Parent Handbook



‘A Special Place for Children’

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**Philosophy**

The McMaster Students Union Child Care Centre provides high quality child care to enrich all aspects of development of children in a “home away from home” atmosphere for both the child and the family.

# Program Statement

The McMaster Students Union Child Care Centre is a service of the McMaster Students Union which provides play-based educational childcare for the McMaster student community as well as the community at large. The centre is licensed under the Ministry of Education and governed by the **Child Care and Early Years Act of 2014**. The program follows the ministry’s statement on programming and pedagogy using the four foundations: *Belonging, Well-being, Engagement and Expression*found in the document, “**How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years 2014”**

Understanding that children are competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential, educators provide engaging activities and planned and spontaneous experiences that build on their strengths and abilities allowing them the opportunity to be successful. Children receive encouragement to inspire self- esteem and positive interactions. Staff will not engage in any of the **prohibited practices** as outlined in the policies. The childcare staff functions as a team to ensure that each child is relaxed and secure in his/her environment responding to their individual needs, sensitive to social, cultural or developmental differences. All educators are knowledgeable, caring, reflective and resourceful professionals who engage in life-long learning.

Recognizing that the family is most influential to their child’s learning, development, health and well-being, the educators encourage the parents’ input, and work together to foster optimal development for the whole child.

**Goals and Approaches** (strategies include but are not limited to the following)

 ***(The Rights of Children taken from Hamilton’s Charter of Rights of children and Youth are indicated with an asterisk \*)***

1. **To ensure the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children**.

***\* “I have the right to be safe, secure and healthy.” \****

***\* “I have the right to good food, and warm, clean clothes.” \****

***\* “I have the right to a healthy earth to live on.” \****

* Providing nutritious meals and snacks based on Canada’s Food Guide taking into consideration each child’s nutritional needs as well as cultural and family preferences to promote healthy eating habits.
* Creating positive eating environments that respond to children’s cues of hunger and fullness.
* Teaching and modeling the proper sanitary/hygiene practices (see policies)
* Posting allergies and Individualized Plan and Emergency Procedures for children with Anaphylactic or other medical issues that will be reviewed by all staff, students and volunteers.
* Creating safe play opportunities that allow children to build confidence in their abilities.
* Providing a balance of quiet and active activities during the day.

