordinator. In order to provide the best possible care for your child it is important for staff to be notified of any relevant information about your child's health, development and relevant personal/family matters.

LOST PROPERTY

All lost property will be kept by the Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Vacation Care Program for two (2) weeks after each program finishes, lost property can be collected from the RDNH office. Lost property not collected after this period will be donated to charity.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs taken by RDNH staff will be used to produce advertising materials to promote the holiday program and for use within activities. Photographs will only be taken of children if permission is provided on enrolment. Photographs may be displayed on our website at www.rdnh.org.au. Photographs taken by non staff members (i.e. Newspaper Reporters) for the purpose of advertising will require the explicit permission of parents/guardians.

FOOD

Staff can assist in opening packets but **can not** heat food or supply boiling water for instant noodles.

Occasionally, we may buy the children treats on excursions and/or whilst at the Centre.

Cooking with the children is one of the holiday experiences we sometimes have. The RDNH Vacation Care program ensures that children are supervised and educated in necessary health and safety precautions whilst cooking. A qualified Food Supervisor supervises all cooking experiences.

MOVIES (DVD)

The RDNH Vacation Care Program may rent, purchase or borrow 'C', 'G' or 'PG' rated films deemed suitable for viewing by the Vacation Care Coordinator. These videos may be shown as a special activity, to settle the children during the lunch hour or as a free-time activity before and/or after the program of daily activities. RDNH Vacation Care Program does not condone the use of pirated films and will refuse to play them if a child brings one from home due to their illegal nature.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Children are responsible for their own possessions. Items of value should be discouraged from being brought to the program. This includes money.

ACCIDENTS

Every attempt will be made to ensure the sound management of an injury.

For a minor accident, staff will administer basic first aid and complete an accident report that will be signed by the staff member, Vacation Care Coordinator and the parent/guardian.

For a more serious accident, staff will administer first aid and a co-worker will call for an ambulance. Staff will ensure that the rest of the group are being adequately supervised and the child's parent/guardian/emergency contact will be called.

If your child has an accident and does not report it to the program staff, then they are unable to address the problem. Please tell your child to inform a staff member of any such occurrences in order that appropriate action can be taken.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS POLICY

Priority Of Access - Guidelines

Priorities as indicated in the ChildCare Handbook:

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect
- Families in crisis should have support and assistance from child care services to the maximum extent possible.
- Families with work or work related needs.

"Where demand exceeds supply, it is important for services to allocate available places to those families with the greatest need for child care support."

Priority Of Access - Evidence Of Priority Of Access

When a family seeks to establish priority, the service should satisfy them that a child fits in the Priority of Access. Where this is not clear, the service should consider requesting documents as evidence of priority, such as:

- Disability of parent or child - medical certificate or other formal assessment; or
- Risk of serious abuse - confirmation from social worker, State Welfare Department or doctor, Court or Intervention Orders.

Once a vacancy arises, the Vacation Care Coordinator will contact the next family on the list.

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE (Non Excursion Days)

The School Holiday Program provides a fun, stimulating, active care and recreational experience for primary school aged children. To enable your child to participate fully in the program, children are encouraged to be signed in to the program before 9.30am.

Please note that on excursion days children are encouraged to be at the centre 15minutes prior to the stipulated departure time on the Activities Brochure. On excursion days we aim to arrive back at the centre by 4.30pm, but please double check this information with a staff member as each excursion does differ.

Please note all children will have the option of participating in the planned activities. If the child chooses not to participate, other activities, games are always available.

A Schedule example is attached

ROWVILLE & DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

Vacation Care Program

Date .

Theme: Welcome To The School Holiday Program and the New Year

Description: Help us welcome in a New Program and the New Year with a range of games and activities including get to know you, Calendars and prepare for BIG program ahead

Time	Routine	Activities	Rational	Staff Member/s
7:30	Staff members arrive, prepare and setup for the daily program. Ensure the daily roll and all necessary equipment is ready for use.	Preparation and Setup	To ensure the program is adequately prepared to ensure smooth running of the daily program	Coordinator/ Staff Member
7:45	Children start arriving. Have a range of low impact activities available for children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lego; • Colouring; • Cartoon DVD; • Computer. 	Lego Colouring Cartoon DVD Computer	Provide activities suited to children as they arrive, making them feel and included in the program	Coordinator and all staff members
9:15	Children stop their activities and sit down. Coordinator (or designated staff member) calls the roll. Each child's name will be ticked off and initialled by the staff member conducting the roll call. Staff introduction to children. Officially welcome children to the program and explain the rules, areas for play and quiet activities, and also Emergency Evacuation Procedures.	Roll Call	By providing all children with a positive introduction to the day they will be then introduced to all staff working for that day, and have an understanding of the activities to be conducted during the day.	Coordinator/ Designated staff member.

