



Parent/ Guardian Handbook

Welcome to YWCA Child Care

This handbook will provide you with important information about YWCA Child Care. We look forward to working with you to create a welcoming learning environment for you and your child.

YWCA Child Care Team

YWCA Cambridge, a member of a world-wide network, is a non-profit organization working with and for women and their families. Through proactive leadership, we offer high quality programs and services, advocate for social and economic change and work towards the empowerment and self-determination of all women.



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Centre Information

YWCA Ryerson Child Care Centre

749 Grand Valley Dr.

Phone: (519) 653-0746

Supervisor: Wendy Gilchrist

Email: w.gilchrist@ywcacambridge.ca

The Centre is located in Ryerson Public School in Preston. The Centre is licensed for toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarten and school aged children. Hours of operation are 7:00 am - 6:00 pm, Monday - Friday, 12 months a year.

YWCA St. Elizabeth Child Care Centre

50 Adler Dr.

Phone: (519) 654-9366

Supervisor: Kim Whalen

Email: k.whalen@ywcacambridge.ca

The Centre is located in St. Elizabeth Separate School behind the arena in Hespeler. The Centre is licensed for toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarten and school aged children.

Hours of operation are 6:30 am - 6:00 pm, Monday - Friday, 12 months a year.

YWCA St. Margaret Child Care Centre

210 Cowan Blvd.

Phone: (519) 622-6773

Supervisor: Susan Mathers

Email: s.mathers@ywcacambridge.ca

The Centre is located in St. Margaret of Scotland Separate School in Clemens Mills. The Centre is licensed for toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarten and school aged children.

Hours of operation are 6:45 am - 6:00 pm, Monday - Friday, 12 months a year.

YWCA Woodland Park Child Care Centre

555 Ellis Road

Phone: To Be Determined

Supervisor: Gillian Scott

Email: g.scott@ywcacambridge.ca

The Centre is located in Woodland Park Public School in Hespeler. The Centre is licensed for toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarten and school aged children. Hours of operation are 7:00 am - 6:00 pm, Monday - Friday, 12 months a year.

YWCA LINC Preschool Program

Wesley United Church

Phone: (519) 622-6951

Supervisor: Fatma El Hefney

Email: linc@ywcacambridge.ca

This is a licensed preschool program offered in partnership with Conestoga College LINC program (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada). Children whose parents attend the language instruction are eligible to attend this program.

Hours of operation are 9:00-12:00 pm, Monday - Friday, September - June.

The YWCA Child Care Philosophy

YWCA Cambridge Child Care embraces the Reggio Emilia philosophy. Reggio Emilia is a small town in Italy that has fostered and developed a unique approach to child care. It is an approach that is based on the principles of respect, responsibility and community. There is a focus on the use of language and a multitude of media to discover and express ideas.

The role of the educator is to support and nurture children's rich relationships with the world around them as well as to facilitate exploration and experiences through joint discovery and problem solving. They encourage children to explore, experiment and hypothesize; respecting that we CAN have many different points of view and see things from different perspectives. Emphasis is on the PROCESS of learning, exchanging thoughts and ideas and listening to each child as an individual.

One of the key elements of the Reggio Emilia approach is emergent curriculum. Emergent curriculum allows educators to respond to the children's ideas as curriculum unfolds. The time frame is open, allowing projects to follow the children's interests. Ideas develop from one another. For example, a discussion on planets led to an interest in the Earth, which led to projects on the world, which led to an exploration of food, customs, dress and flags, which led to an interest in the Olympics. This emergent curriculum is documented in many different ways (webs, photos, documentation of projects, sketches, curriculum books etc.).

Our goal is to foster strong, positive self-image and develop skills in making choices, problem solving and socialization. We strive to enhance both natural curiosity and creativity, and are dedicated to the concept of learning through play. It is an exciting journey that allows children to grow and flourish in a positive environment. Children and their rights are intrinsic in delivering YWCA high quality child care programs that recognize and respect the uniqueness and potential of each child.

He has always looked forward to coming to daycare and has grown into a very happy, loving, independent boy and we credit all of you with this."



Staff

Competent, caring and nurturing educators are partners in learning with children and parents. Our centres are staffed in accordance with Ministry of Education Regulations by Registered Early Childhood Educators trained in Standard First Aid and Infant/Child CPR. Our staff participate in yearly professional development activities and our cooks and supervisors maintain a current Safe Food Handlers certificate from the Region of Waterloo Department of Public Health.