1. **To support positive, respectful, and responsive interactions with all families, children and colleagues**.
* ***“I have the right to be heard” \****
* ***“I have the right to be proud of who I am” \****
* ***“I have the right to know about and practice my culture” \****
* Having orientations sessions with each family before their child begins in the program.
* Welcoming children and parents each morning at drop off encouraging information sharing and helping each child to settle into the program.
* Demonstrating/modeling a sense of respect with children, parents and colleagues.
* Hosting special family events creating a sense of community.
* Celebrating and recognizing that we are all different and may have had different experiences
1. **To encourage positive interactions with and between children, that promotes self-esteem, problem solving and supports their ability to self-regulate.**
* ***“I have the right to express myself, my personality and thoughts without judgement” \****
* ***“I have the right to have friends” \****
* Modeling positive behaviour and language
* Use emotional regulation techniques such as a calm voice, assistance through routines, and comfort, to help guide children through times that their emotions may be dysregulated
* Helping children to identify their feelings and, if needed, offer them the words to express how they feel.
* Helping the children to problem solve and encouraging them to work out conflicts on their own.
* Maintaining calm and organized routines.
* Acknowledging a child’s need to have their own space and providing places for individual play or quiet time.
1. **To plan a fluid program based on children’s interests and development that fosters the children’s exploration, play and inquiry.**
* ***“I have the right to make choices” \****
* Getting down to the children’s level and engaging in their play encouraging questioning and exploration of their environment.
* Listening and observing the children to determine areas of interest and providing experiences that build on these interests.
* Respecting the child’s choice to play or choice to observe activities
1. **To provide opportunities for child-initiated and adult supported experiences.**
* ***“I have the right to be heard” \****
* ***“I have the right to play” \****
* Providing new and diverse materials and experiences that follow the children’s interests and enhance their learning.
* By being co-learners researching and finding answers or resources to expand on the children’s ideas and questions, furthering their experience & knowledge.
1. **Plan for positive and creative learning environments and experiences in which each child’s learning and development will be supported.**
* ***“I have the right to learn more things” \****
* Considering the four foundations of Belonging, Wellbeing, Engagement and Expression in creating a positive learning environment that fosters age and developmentally appropriate experiences. Using the continuum of development as a reference to plan for age-appropriate activities that support their current level of skill and provide challenges to advance their learning.
1. **To have a balanced schedule that engages children with an opportunity for active play as well as quiet and rest time**.
* ***“I have the right to play” \****
* ***“I have the right to rest” \****
* ***“I have the right to privacy” \****
* Giving the children the opportunity to have gross motor play indoors and outdoors (when weather permits) each day.
* Providing equipment that encourages this active play i.e. tricycles, climbing equipment, balls etc.
* Providing quiet spaces where children can relax and spend time by themselves when desired.
* Providing a comfortable quiet, familiar space for rest time.
* Providing quiet activities at rest time for children that don’t sleep.
1. **To foster the engagement of, and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children**.
* Have a minimum of 6 monthly Parent meeting excluding July and August, to discuss the program and implications.
* Special activities in the classroom planned by educators
* Maintaining a parent bulletin board for information of interest to parents.
* Using a parent contact list to email families to send messages about happenings at the centre.
* Encouraging ongoing communication with families each day.
* Using the Lillio app and or completing a daily communication book or chart for parents to read.
* Posting documentation of the children’s activities.
1. **To engage with community partners to enhance the program and support an inclusive environment.**
* ***“I have the right to be free from discrimination” \****
* ***“I have the right to special help like a wheelchair if I ever need it*” *\****
* A designated Resource teacher assigned to the centre works with the staff to support an integrated program.
* Local community partners and associated professionals are engaged to ensure the best support for the children and families at the centre.
* Allowing clinicians to come to the centre to work with children.
* Providing parents with information regarding community resources.
* Arranging for community partners such as the local librarian to provide interesting experiences for the children.
* Allowing agencies such as MUMC to do child-based research with our families.
1. **To encourage and support ongoing professional learning for all staff**.
* The centre supports Educators in the “Continuous Professional Learning” cycle as outlined by the College of Early Childhood Educators.
* Upcoming professional learning opportunities are posted for all staff. They are encouraged to engage in activities that they will be able to put into practice in their program.
* Current issues and topics of interest are presented at staff meetings to keep staff informed/updated particularly with new trends and changes in legislation.
* The centre will financially support staff to participate in professional learning opportunities.
1. **To document and review these goals with staff to ensure we are following our program statement, policies and Individual Support Plans (ISP)**
* The program will be observed, documented and reviewed with staff to ensure that the Program Statement, Policies as well as Individual Support Plans (where applicable) are guiding the practice.
* Areas for improvement, mentoring and strategic planning will be put in place.
* Staff, students and volunteers will review and sign off on the program statement & implementation strategies, policies and Individualized Plans annually for the purpose of reflection, planning and understanding.

***Implementation of Policy and Procedure***

It is expected that goals described in the Program Statement will be implemented by employees and students/volunteers using the approaches such as outlined in the statement. The Director or designate will observe the program and staff for compliance of the Program Statement and the Prohibited Practices Policy.

**Methods to guide behavior in a positive manner that maintain the child’s self-esteem.**

* Children will be guided in a positive manner that is appropriate to their age and developmental level.
* Guidance will assist the children to learn problem solving and self-regulation.
* Regular staff intervention will acknowledge positive behavior using encouraging comments and reminders to children of acceptable behaviour. Where possible intervention will permit logical consequences.
* Children are encouraged to verbalize their feelings and concerns to other children.
* Staff will use soft, supportive voices, model acceptable behaviour and not discuss the children’s inappropriate behavior with other staff in front of them.
* Staff and student/volunteers will not engage in any of the prohibited practices as listed in the Implementation Policy.

The following **Prohibited Practices** will not be tolerated including:

* Corporal punishment of any kind;
* Deliberate use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity, self worth;
* Depriving the child of basic needs including food, shelter clothing or bedding;
* Using physical restraint such as confining the child to a high chair, stroller or other device for the purpose of discipline or in lieu of supervision;
* Locking the exits of the child care centre for the purposes of confining the child or using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children;
* Inflicting bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

***Contravention of Policies and Procedures and Commission of Prohibited Practices***

In the event that there is a contravention of the policies and prohibited Practices, the following actions will be taken:

1. Staff member will be brought in for discussion.

2. They will be given suggestions and additional training if warranted. Potential consequences will be discussed.

3. If problems persist it will be reason for some time without pay to consider suitability for the position and possibly dismissal.

