

Schoolhouse Playcare Snapshots

Neil's Story

Being first time parents, we knew we would be experiencing some anxiety when it came time for our baby to go to child care. But adding this pandemic to the mix has made us feel so much more worried. In addition to concerns for our child's safety, I was also worried about the transition itself. At that time, our child hadn't spent any time without me or my husband. But thanks to Sandy's (Supervisor) out-of-box thinking, we were able to have socially distanced, outdoor visits with the educators. Meeting the educators in-person, getting a chance to ask questions, and seeing them engage with our child made all the difference... Not just for our baby, but for us as well!

In addition to enduring the pandemic, the events of last year also brought the issue of systemic racism to the forefront. We absolutely love Canada - our new home, but we equally cherish our Indian heritage and culture, and it has always been very important to us to expose our child to that. Diwali - the festival of lights - is a major festival in our culture. All I did was share that with my son's educator and one can only imagine our excitement and joy when he brought home a beautiful Rangoli and Diya that they had made at child care!

I know our baby may be too young to realize the importance of appreciation for our culture, but we will always cherish his first artwork for Diwali. And we really appreciate the efforts of the educators to foster equity and racial inclusivity in that setting.

We are so glad and thankful that we chose this child care. We couldn't have asked for a better start to our kid's learning journey!

-Dr. Param Sekhon



Jaidien's Story

Being a mother of two and expecting is a blessing in itself, but from the beginning of the pandemic I have had to deal with setback after setback, but always stayed positive. The moment it was announced that there would be interruptions and closures to schools and child care, I found it hard to stay positive. With the closure of schools and child care centres, I was caught in a difficult predicament, tasked with making challenging decisions about our family's safety, financial obligations, and career concerns daily. Because of these closures there were very few options about how to proceed with our regular or somewhat regular lives. With all the other challenges ahead, the pandemic raised many questions about how to proceed with providing for my children emotionally, socially, and supporting my children's education needs.

Just as all hope was gone and it felt like we had no options or positive direction to move ahead, Schoolhouse Playcare Centres came to the rescue. They reached out to me and presented the option for Emergency Child Care, available for essential workers.

Once the information was presented to me, like every other parent out there I then had worries of how safe it was to send my son Jaidien. But as fast as the worry entered my thoughts, they were eased because of the high level of care I have known to expect from Schoolhouse Playcare Centres. They have been superb from the beginning without a doubt. Schoolhouse Playcare Centres has created such a caring, nurturing, and responsive environment for my son Jaidien, to the point he asked us if he can go to child care on weekends. Jaidien always shares stories about his time at child care, telling us how his day was and talking about his lovely teachers. Since he has been at SPC, Jaidien has become more adaptable to changes in his life and almost every environment he is in.

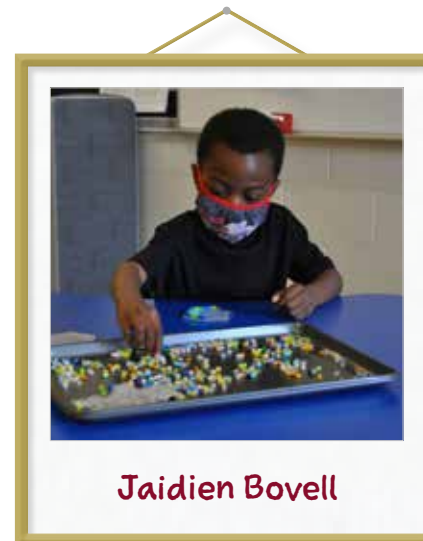
Throughout the pandemic, Schoolhouse Playcare Centres staff at the **Captain Michael VandenBos Public School** have been one of my biggest support systems in reassuring me that Jaidien is safe and well taken care of. This level of care was consistent when Jaidien was enrolled in the Emergency Child Care program at the **Glen Dhu Public School** location. This brought relief knowing that my child was happy, safe, and well cared for while I worked on keeping our lives as intact as possible. From day one, I was immediately put to ease by the professionalism, care and warm welcome from Trina (Supervisor at Captain Michael VandenBos location).

I am also thankful for all the R.E.C.E's and E.C.A's that work at that location. They are warm, nurturing, respectful, professional and go above and beyond to ensure that Jaidien has the best experience in child care.

There is so much more I can say about how COVID-19 affected my family, but nothing compares to the relief I felt knowing that there was reliable and safe child care options available, and the reliable staff at Schoolhouse Playcare Centres. I would like say thank you to Trina and her staff at Captain Michael VandenBos location for their unwavering support and outstanding care they have always provided. I would also like to say thank you to the staff and leadership at Glen Dhu, you all made it easy to feel at ease when leaving my child in your care.