Orientation to the Centre

It is our goal to make your child's transition into the program as smooth as possible. During your orientation appointment we will make the following available to you and your family:

- A tour of the entire centre including the playground.
- An introduction to the staff who will work with your child.
- An explanation of the licensing and inspection processes for child care centres in Ontario, including an explanation of and the posting of serious occurrences.
- The opportunity to schedule a couple of play visits (no charge) before your start date.
- An explanation of all registration forms including your financial responsibility.
- Information about the method used for passing messages about your child to the appropriate staff member.

Arrival and Departure

Parents are requested to allow sufficient time during transitions to ease their child into or out of the program and to allow for discussion with staff at arrival time. Be sure to tell the staff anything you think he/she should know.

Our staff are on different shifts so you may or may not see your child's teacher on a day to day basis. Each centre has their own system of assisting with the communication between parent and teacher. Please take advantage of the system at your centre to ensure that your child's teacher receives messages.

Some parents have asked that older siblings be allowed to pick up/drop off their younger siblings. There is provision in our policies for some flexibility with sign in/out procedures for children 10 years of age and older. Please speak to the Supervisor for more information.

All children must be signed in and out of the program. Please advise the centre if someone other than a custodial parent/guardian is picking up. Staff will ask to see picture identification if someone they are not familiar with comes to pick up your child. Please remember this is for the protection of the children and inform the person picking up of this policy.

We will not release a child without your authorization.



Late Pick-up

Children become distressed when they are late being picked up. Our centre closes at the specified time and staff have personal commitments. Your child and our staff appreciate your consideration.

Attendance

Please notify the centre in the morning if your child is going to be absent. A telephone message would be fine. This is especially helpful with school age children as child care staff must search for your child if they do not arrive after school.



Admission and Discharge

Our child care programs are open to all children.

The following forms **must** be completed and signed **before** your child starts:

- Registration Package
- Region of Waterloo Immunization Form (Toddler to Preschool)
- Emergency Information Card

Parents are encouraged to schedule a couple of play visits to the centre prior to their child's start date.

Not every program meets the needs of every child/family. In a case where the family or YWCA Cambridge do not feel the program meets the family/child's specific needs, every effort will be made to assist you in finding more suitable care.

Your child may be withdrawn/discharged with one month's notice or fees in lieu.

Fees, Payments and CWELCC

Fees are due one month in advance payable on the first of the month.

A deposit in the amount of \$100 is required at the time of registration and is deducted from the first month's fees. Should a family change their mind, this deposit will be kept in lieu of one month's notice. A non-refundable registration fee of \$15 is also required and is paid at this time.

Should a before and/or afterschool Kindergarten or School Age child withdraw for the summer, a non-refundable deposit in the amount of one hundred dollars is required in the month of June for fall registration. This deposit is applied to September fees.

There is a service charge for cheques returned by the bank.

Should you choose to withdraw your child from the program at any time we

require one month's notice or fees in lieu.

There is no refund for absence due to illness or centre closure due to inclement weather. ***Please read your Financial Policy for complete details.***

*Our organization is applying to the Region of Waterloo to participate in the **Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care Plan (CWELCC)**. We will know by Late fall if our application has been approved. Further information will be communicated with families as it gets distributed to us.*

Base fee includes everything except for Break care and registration fee's.

Please note that once we have the approved funding for CWELCC we will update the base fee immediately and all refunds/credits will be provided to our families.

DAILY RATES		
CATEGORY	Base fee	Non base fee
Toddler	61	Registration fee of \$15.00
Preschool	56	Registration fee of \$15.00
KINDERGARTEN (4-5)		SCHOOL AGE (6-12)
	Base Fee	Base Fee
Before School	11.50/day Public Board- 11.75/day	11.50/day Public Board- 11.75/day
After School	16.50/day Public Board- 16.75/day	16.50/day Public Board- 16.75/day
PD Days and break care	Non base fee: \$47/day Non base fee: Registration fee of \$15.00	Non base fee: \$47/day Non base fee: Registration fee of \$15.00

Change of Information

The Supervisor must be informed of any change in employment, address, telephone numbers etc. in order that staff will be able to reach you in case of an emergency.

Please advise us, and if possible leave a contact number with the staff, on days when you will not be at your regular work or school number.

Holidays and Closures

The Child Care Centres will be closed the following days:

Family Day	Labour Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Easter Monday	Christmas Eve day - noon closure
Victoria Day	Christmas Day
Canada Day	Boxing Day
Civic Holiday Week	Approximately 1 week between Christmas and New Years.