4. Any form of corporal punishment will be reason for dismissal.

5. Any contraventions to the prohibited practices will be reported to the College of ECE’s as per the “Duty to Report” document.

The Director and program staff will continue to review and reflect on the approaches outlined in the Program Statement to ensure a positive learning environment for all children and their families

***Staff and Ratios***

The centre is licensed for 15 toddlers, and 32 preschoolers. We employ 7 full time Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) as classroom teachers for these groups. The ratios for toddlers are 1 staff for 5 children and for preschool the ratio is 1 staff for 8 children.

Staff are trained in First Aid and CPR, Epi-Pen administering and are in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators. Staff participate in continuous professional learning to keep up to date with new information in the field. Staff obtain a vulnerable sector check as well as a health assessment and have up to date immunizations as set out by Public Health.

We also employ non-RECE teacher’s assistant who assist the RECE’s with covering ratios, housekeeping duties and relief for breaks.

***Hours of Operation***

The Child Care Centre hours are **7:30am to 6:00pm** Monday to Friday from the day after Labour Day in September to the July 1st holiday.

In the summer, between the July 1st holiday and Labour Day, the centre is open from **7:30am to 5:30 pm** Monday to Friday.

Parents who arrive at the centre prior to opening may **not** leave their child unattended.

***Holidays***

The Child Care Centre is closed on the following statutory holidays throughout the year:

>January 1st  > Family Day >Good Friday >Victoria Day >Canada Day

>Civic Holiday >Labour Day >Thanksgiving >Christmas Day >Boxing Day

**Christmas Eve the centre closes at 1pm.**

**\*The week between Christmas and New Years, the centre is closed**.

***Closure for Staff Event***

Twice per year (typically once in the fall and once in the spring) the City of Hamilton supports the Early Years field by holding a Professional Learning Day for all Child Care professionals. On these days, the centre is shut down so staff can participate in the event. Parents are not charged for these days. Parents will have advanced notice of the day.

# Registration & Waitlist Policy

The McMaster Students Union Child Care Centre provides care for toddlers 18 months to 2.5 years (may start as young as 12 months) and Preschool children from 2.5 to 4 years (or Kindergarten entry eligibility). Parents must complete an application form with all applicable information to be included on the waiting list. The following priorities will be followed when enrolling children from the wait list.

1. Children of McMaster University Undergraduate students
2. Children of McMaster University Graduate Students
3. Staff and faculty of McMaster University & Students Union
4. Community members

Note: Children from families already in the centre will have priority as well.

On inquiry, parents will be informed as to their position on the wait list as accurately as possible while maintaining the confidentiality of the children on it.

Enrollment is based on the position coming available i.e. full or part time/toddler or preschool. **No fee is required to be on the waitlist.** When a position becomes available families on the list will be called, and an orientation session will be set up. An application package including immunization, emergency numbers, permission for photographs, administering creams (sunscreen, diaper cream etc.), further information about your child (temperament, likes/dislikes, skills) as well as a list of items to bring will be given for parents to fill out. At this time, the registration fee is due. All forms must be in before your child can begin at the centre.

***Please keep us informed:***

***It is essential that centre files be kept up to date. Parents must notify the staff immediately of any changes to telephone numbers or other information on the enrolment form of your child.***

We offer full time and part time positions. Full time is Monday to Friday. The three day part time is Monday, Wednesday and Friday and two day part time is Tuesday and Thursday.

***Orientation***

Before your child begins in the Child Care Centre, we have an orientation visit. You and your child will spend a morning from 9:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. at the centre. You may participate in indoor & outdoor activities, gathering time, lunch and observe the beginning of sleep time. Parents are not billed for these days. This orientation introduces parent and child to the centre and staff so that both are comfortable.

***Fees***

***-Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC)***

McMaster Students Union Child Care Centre has opted into the CWELCC system. This provides a reduced rate for families for child care.

The fees are charged monthly which is calculated by an average of 260 days of operation for the year.