Even through COVID-19 and visiting the different SPC locations for emergency child care, Jaidien has created a bond with the staff when he was there. The staff took the time to know Jaidien and in no time they were able to tell what gets him upset, and how to cheer him up. Also, thank you to all those who made this possible that I am not aware of. Even through this difficult time, it's great to know that there was a way to survive.

-Mikalia Bovell



Nash's Story

Putting your child into child care for the very first time is an emotional time for all parents. During a pandemic it added a whole other layer of emotion. It honestly has been the best decision we have made for our son. The staff at **Highbush** welcomed us with open arms. They went out of their way to help make the transition go smoothly. Atina (Supervisor), helped put us at ease by sending us pictures of the centre and the staff as we could not go for a tour. Desiree and Anam have gone above and beyond caring for our son. They are so patient and kind with him. They have taught him so much over the past few months.

Every day he is coming home with new words and skills. They keep him stimulated by doing fun science experiments and art projects. They keep us informed with daily reports and send us pictures with the StoryPark App. During COVID, the child care centre has allowed for our son to learn and socialize with other kids his age which has been fundamental in his development. The staff have taken all appropriate health measures such as wearing PPE and screening us in the mornings. We are confident they are trying their absolute best in keeping our son healthy and safe.

The staff have been so thoughtful and creative during such an uncertain time. They exceeded our expectations by hosting a "Holiday Family Photoshoot" outdoors for families to take part in. My husband and I have both been fortunate enough to work throughout the pandemic as we have essential jobs. Therefore, without child care we wouldn't have been able to both work. We are beyond thankful to have an amazing child care centre for our son to go to every day.

-Kaitlin and
Chris Neale



Nash Neale



Trucks & more!



Blake Wilson



Jaxson Wilson

Jaxson and Blake's Story

As a single working mother of 5 year old twins, COVID has had a severe and direct impact on my life. I needed a place for my children to go each day so I can go to work. I needed a place where I know they will be well taken care of and will be safe.

There is no better place than that of **Brooklin Village Schoolhouse Playcare Centres**. They have been attending since they were 18 months old and have loved it since Day 1. The bond they have developed with their educators is one that is strong. They are always excited to get dressed each morning and "go to school".

With the onset of COVID, I made the decision to hold them back from starting Junior Kindergarten in September of 2020, opting instead to keep them where they are comfortable – in child care. That was an option brought to me by the Supervisor herself. Knowing I was nervous about them starting school during a pandemic, that option brought me immediate relief.

The staff and the educators at Brooklin Village are amazing, for lack of a better word. I am so lucky that my children have been blessed to be a part of that family. I'm not sure what we would've done without them. My kids are happy. They are playful. They are loved when they are there.

-Angela Wilson

Bentley's Story

It was a year ago today we were all put on lockdown. My little guy was new to **SPC Glen Dhu** and had only been in child care for 3 months before all our lives forever changed!

With all the uncertainty going on, we had no idea when he was going back to child care, and when/if he did what it would look like. Needless to say, I was a nervous wreck! Luckily for me, all the staff at the SPC Glen Dhu location were very supportive, understanding and did everything they could to ease my mind and worries. Andrea (Supervisor) was always available for a call or email if I had any questions or concerns. She was always willing, ready to listen and explain anything I was unsure of. I am extremely grateful for all the communication during that time and that we were able to stay connected.

Fast forward to October 2020, and we sent our son back to SPC. I was still anxious and concerned, but with all the protocols, communication and relationships built with the staff it helped to ease the transition. Since my son has returned to SPC Glen Dh, he has flourished! All the staff and educators are so wonderful, kind, caring and treat the kids like their own. I look forward to the daily report card, as they always write a sweet story or cute memory from the day about my son.

Since COVID, my son hasn't seen any friends and barely any family, so the staff and SPC Glen Dhu have become his world of friends/family/support. He's excited and eager to go to SPC everyday, he's thrilled to learn and be with his friends and teachers. All weekend is spent asking when he goes back to child care! I knew my son would do great, but he's far exceeded our expectations and I can't help but think it's because of the wonderful staff/teachers that helped ease the scary transition and give him the love and support he needed to feel comfortable enough to grow to his best potential!

I can't wait until COVID is behind us, as I really miss being able to come into the centre and chat with all the staff during pick-up and drop-offs. I would like them to know they have made this transition as easy as it could be for me, my son and our family. I am forever grateful for their loving and nurturing environment they give to my little guy, and the connections we've made with each of them. I can't wait to give all the staff/teachers a big HUGE hug, for all the hard work they are doing to keep everyone safe and happy during this crazy time.