Staff PD Day - to be determined each year (usually the first Friday in November)

Inclement Weather

Please listen carefully to **CHYM FM 96.7** for information regarding YWCA Cambridge Child Care Program closures. Please note we are not affiliated with the YWCA of Kitchener-Waterloo and are separate from the YMCA. Our closure notification will say **YWCA Cambridge Child Care Centres**. If in doubt please call your centre.

In the interest of the safety of children and staff YWCA Child Care Centres will close in the event that the schools in Cambridge are closed. Should it be necessary to close there will be no refund of fees. Closures will be announced as early as possible in the morning, however should you hear that the schools are closed (not just buses cancelled) you can assume our programs will be closed as well.

Some centres open very early and in the event of an overnight storm, many roads may still be unploughed making it difficult for opening staff to reach the centre on time. Please be patient if we require a little extra time to get to work after a snow storm.

Behaviour Guidance

The YWCA Cambridge Child Care Policy on Behaviour Management follows the guidelines and adheres to the regulations laid out in the Child Care and Early Years Act of Ontario. Staff respect the children and expect their respect in return. It is the goal of YWCA child care staff to promote friendly, constructive, non-confrontational relationships between children, and between the children and the staff. The techniques of child guidance used support this objective.

The classroom environment is managed with the consistent use of positive reinforcement, with the goal of reducing the amount of discipline needed to a minimum level. Some techniques that staff use regularly include re-direction, positive statements, establishing limits, giving ample warning prior to transitions, logical and natural consequences, modelling appropriate ways of interaction and providing choices.

Prohibited practices include corporal punishment, physical restraint unless it is for the purpose of preventing child from hurting him/herself or someone else, locking exists for the purpose of confinement, use of harsh or degrading measures that would humiliate the child or undermine their self-respect, depriving basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding, or inflicting any bodily harm, including making a child eat or drink against their will.



Student Suspension

A child who has been suspended from school during the day will not have access to the before and after school program until the suspension is completed. Fees for the program will continue to be charged.

In the event that a child exhibits inappropriate behaviour while attending a before or after school program that puts themselves or others at risk, a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up their child. In the event a parent/guardian is unavailable the emergency contact will be notified. The child will be unable to return to the program until a meeting is held between the parent, centre supervisor and school board personnel (as appropriate).

Communication

We want to know how you are feeling about the program so please take time to talk to your child's teacher on a regular basis.

If something concerns you and you are unable to resolve it with the teacher please feel free to speak to the Centre Supervisor. The Supervisor can be reached by telephone at the centre.

You are also welcome to contact the Director of Child Care Services, Vicki Warren, in regards to any issue. She can be reached at the YWCA (519-267-6444) Monday- Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4 p.m.

A copy of our policy on addressing Parent/Guardian Issues and Concerns can be found in Appendix D.

Suspected Child Abuse

The Child and Family Service Act of Ontario protects children and gives them the right to be understood, loved and respected within the framework of a caring family and community. All individuals who work or volunteer with children are obligated by law through this Act to report anything of an unusual or suspicious nature to Family and Children's Services. This may include, but is not exclusive to: marks on a child's body, signs of neglect (dirty body/clothing, extreme hunger), play that is violent or sexually explicit, any information shared by a child that would cause a staff person concern for the child's safety.

The procedure at YWCA Cambridge for reporting to Family and Children's Services (F&CS) is very straight forward:

1. The staff person with a concern talks to the child, apprises his/her Supervisor of that concern and intention to make a call to Family and Children's Services
2. The staff member places the call to F&CS giving the information clearly and concisely.
3. The phone call and conversation with the child are documented by the staff person and that documentation is reviewed by the Supervisor.

Note: In order to ensure the safety of the child and maintain confidentiality for staff, parents are NOT notified by YWCA Cambridge if a call is made to Family and Children's Services.

Parent Involvement

On going communication with the Child Care Centre is essential. Do leave time at the end of your day to hear about your child. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact the centre to arrange a private interview.

Our programs provide opportunities for group parent events and individual parent-teacher meetings. Through bi-annual newsletters and monthly calendars we keep you up to date on our activities.

Webs are posted for your information. These visual aids show how our philosophy and goals are combined to provide a high quality program for the children in our care. Each group documents daily activities in the curriculum log. Posted around the centre you will also find plans and written and photographic documentation of projects and works in progress. Parents are encouraged to read all of these things and engage children in discussions at home.

The major goal of our program is to meet the needs of your child. If you have any suggestions to improve the care offered, please feel free to discuss this with the supervisor. We invite families to share special information about holidays and customs from other countries.