Fees are payable in advance on the first Monday of each month. Receipts will be sent upon payment each month and at the beginning of the following year for tax purposes. Cheques are payable to MSU Child Care Centre if you wish to post-date a series of cheques. We are now able to accept Visa or MasterCard payments through the MSU Accounting office. A form must be submitted and the fee will be processed on the first Monday of each month. Parents are required to pay the full rate per month whether children are present or not. Monthly fees include all statutory holidays and as well as any closures that occur due to forces beyond our control i.e. snow days. The Child Care fees are tax deductible.

***Current Fees as of January 1, 2023***

**Toddler Daily Base Fee- $57.92 Reduced CWELCC Daily Rate- $27.37**

**Preschool Daily Base Fee- $48.92**  **Reduced CWELCC Daily Rate- $23.11**

***Other Base Fees***

***Registration* *Fee***

A registration fee is charged for every new child who enrolls in the centre. Subsidized and non-subsidized families are both responsible for this fee. The CWELCC system provides a reduction for the registration fee.

**Registration Base Fee- $25** **Reduced CWELCC Fee-** **$12.00**

***Monthly Fees based on the reduced CWELCC Rate***

**Toddler** **Full Time (5 days per week)** **$593.02**

 **Monday, Wednesday, Friday $355.81**

  **Tuesday, Thursday**  **$237.21**

**Preschool** **Full Time (5 days per week)** **$500.72**

 **Monday, Wednesday, Friday $300.43**

 **Tuesday, Thursday**  **$200.29**

***Non-Base Rate Fees***

***-Late Payment Charge***

Fees not paid by the end of the month will be subject to a $20.00 late payment charge.

***-Late Pick Up of Child(ren) -After Closing***

A late fee will be charged to persons arriving after closing hour of 6:00 p.m. (5:30 in the summer) at the rate of $20.00 for every 15 minutes or part thereof. ($25.00 for those with more than one child.) Families will be charged for every late arrival. If a child is picked up late regularly, staff will discuss with the family and if it continues, they may forfeit the child’s place in the centre. The late fee is meant to be a deterrent, not an extra fee.

MSU Child Care Centre does not charge any other non-based fees at this time. If any non-based fee changes will be requested, (ie. class trip fee), families will be notified 20 business days in advance.

***Withdrawal of Child from Program***

Notice in writing is required **twenty** business days in advance of withdrawing your child. If proper notice is not given, the parent will be required to pay for up to four additional weeks of fees.

***Service Termination***

The Child Care Centre reserves the right to terminate the agreement with a family if the staff feels that we are unable to meet the child’s/family’s needs.

***Subsidy***

# Subsidies may be available through the City of Hamilton Child Care Services Management Program for persons with limited incomes. For further information please contact the Child Care Centre Director.

Those requiring subsidy, must make their own appointments with Social Services to update their contract. Please let us know the reason for the absence so we may bill appropriately. Days over and above those allowed by the subsidy agreement must be covered by parents.

#  Arrival and Pick-Up

The following procedures are in place to ensure a smooth and safe transition to and from the Child Care Centre.

1. On arrival, parents must bring their child to their group and ***notify a teacher that the*** ***child has arrived***.
2. All belongings are placed in the child’s cubby. We ask that all children be in the center by **9:30 a.m**.
3. **All** belongings must go home when sharing a cubby and on weekends.
4. Any messages may be left with the teacher verbally or in writing or emailed to staff through Lillio or email.
5. A quick health check will be made on each child as they arrive**.**
6. When picking up, parents are not to leave the center with their child without making sure staff are aware of their departure.
7. The Child Care Centre has a security system. Once a child has been enrolled, families may obtain a Fob for a deposit of $20.00 each. (This deposit is reimbursed when the Fob is returned.) Inside the front doorway is an intercom with video which when buzzed allows staff in the kitchen, office and toddler room to view who is at the door and unlock it if person is expected. Families are encouraged to obtain a Fob for the security system. This gives families access to the front entrance of the Centre. Families may ask for more than one if they would like. This is **not** a mandatory fee, but it is encouraged as staff could be busy with the children and it may take time to answer the buzzer. When the Fob is returned, their deposit will be reimbursed. If Fobs are lost and a new Fob is required, families will be asked to pay for the new Fob.
8. If your child will be absent for any reason, families will still be charged for the day.
9. \***Please be careful to leave the gate closed with clasp over the top.**

***Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy***

**McMaster Students Union Child Care Centre (MSU) will ensure:**

When a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal policy. Staff will ensure that any child receiving child care at the child care centre is only released to the child’s parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided **written** authorization that the child care centre may release the child to and that the person who the child is released to is a minimum of 14yrs.of age.