Time	Routine	Activities	Rational	Staff Member/s
9:30	Daily Welcome and Get to Know You Games	Group Get To Know You Games	Fosters a sense of community within the program. Different games to be played with children, to provide them with an opportunity to get to know other children within the program.	Coordinator/ Designated staff member
10:15	Children wash hands. Children to eat their morning tea whilst seated.	Morning Tea	Whilst children are seated and eating a morning snack, a roll call will be conducted to validate the daily sign-in sheets and to provide staff with an opportunity to put names to faces of children within the program. Children within the program will be encouraged to bring healthy snacks and lunches to the program. Water will always be available for children to drink throughout the day.	Coordinator/Setup Staff
11:00-11:45	Children go outside to play All children must wear a hat, and apply sunscreen (to be brought by individual children) After outside play, children will wash their hands before returning to activities.	Outside Developmental Play Weather Permitting	Children will be provided with various sports equipment and given the opportunity to further develop their social, fine and gross motor skills.	All staff members
11:45-1:00	Children have a choice of organised activities, as advertised in the Activities Brochure. Staff ensure all children are given the opportunity to join organised programs, although an alternate activities will be provided.	As listed on the Activities Brochure Alternate 'quiet play' activities	For those who finish early, or do not wish to participate in the activities, there will be colouring sheets and 'quiet alternative activities' available.	All staff members

Time	Routine	Activities	Rational	Staff Member/s
1:00-1:30	<p>Coordinator (or designated staff member) calls the roll. Each child's name will be ticked off and initialled by the staff member conducting the roll call.</p> <p>Children wash hands.</p> <p>Children to eat their lunch whilst seated.</p>	<p>Lunch</p> <p>DVD movie</p>	<p>Whilst children are seated and eating a, a roll call will be conducted to validate the daily sign-in sheets and to provide staff with an opportunity to put names to faces of children within the program.</p> <p>Children within the program will be encouraged to bring healthy snacks and lunches to the program. Water will always be available for children to drink throughout the day.</p>	Coordinator/Setup Staff
1:30-2:30	<p>Children to re-commence advertised activities and programs.</p> <p>Staff ensure all children are given the opportunity to join in, although an alternate activity will be provided.</p>	<p>As listed on the Activities Brochure</p> <p>Alternate 'quiet play' activities</p>	<p>Children will be afforded the opportunity to be involved in creating a personalised calendar, but if they wish not to be involved in this activity they will be able to make use of the colouring sheets.</p> <p>This is to ensure that most children will be a part of the craft, and to make sure there are too many activities happening at once.</p>	All staff members
2:30-3:30	<p>Children go outside to play</p> <p>All children must wear a hat, and apply sunscreen (to be brought by individual children) during daylight savings hours</p> <p>After outside play, children will wash their hands before returning to activities.</p>	<p>Outside Developmental Play</p> <p>Weather Permitting</p>	<p>Children will be provided with various sports equipment and given the opportunity to further develop their social, fine and gross motor skills.</p>	All staff members

Time	Routine	Activities	Rational	Staff Member/s
3:30-4:00	<p>Coordinator (or designated staff member) calls the roll. Each child's name will be ticked off and initialled by the staff member conducting the roll call.</p> <p>Children wash hands.</p> <p>Children to eat their afternoon tea whilst seated.</p>	<p>Afternoon Tea</p>	<p>Whilst children are seated and eating, a roll call will be conducted to validate the daily sign-in sheets and to provide staff with an opportunity to put names to faces of children within the program.</p> <p>Children within the program will be encouraged to bring healthy snacks and lunches to the program. Water will always be available for children to drink throughout the day.</p>	<p>Coordinator/Setup Staff</p>
4:00-5:30	<p>Children to play board games</p> <p>Children to also have a DVD available to view.</p> <p>Children to be signed out when their parent/guardian picks them up.</p>	<p>Board Games</p> <p>DVD</p> <p>Computer Games</p> <p>Group related activities.</p>	<p>Children will be encouraged to work collaboratively on Lego constructions, or various group related activities and games. Themed appropriate DVD available for viewing at this time.</p>	<p>All staff members</p>
5.30 – 5.45	<p>Staff begin to pack and clean up what is left from the day's activities and start preparing for the next day.</p> <p>Children will be given the opportunity to assist staff in the end of day pack and clean process.</p>			
5:45-6:00	<p>Service closes. The Supervisor may choose this opportunity to also do any administration work or final preparation work for the next day that still needs to be completed.</p> <p>If any child is still at the Service after 5.45pm, steps will be taken to contact the parent.</p>	<p>Pack up</p> <p>Administration</p>	<p>This provides staff with the opportunity to ensure the venue is tidy and all administration work is up to date for the coming day.</p>	<p>Supervisor & Staff Member</p>

FEEDBACK, ENQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

RDNH welcomes all types of feedback and enquiries from families on any aspect of the program. We encourage participation and suggestions from families and staff in the decisions regarding the Vacation Care operation, and its policies. We believe continual assessment and evaluation of the Vacation Care program by the committee, parents, staff and children is an integral part of program planning. In order to facilitate this belief, the program will undertake various surveys throughout the year in order to gain information for future planning. Both children and parents and staff will be surveyed to ensure the program offered reflects both children and parental needs and interests.

Families with concerns or complaints are encouraged to discuss these with the Vacation Care Coordinator. Complaints which are not resolved to the family's satisfaction, will be referred to the House Manager; if remaining unresolved to the Committee of Management.

Enquiries regarding the RDNH Vacation Care Program can be made by calling the office on 9764 1166 during the school term and on 0417 374 837 during the holidays.

DISCLAIMER

The Rowville & District Neighbourhood House Inc. has made every effort to ensure that all information contained in this handbook is correct at time of printing. It reserves the right to change the contents of this handbook if required. A notice of any changes will be sent to current families and will also be displayed at the sign-in/out table.

**We hope your child/ren will enjoy their time spent at our
Vacation Care Service.**

**Please feel free to discuss your child's participation in
the program with the Vacation Care Coordinator.**

ROWVILLE AND DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE INC.

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