We believe in the principles inspired by the early childhood programs in Reggio Emilia Italy. Children, parents and teachers are partners in learning and collaborate to create the best possible environment for children. We will keep you informed about what is happening in your child's group and we encourage you to become involved in a way that works best for you.

You may decide to spend some time in the classroom working with the children on a project, to bring in some materials to enhance/add to a project or to let us know what your child is interested in so we can develop a project. Please become an active participant as you are able.



Health

Convalescing children are usually better at home where they can have extra rest. We ask that you not bring a sick child to the centre because young children are susceptible to infections. Even when children are mildly ill the stimulating atmosphere of a large group and an active program can be very tiring for them.

Please keep children at home with:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- High Fever

Children with recurring vomiting and/or diarrhea must be kept home for 24hrs after the last episode. If the centre is in an outbreak (as determined by Public Health) children must be kept home for 48hrs after the last episode.

Due to numbers and legislated ratios it is not possible for us to keep your child indoors when her/his group is outside for regularly scheduled play time. Please keep this in mind when deciding whether your child is well enough to be at the centre.

If your child is going to be absent due to illness, please call us **before 9:30am** so we can plan accordingly.

If your child has a communicable disease (chicken pox, pink eye etc.) please let us know so we can inform all parents. As well, we must report some communicable diseases to the local Public Health Office.

If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be contacted to make arrangements to have the child picked up. As a result the supervisor must know where to reach you at all times.

For your information it is our policy to contact parents by telephone whenever their child hits her/his head. We recognize that this can mean frequent calls but are also concerned regarding the health of your child. If you choose that we **not** call **every** time you will need to sign a waiver to that effect. Please see the Supervisor regarding such a waiver.

Head Lice

If any evidence of head lice is detected at the centre the parent will be called immediately to remove the child from the centre. You must purchase a special head lice treatment from the drug store and treat your child's hair. In addition all eggs must be removed by picking or combing through the hair strand by strand.

No product can guarantee that existing eggs will be prevented from hatching therefore they **must be removed**. Treatment should be repeated in 7 to 10 days to prevent re-infestation from newly hatched eggs. **We cannot emphasize enough how quickly head lice can spread throughout a centre.**

Notices will be distributed to all children in the infected child's group requesting that parents check their children's hair and report the findings to the staff the next day by returning the tear off portion of the notice. Children who have not been checked (and treated if necessary) will not be able to stay for the day. If you would like to read our complete policy please ask your child's educator or the Supervisor.

Sunscreen

YWCA Cambridge provides sunscreen that staff will apply to your child 30 minutes before outside play time in the afternoons. Please apply sunscreen at home in the morning before bringing your child to school so he/she has good protection in the morning. You will receive a permission form to sign each spring.

Medication

If medication needs to be administered at the centre, a parent must fill out the appropriate form recording the dosage. All medications must be labelled container from the pharmacy. Some medication may require a doctor's note.

Please give any medication to your child's educator or Supervisor so it can be locked away. Do not leave medication in your child's cubby.



Emergency Management

YWCA Cambridge has Emergency Management Plans that include practice drills in the event of a fire, tornado, evacuation and lock down.

Each child has an emergency contact card that is kept with the attendance for their room. Should the centre be evacuated for any reason, parents/guardians will be notified by phone as soon as the children are relocated. It is therefore extremely important that any changes to your phone numbers is given as soon as possible to your child's educator or the Centre Supervisor.

Your Centre Supervisor will be happy to show you any of the Emergency Management Policies and Procedures as well as the location of the centre's emergency shelter.

Food and Nutrition

We follow Canada's Food Guide and the Child Care and Early Years Act regulations when planning and preparing nutritious noon meals and morning and afternoon snacks. The menus are posted in advance on the parent bulletin board.

Eating is a positive time at the centre. Emphasis is placed on encouraging social interactions with friends and learning appropriate table manners.

Should your child be allergic to certain foods, please indicate this on the medical form and keep the centre up to date. We cannot prepare a separate menu for your child, however please see the supervisor if you have a menu concern.

If you are sending special food for your child please make sure it is labelled with the child's name, date and special storage directions.

We cannot accept store bought or homemade treats (eg. cakes, Tim Bits) for any occasion as these cannot be guaranteed to be nut free. Instead if you are interested staff will share some ideas with you to provide a celebratory experience for your child if it is a special day.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND CANDY OR GUM WITH YOUR CHILD.