**Procedures**

**Accepting a child into care:**

We recommend that children are present in the program by **9:30am** so that they can participate in the daily activities, that staff can greet children during an appropriate time of the routine and to ensure that lunch is prepared accordingly. If a child will be absent, parents are to contact the centre by phone or by classroom email (**not** sent to the Director email).

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off:

o Staff will greet the parent/guardian and child.

o At this time parents are to explain any changes to the child’s day (i.e., early pick up, change of individual picking up). Parents are encouraged to discuss any changes in sleep patterns, meals or behaviours from the evening/morning to the classroom teachers to help staff support their child through the day.

o Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child’s parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the emergency information page or if the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up **in writing, signed and dated** (e.g., note or email).

o Staff will document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.

o Staff will then sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

**Where a child has not arrived in care as expected:**

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message, email or advised the closing staff at pick-up, communicated a vacation time period), the staff in the classroom must:

o At **10:00 am** staff will begin to determine which children have not arrived and if a message had been sent to the Centre to inform of the absence.

o If no message has been received from the parent/guardian, staff must commence contacting the child’s parent/guardian no later than **10:30am** by email through the Lillio message centre. If there has been no response from the parents/guardian by **11:30am** staff will then attempt to contact them by phone.

o If no response by **12:30pm**, staff are to inform the Director/Designate and the child’s **emergency contacts will be contacted**.

Once the child’s absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child’s absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child’s absence in the daily written record.

**Releasing a child from care:**

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child’s parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided **written** authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),

o confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child’s parent/guardian/authorized individual.

o where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual’s information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual’s name on the child’s file or written authorization.

 **Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes):**

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up, **after** **30 minutes** classroom staff shall message parents/guardians through the Lillio message centre. ,

o Where the staff does not receive a response **after 30 minutes (one hour from communicated pick-up time)**, program staff will place a phone call to the parent/guardian. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian’s instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.

o Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall refer to the program closure procedure ‘where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed’.

**Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed:**

Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 6pm (5:30pm during summer hours), staff shall ensure that the child is offered a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.

Staff shall stay with the child and proceed with calling the parent/guardian(s) to advise that the child is still in care and needs to be picked up. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual; the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian and staff have the contact information for that person.

If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall call the emergency contacts listed on the child’s emergency form.

Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child’s file (e.g., the emergency contacts) **by 7pm (6:30pm during summer hours), the staff shall proceed with contacting the Director/Designate and then staff who are with the child are to contact the Hamilton Children’s Aid Society (CAS)** [**(905) 522-1121**](https://www.google.com/search?q=hamilton+children%27s+aid+society&rlz=1C1OKWM_enCA884CA884&oq=hamilton+children%27s+aid&aqs=chrome.0.0i355i512j46i175i199i512j69i57j0i512j0i22i30l2j0i390i512i650l3.4797j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8) **Staff shall follow the CAS’s direction with respect to next steps.**

# Severe Weather & Emergency Procedures

If the Child Care Centre is to be closed due to severe weather conditions, an email will be sent to families at the earliest possible time after the decision has been made, as well as a message through Lillio. **(Note: if both local school boards close, the childcare centre will be closed).** Regular fees apply to these days. The Child Care will email you if we must close early. If you have not received an email and are concerned, please check with the Centre. All children must be picked up within **two** hours from emergency closing time or the late fee will be in effect.

In the event of disaster, the above procedure will apply. Parents who arrive at the Centre may remain with their child but **not remove the child** without first informing the Director or designate staff who will then adjust the attendance record. The designated place of Emergency Shelter is **Dalewood School/Recreation Centre located at 1150 King St. West Hamilton.**

***Healthy Eating Policy***

McMaster Students Union Child Care Centre promotes healthy eating by planning and providing nutritious and safe foods in a positive, supportive environment, by role modeling health eating behaviours, by including healthy foods in creative play and teaching activities for children, and by engaging, supporting and educating parents and child care staff.