-Natalie Terry



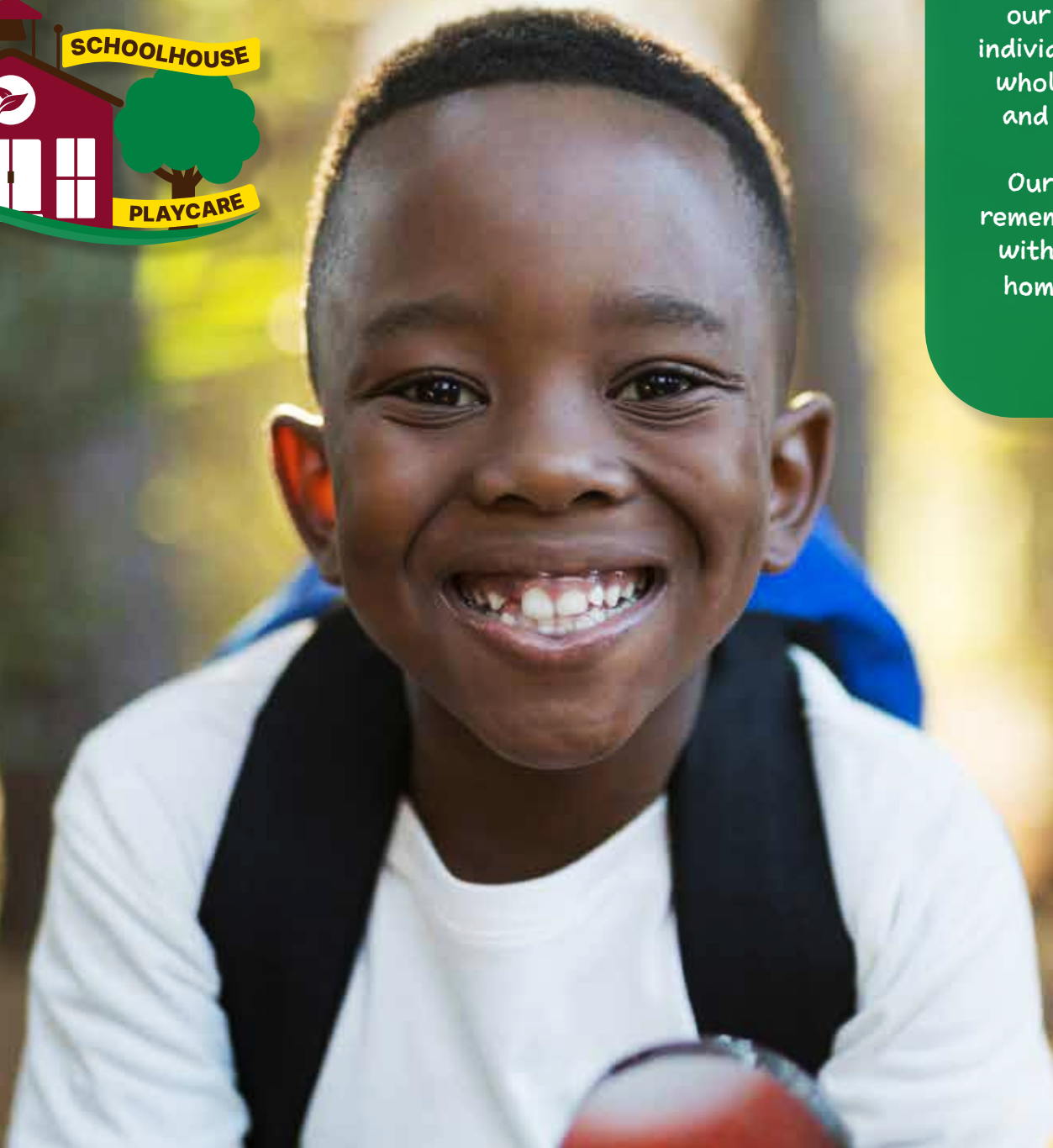
Bentley Terry



**Exploring the
outdoor classroom!**



We ♥ our educators



“This is such a special spot for not only our children but our community. The individuals that work here love with their whole hearts and create such a caring and safe environment for our babies.

Our children grow up but will always remember the love and support they felt with their first experience away from home. Thank you for all that you do.”

-Parent at Glen Dhu

(905) 728-7740

schoolhouseplaycare.ca