Clothing and Possessions

Your child is an active learner and therefore should wear play clothes that are comfortable, manageable and easily laundered. Please provide a complete change of clothing in your child's cubby daily.

During winter months your child will need warm clothing, boots, snow pants, mitts, hat and neck warmer. Rain boots are a good idea when it is wet. Extra socks and underwear left at the centre are appreciated.

All clothing should be clearly marked with your child's name to prevent loss or confusion. YWCA Cambridge is not responsible for lost clothing.

There is a limited supply of emergency clothing. If your child wears any piece of our clothing home please launder and return it as soon as possible.

Just as a reminder that Health Canada has issued a warning about the danger of scarves, mitts on strings and sunglass cords for children. YWCA Cambridge promotes the use of neck warmers instead of scarves and will not use mitts on strings when children are playing outside. We will also remove cords from sunglasses.

Toys From Home

Toys from home can become a problem. However, we recognize that something familiar makes transitions easier. By all means send a favourite soft, cuddly sleep toy.

Cubbies

Your child has a cubby space to store her/his personal belongings. In some centres this is a shared space. We ask that you take your child's belongings home on a regular basis to reduce loss and assist the cleaners.

Please do not sit your child on top of the cubbies for any reason. **This is unsafe** and encourages children to attempt climbing. Thank you for your co-operation.

Field Trips

From time to time your child's group or all of the children may leave the centre for a field trip. You will always be notified in advance, given details of the outing, and asked to sign a permission form. Please note that it is our policy **not** to transport toddlers and preschoolers on buses. School buses are a safety risk for toddlers and preschoolers, and in keeping with information gathered from the Ministry of Transportation and Public Health we have determined that the benefits do not outweigh the risks.

Parent volunteers are always welcome to assist with supervision. According to the Child Care and Early Years Act and YWCA Cambridge policy all volunteers must have a Vulnerable Sector Criminal Record Check completed. Please speak to your child's teacher or Supervisor for details on how to obtain this.

Walks that happen on the spur of the moment are recorded near the sign-in/out book for your reference.

Students and Volunteers

An important part of promoting the profession of Early Childhood Education is participating in the training of individuals entering the field or providing volunteer opportunities for those who are still undecided. Your child's educator will make you aware of new faces in the centre and their role in your child's program. All volunteers and students are screened with a Vulnerable Sector Police Check in the same way as employees. Our Supervision Policy of Students and Volunteers does not allow for the students and volunteers in our program to be alone with your children. Further it clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of the organization, supervising employees, volunteers and students. Students and volunteers are there in a role to be mentored by our staff or in the case of program volunteers to share a skill or talent. Your child's safety is first and foremost with us. YWCA Cambridge is proud of our affiliation with the education institutions in our area and we hope you will welcome these individuals.

YWCA Cambridge is a community based organization affiliated with the United Way. We open our doors to other non-profit organizations in Cambridge to assist with work and volunteer placements for adults with developmental delays. We value the contribution that these special individuals bring to the child care environment and the diversity that our children experience. All policies and procedures mentioned above apply to these volunteers.





APPENDIX A



Program Statement

For more than 60 years YWCA Cambridge has provided high quality early learning and child care programs for families. At the core of our programs is the Reggio Emilia Philosophy in combination with the Ministry of Education's Early Years Pedagogy as introduced in the document "How Does Learning Happen?" How Does Learning Happen embraces many of the concepts from the Reggio Emilia Philosophy while expanding on them under four foundations of learning.

The four foundations that are key for children to learn and flourish are a sense of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression. These foundations are interwoven in our daily programming, guiding our practice.

The first foundation is belonging. Every child has a sense of belonging where they are connected to others in their environment, forming relationships, their experiences are valued and they feel free to make contributions a part of a group and community. Children and their families are welcomed each day by caring educators. Within the Reggio Emilia Philosophy is the premise that children, parents/guardians and educators are partners in the children's learning. Educators are trained to ensure the transition from home to the child care program is as smooth as possible. Connections are made between children. Children through provocation are engaged in project work that reflects their interests and those of others in the program. Educators partner with parents/guardians to reflect on their children. How their child's morning was at home? What happened during the day at child care? Are there any messages to pass back and forth? What projects are they working on? How to encourage and support developing skills?

Parent/guardian contributions are invited and encouraged through collaboration about the program or a project, volunteering in the classroom or adding any appropriate items to project work or the environment in general. There is an open door policy and communication is a priority. Documentation of project work and ordinary moments in a child's day are posted. Educators are available to discuss children's progress or a particular project in which a child is involved.