1. Menu planning is in accordance with Canada’s Food Guide to provide a variety of nutritious and healthy meals and snacks using foods that are familiar and child friendly. Menus will be reviewed and revised when needed.
2. Centre cook and Director as well as RECE staff have obtained safe food handlers’ certificates that are kept in good standing.
3. Educators are positive role models during meal and snack time and create an atmosphere for positive social interactions where children can learn good eating habits and the importance of nutrition. Staff provide a clean, pleasant and social atmosphere during eating times.
4. **Individualized plans for emergency medical procedures for children with an anaphylactic allergy are posted in each room, kitchen, office and on clipboards.**
5. **Consideration is given to families who wish specific dietary instructions for cultural or personal reasons (no pork, vegetarian, Halal etc.) Written requests must be kept on file.**
6. Food and cooking activities that integrate healthy foods and concepts are provided in the classrooms.
7. Support and resources are provided to parents that incorporate healthy eating and the well being of their children.
8. Children with anaphylactic allergies, allergies, sensitivities and dietary restrictions due to cultural practices are posted in the kitchen, each classroom and all locations in which the children may be present, to easily identify potential risk to children for staff and support staff that may be unfamiliar with the children in the program. For the gym and outdoor playground, the allergy list will be on each attendance check off list.
9. All teachers are trained in **Infant/Child CPR and First Aid** renewed every three years. If your child has an anaphylactic allergy or a medical issue (i.e. seizures or asthma etc), an emergency process form must be filled out and kept visible for all staff.



**Due to allergies, we are a nut free facility. Please make sure any food brought in is nut free. Please ensure your child’s face and hands are washed on arrival, particularly if they have had nut products for breakfast.**

***Individualized Plans and Emergency Procedures for Children with Life-Threatening/Anaphylactic Allergies***

* Before attending the childcare centre, the Director/designate will meet with the parent of a child to obtain information about any medical conditions, including whether the child is at risk of having or has anaphylaxis.
* Before a child attends the child care centre or upon discovering that a child has an anaphylactic allergy, an individualized plan and emergency procedures will be developed for each child with anaphylaxis in consultation and collaboration with the child’s parent, and any regulated health professional who is involved in the child’s care that the parent believes should be included in the consultation. All individualized plans and emergency procedures will include a description of symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction that are specific to the child and the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency based on the severity of the child’s symptoms.
* The individualized plan and emergency procedures for each child will include information for those who are in direct contact with the child on a regular basis about the type of allergy, monitoring and avoidance strategies and appropriate treatment.
* All individualized plans and emergency procedures will always be made readily accessible to all staff, students and volunteers at the child care centre and will be kept in the child’s file, on bulletin board in each room and on clipboard when outdoors/gym.
* **All** individualized plans and emergency procedures will be reviewed with a parent of the child annually or when a change is needed to ensure the information is current and up to date.
* **Every child’s epinephrine auto-injector must be carried everywhere with the child**

### \*Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Anaphylactic Allergens

### The following strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents must be followed at all times by employees, students and volunteers at the childcare centre.

* We do not serve foods where its ingredients are not known.
* The cook is apprised of all children with anaphylactic allergies and will ensure that causative agents are not served to those children.
* The cook will be aware of and able to provide information about all ingredients in the foods served.
* In cases where a child has food allergies and the meals and snacks provided by the childcare centre cannot meet the child’s needs, we will ask the child’s parent to supply snacks/meals for their child. All written instructions for diet provided by a parent will be implemented.
* Ensure that parents label food brought to the childcare centre with the child’s full name and the date the food arrived at the childcare centre, and that parents advise of all ingredients.
* Where food is provided from home for children, ensure that appropriate supervision of children is maintained so that food is not shared or exchanged.
* All bottles that are brought from home **must be labelled and covered with a lid while** in the fridge. \*Please label lids as well
* Encourage parents who serve foods containing allergens at home to ensure their child has been rid of the allergens prior to attending the childcare centre (e.g. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)
* We do not use craft/sensory materials and toys that have known allergens on the labels.
* We make sure each child’s individual plan and emergency procedure are kept-up-to-date and that all staff are trained on the plans.
* Staff refer to the allergy list and ensure that it is up to date and implemented.
* Update staff, students, and volunteers when changes to a child’s allergies, signs and symptoms, and treatment occur and review all updates to individualized plans and emergency procedures.
* Update families when changes to allergies occur while maintaining the confidentiality of children.
* Update or revise and implement the strategies in this policy depending on the allergies of children enrolled at the childcare centre.
* ***Administration of Medications***

A medication form, prescription as well as non-prescription drugs approved by the Child Care Centre, must be completed by the child’s parent.

Medication must be in its **original container, clearly labeled with the child’s name, name of the drug, dosage, date of purchase, and instruction for storage**.

Each medication requires a separate consent and approval form from the parent. A daily record must be signed by the teacher. All medication must be given to the teacher on arrival to be put in a locked container. ***Under no circumstances will medication be given without a completed authorization form.***

***Topical Creams***

Parents may bring diaper cream, sunscreen, lotions etc. that their child may need. These items are **supplied by the family**. Forms to be filled out with the name, expiration date, purchase date and instructions for use. The form is part of the application package when children are enrolled and may need to be updated as new items are needed or items expire.

***Immunizations, Illness & Accidents***

Prior to admission each child must be **immunized** as per Hamilton Public Health regulations, or an authorized exemption form must be filled out and kept on file. The form must be signed by a notarized authority.

If your child is not well enough to participate in the regular program, they should remain at home. When a child displays signs of illness, the parent will be called to take the child home. If we are unable to reach a parent, then your designated contact person will be notified. Parents are required to notify the Child Care Centre when your child is sick and the nature of the illness.

If a child sustains an injury at the centre, a form will be filled out by the staff present, indicating what happened, the type of injury, and what actions were taken. The parent/guardian will be asked to sign that they have seen the form; one copy will be filed in the child’s file at the centre. Another copy will be given to the parent/guardian.

***Ministry of Education Serious Occurrence Notification Requirement***: A serious occurrence is defined as:

: The death of a child in whom in receiving care at the centre whether on or off

 premises

: abuse, neglect or allegation of such while receiving care at the centre

: a life-threatening injury or illness of a child receiving care at the centre

: an incident where a child who is receiving care at the centre goes missing

: an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of the centre that poses a

 risk to the health, safety or well being of the children.

The following are other examples of serious occurrences:

: when a child has a high fever at the centre and dies at home later.

: a staff member grabbing a child forcefully

: A child is unattended – i.e. left in a room when the others have left to go outside. All serious occurrences will be posted for the required 10 days on the bulletin board at the front entrance.

Please note: As Early Child Educators, we are required by law to report any suspicion of Child Abuse and/or neglect.

***Outdoor Play***

All groups will spend two hours outdoors each day. If there is inclement weather, gross motor activities will be provided in the gym or classroom. We ask that children come prepared with appropriate outdoor clothing which may include coats, snowpants, boots, hats, mittens, scarves, sun hat. Children will spend time outdoors in temperature above -15 degrees Celcius and +30 degrees Celsius. It will be the teacher’s discretion to bring children outdoors if the temperature is beyond these numbers. Children will not go outdoors when the temperature reaches -20 degrees Celsius.

***Parent/Staff Communication***

Our centre values strong relationships and open communication with families. **Daily records** and **posted documentations** through the Lillio appwill inform you about some of the experiences and discoveries the children have made. Be sure to check your child’s report for information about your child’s day. These are good tools to use when talking to your child about their day.

The Child Care **Parent Committee** is an advisory committee that meets once a month to discuss program, staff issues, planning for events, liaison issues, fundraising etc. The committee consists of interested parents, the Child Care Centre Director, a staff representative, the M.S.U Business Manager, the M.S.U. V.P. Finance and representative from the S.R.A. (Student Representative Assembly). All parents are encouraged to participate by attending this meeting.

***Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures***

Parents are encouraged and welcome to express concerns regarding their child, to staff and/or Director at any time when necessary. In order to deal with concerns respectfully, the following procedure has been put in place.

Steps for Parents:

1. Issues or concerns that are program or room related may be discussed with classroom teachers.
2. If issue or concern is with your child’s classroom teacher or any staff in the centre, approach the staff and express your issue or concern, when necessary set a time and place for discussion when the staff can be totally engaged. Strive to reach a resolution that is mutually agreeable. If a parent is not satisfied with a resolution with the staff then,
3. Approach the Director of the centre and discuss the issue or concern and attempt to resolve the issue with the staff.
4. When a resolution is in place all involved will meet to discuss the implementation of the plan to resolve the issue or address the concern.