Parent/guardian events provide opportunities for families and educators to connect in an informal setting.

Prior to a child's transition to the next age group, visits occur in the program. Children and their families become familiar with the new room, staff, children and routines.

A sense of belonging to the community is also valued. The talents and skills of those in the centre's community are drawn upon to add to project work.

Community partners are approached when a family has a specific need. These connections are only made following a discussion with the family involved. It might be services for a child with special needs, accessing bus passes for a family having trouble making ends meet or getting information about dental services for a child.

.....Program Statement Continued

Centre Supervisors foster a sense of belonging within the school community in which they are involved. School council meetings allow the opportunity for an exchange of ideas, resources and to share family events between the child care centre and the school populations.

The second foundation is that of well-being. Every child is developing a sense of self, health and well-being. There is clear evidence that there are patterns of eating, physical activity and sleep.

As children are all individuals with individual needs it is important that schedules are as flexible as possible. Free flow snack times allow for the children to choose when to eat their morning and afternoon snack. While lunch times are set the children are free to choose what they would like to eat and the portion. Meal times provide opportunities to teach self-help skills as well as social skills. Water is always available throughout the day.

Not all children require a nap. A rest time is provided for toddlers and pre-school children however they may rest, sleep or engage in quiet activities based on their needs.

Daily fresh air and time to explore the outdoors as well as work on gross motor skills is important. Group interactive experiences not only enhance a child's sense of belonging but promote social skills such as turn taking and negotiation of rules. All children are included and activities are adapted according to the children's development.

The third foundation is engagement. Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind and senses. Play evolves from natural curiosity. Children in our programs are viewed as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Our goal is to foster a strong, positive self-image within each child. Children develop skills in choice-making, problem solving and socialization. We strive to enhance both natural curiosity and creativity, and are dedicated to the concept of learning through play. All of our educators are trained in the Reggio Emilia Philosophy and will provide materials and the environment to stimulate new directions for learning.

Educators initiate conversations by asking open ended questions to scaffold learning or to provoke critical thinking. Opportunities for research and the necessary resources are provided. Documentation is reviewed and revisited with the children offering educators a glimpse into future directions for learning. Children provide input into how they want their room to look. This often flows from the projects that are taking place. While the children enjoy their time at the centre, our focus will be on helping them reach their full potential and on providing a sound base for future learning.

The fourth foundation is that of expression; seeing children as capable and powerful communicators. In the Reggio Emilia Philosophy educators are taught about and are able to respond to the hundred languages of children. These languages take many forms; art, dance, drawing, sculpture. Educators who are aware of and are able to respond to the many languages of children give every child a voice. Educators traditionally directed play. Asking for and considering children's ideas can help strengthen their sense of autonomy and competence as well as their critical thinking skills.

.....Program Statement Continued

Children are actively engaged in the process of learning through the manipulation of real life materials and toys in an environment that reflects their community and the interests of the children. Emphasis is on the process of learning, exchanging thoughts and ideas, and listening to each child as an individual. Children are encouraged to explore, experiment and hypothesize; respecting that we can have many different points of view and see things from different perspectives. Children and their rights are intrinsic in delivering high quality child care programs that recognize and respect the uniqueness and potential of each.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in small and large group activities. During these times children are encouraged to interact and communicate in positive ways that support their ability to self-regulate. Programs offered at our child care centres include Seeds of Empathy, Tools for Life and Second Steps. Seeds of Empathy takes place at our Ryerson and St. Elizabeth locations. Seeds of Empathy is designed to foster social and emotional competence and early literacy skills and attitudes in children three to five years of age while providing professional development for their educators. Tools for Life is based on the premise that resilience can be learned and focuses on the social and emotional domains. Second Step is broken into weekly themes that include skills for learning, empathy, emotion management, and friendship skills and problem solving.

Educators encourage conversations between children while acting as a role model to help them find the appropriate words to express feelings, negotiate, problem solve.

In order to ensure our staff are current in the latest developments in the field of Early Childhood Education, opportunities for professional development are provided including an annual conference, workshops at our local Professional Resource Centre and our own November PD (Professional Development) Day. In addition those educators involved in the Seeds of Empathy program receive annual training from the Seeds of Empathy Organization founded by Mary Gordon. Standard first aid is a requirement of all staff and YWCA Cambridge pays to maintain this certification. All new staff are provided with a full day orientation session. Once they have learned the basic policies and routines of the centre, staff are then given a three part workshop on the Reggio Emilia Philosophy. Resource books, staff meetings and webinars are also offered to staff to increase their access to PD. Time for reflection with colleagues is provided through joint planning time and staff meetings.

Annually parents and staff are given the opportunity to fill out a survey in order to determine how we are meeting our program goals. However ongoing and timely feedback is always appreciated. Based on the feedback received and current research program staff will be given the opportunity to review, reflect and provide input into updating the program statement on an annual basis.

Please note that references and information in the above document have been extracted from "How Does Learning Happen?"

APPENDIX B



Program Statement Implementation

The following policy has been developed in order to demonstrate how our Program Statement is brought to life in our centres on a daily basis. The children, parents/guardians and educators are all partners in the children's learning. Children are viewed as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind and senses. Play evolves from natural curiosity. Our goal is to foster a strong self-image within each child. The children develop skills in choice-making, problem solving and socialization. We are dedicated to the concept of learning through play. The techniques of child guidance used and the design of the environment support this objective.

Expectations for Implementation

Our Program Statement has been developed in such a way that reflects not only key elements outlined in section 46 of the Child Care and Early Years Act but also the Four Foundations introduced in the document How Does Learning Happen and the Reggio Emilia Philosophy. It is the expectation that all staff and volunteers are familiar with and utilize this living document.

Director of Child Care Services

- Ensures an orientation training program is developed and routinely updated for new staff, students and volunteers that includes the Program Statement and its implementation.
- Ensures annually that policies and procedures are reviewed by the staff and that this includes time for reflection and input into the Program Statement and how it is implemented.
- Responsible for updating the Program Statement and Implementation Policy as needed.
- Ensures Supervisors are monitoring the implementation of the goals of the policy, the Reggio Philosophy and the Four Foundations in their centres.
- Provide Supervisors with feedback during annual performance appraisals.

- Measureable goals will be set with Supervisors annually that include ways in which those goals will be achieved. Progress is monitored through ongoing discussion.
- Monitor as part of routine visits the implementation of the Program Statement and the quality of pedagogical documentation and provide feedback to the Supervisors.
- Design and distribute an annual parent survey. Discuss results with Supervisors.
- Design and distribute an annual staff survey. Discuss results with Supervisors.
- Make changes to policies as necessary based on feedback both formal and informal from parents/guardians and staff.

Supervisors

- Complete an orientation for each new staff, student and volunteer before they begin.
- Conduct an annual policy review that includes a reflection of the YWCA Cambridge Program Statement and Program Statement Implementation Policy. This is recorded on a Policy Review Sign-off Record Sheet and kept in the Supervisor's Office.
- Collects ongoing feedback regarding the Program Statement that in conjunction with annual reflection is used to review and update the statement.
- Any Supervisor who provides training for a casual supply staff will forward the signed Policy Review Sign-off Record Sheet to the Supervisor in charge of supply staff for filing.
- Practices of employees, students, volunteers and supply staff with regards to the Program Statement and its implementation are monitored on an ongoing basis as part of the responsibility for program observation and evaluation.
- Adherence to the statement and policy are noted specifically and any non-compliance is recorded and dealt with according to policy.
- Complete the Behaviour Guidance Observation Checklist and Reflection monitoring forms for each employee on a quarterly basis and annually for supply staff, volunteers and students. The results will be reviewed with the individual and kept on file for licensing purposes.

- Will be monitored using the Behaviour Guidance Observation Checklist by the Assistant Supervisor four times per year.
- Ensure an annual program evaluation is completed and reviewed with the staff.
- Provide feedback to staff during annual performance appraisals and goal review sessions.
- Provide guidance to staff and volunteers regarding the Program Statement and its implementation. As part of this guidance work together to determine measurable goals and how they will be achieved. It may involve workshops, reading articles or books, or visiting with another group who is excelling in this area. Meetings to discuss progress will be arranged.
- Provide an orientation to the centre for each family during which pedagogical documentation is discussed.
- Explain open door policy, parent/guardian participation and open communication to parents/guardians during orientation.
- Pedagogical documentation is reviewed prior to it being displayed for parents. Guidance is routinely provided on the content.

Staff, Students and Volunteers

- Attend initial orientation session to receive training on the Program Statement and policies of the organization.
- Become aware of and able to articulate how each goal in the Program Statement is implemented in the program.
- Provide ongoing feedback regarding the Program Statement and its implementation that includes attendance at an annual meeting for reflection on the statement.
- Communicate daily with parents/guardians regarding their children's daily activities.
- Post pedagogical documentation for parents/guardians. Use it to engage parents/guardians regarding their child's learning. Note: it is to be reviewed by the Supervisor prior to posting.