Note: Staff and Director are available by phone, email and in person. (If needed, see contact information for the McMaster Students Union General Manager, the Ministry of Education, Hamilton Children’s Aid Society or The College of Early Childhood Educators).

Steps for Staff/Director

1. Be available to listen and respond to parent’s issues or concerns. When necessary, identify a place and time when discussion can occur.
2. Clarify individual perceptions involved in the issue, listen actively and empathetically.
3. Generate options for a win-win outcome
4. Develop an agreement that works for all as soon as possible and agree on a time line to implement the plan.
5. Parents issues and concerns of an urgent manner will be responded to within 24 hours.
6. All issues will be kept confidential.

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interactions, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Director.

***Children’s Belongings***

Children may bring a backpack with items they may need for the day. This includes extra clothes (including shirts/sweatshirts, pants, underpants and socks), outdoor clothing, comfort items (blankets, soothers, bottles [to be put in fridge in kitchen], stuffies). Families are encouraged to label all items with their child’s name. Wipes are provided by the centre, but if you wish your child to have their own, you may send them in. Diaper creams may also be brought in and given to the teacher in the classroom and not to be left in the back pack. **\*No medications, creams, sunscreen etc. may be left in the backpack where children may have access to it.**

Every child has a cubby with their name on it for their outdoor clothes and belongings. Soiled clothes are put in a bag and left on the child’s hook. Please replace immediately with fresh clothes. **Everything** in your child’s cubby must be taken home each night as per Fire Department regulations.

# Rest Time

Cots (or cribs for those under 18 months) are provided for the children to have a nap/quiet time after lunch.

1. Each child is assigned an individual cot (or crib).
2. Children may bring their own blanket from home for nap/quiet time to be kept on their bed. Blankets will be sent home regularly for laundering.
3. Each child may bring a soft toy/soother etc. for nap time.
4. Parents will be consulted via the initial questionnaire about specific sleeping arrangements. Anything special instruction for sleep time must be put in writing by the child’s parent.
5. Children may sit quietly with books or quiet toys if not sleeping.
6. Regular direct visual checks during sleep time will be made and these will be documented in the child’s report on Lillio.
7. Any significant changes in a child’s sleep patterns will be communicated to parents via the daily report.

***Special Events***

Notes for Special Events will be sent out on Lillio and through email.

Parents are encouraged to take note of the **Parent** **Board** daily where important memos and current bulletins will be posted. If a neighbourhood walk is planned, families will be notified, and a permission form will be issued and required to be signed before the event.

***Research***

The childcare centre occasionally participates in child related research studies being done by, students or associated professionals.

1. Forms for requests for research participants are sent out to parents.
2. Signed consent by the parent must be collected before a child will be allowed to participate in a research project.
3. Participating parents are sent a report on the findings of the research being done when complete.
4. Children will always be accompanied by the parent or staff during studies completed outside the classroom

***Volunteers & Students***

The childcare center has placement students from the Early Childhood Education program at Mohawk College with us at various times during the year. In addition, we have a number of McMaster University students volunteering in our program and occasionally Co-op students from the local high schools.

* All volunteer or placement students are subject to interviews and Vulnerable Sector checks (if over the age of 18) as well as Public Health Requirements
* Students and volunteers must read the Philosophy and Program Statement and the Policies and Procedures of the Centre including the list of Prohibited Practices as well as the Playground Safety Policies before beginning their placement and, if applicable, annually thereafter. The policies must be agreed to and signed off on the sheets attached before they begin and if applicable, annually thereafter.
* Volunteers and students will be given an orientation including expectations during their time with us, a tour of the centre, and an introduction to the designated staff members who will be responsible for their supervision and mentoring.
* A checklist of orientation procedures will be filled out and signed off to ensure understanding of the centre Program Statement, policies, procedures and expectations. Only **employees** will have direct unsupervised access to children,
* ***Students/volunteers are not included in child to teacher ratios and are not to be left alone with the children at any time.***
* NOTE: MSU teacher’s assistants are paid employees.

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