- Invite parents/guardians to participate as a volunteer should they mention a contribution they can make to a project.
- Casual supply staff are required to sign up for and attend an annual review and reflection at one of the centres.
- Complete pedagogical documentation routinely. Have it approved by the supervisor prior to it being displayed.
- Take part in an annual performance appraisal. In discussion with their supervisor develop measurable goals.
- Use the Behaviour Guidance Monitoring Form as a reflection tool in discussions with your supervisor.

Non-Compliance

Staff discipline for non-compliance will be carried out according to YWCA Cambridge Personnel Policies and Procedures. Non-compliance with the Program Statement and Program Statement Implementation Policy will result in initiating the progressive Warning and Discipline Policy (YWCA Personnel Policies and Procedures).

Under section 48 of the Child Care and Early Years Act the following are prohibited practices and are grounds for dismissal for staff, students and volunteers:

- corporal punishment of the child;
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;

- 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 or self-worth;
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Review

YWCA policies, procedures and individualized plans are reviewed with staff, students, supply staff and volunteers prior to their commencement. This review is signed by both the person and Designated Supervisor.

It is the responsibility of the Centre Supervisor to ensure all staff, students, supply staff and volunteers review policies, procedures annually and complete all required annual review sign-off forms. The Assistant Supervisor will sign off on the Supervisor's form, indicating that she/he took part in the review. Supply staff will be given the dates for the annual review of policies at each centre and will be required to attend one of the meetings.

A review and reflection of the YWCA Cambridge Program Statement and Program Statement Implementation Policy is conducted each January by the Centre Supervisor and is recorded on the Policy Review Sign-off Record Sheet to be kept in the Supervisor's office. It is during this time that input from the staff is gathered for any updates we wish to make as an organization. Casual supply staff and volunteers are required to sign up for and attend this review session at one of the centres. The Supervisor providing the training for a casual supply will forward the signed Policy Review Sign-off Record Sheet to the Supervisor in charge of supply staff for filing.

The review of individualized support plans for children forms its own policy. Plans are reviewed with all those involved with the child including the parents/guardians, Supervisor, staff and supporting agency staff. Plans are developed by this team, and reviewed and updated at regularly scheduled meetings. Any staff new to the team are oriented by the existing team. Plans are then explained to the rest of the centre team.

Anaphylaxis and medical support plans also form their own policies. These individual plans are reviewed each year with the family, staff, supply staff volunteers and students. A Sign-off Record Sheet is completed.

Monitoring

Practices of staff, students, volunteers and supply staff with regards to the program statement and its implementation, and use of YWCA Cambridge policies and procedures are monitored on an ongoing basis as part of the Supervisor's responsibility for program observation and evaluation. Concerns and issues are dealt with as they arise. This is also a time to mentor and guide staff, students, volunteers and supply staff.

Supervisors will complete the Behaviour Guidance Observation Checklist and Reflection Forms for each staff on a quarterly basis and annually for supply staff, volunteers and students. Staff providing care or guidance to the children will receive feedback from their immediate supervisor and/or the Director of Child Care Services at regularly scheduled performance appraisals (i.e. annually for employees). The results will be reviewed with the individual and kept on file for licensing purposes. In addition, an annual program evaluation is completed. This evaluation contains a component of interactions with others.

Child Care Supervisors will be monitored by the Assistant Supervisor four times per year with the Director of Child Care Services monitoring on an informal basis as part of routine visits. The documentation will be reviewed with the individual and a signed copy will be kept on site at the child care centre for licensing purposes.

Professional Development

Professional development is essential for keeping educators current in their information and aware of the latest developments related to their field. It not only provides updates but also offers an opportunity to network. Supervisors and staff set goals together that are measurable and take into consideration both new areas of development and building on existing skills.

Standards for Communication with Parents/Guardians

- Staff communicate daily with parents/guardians regarding their children's daily activities.
- Pedagogical documentation is posted for parents/guardians. The documentation is another way in which staff can engage parents/guardians regarding their child's learning.
- Parents/guardians are invited to participate as a volunteer should they mention a contribution they can make to a project.
- There is an open door policy and parents are welcome at any time into the program.
- Feedback about the program is encouraged informally on a daily basis from parents/guardians.
- When concerns are brought to staff members they are empowered to find solutions. However if needed, they will go to their Supervisor to determine the best course of action. Should the Supervisor require guidance she/he will contact the Director of Child Care Services.
- Concerns that have an impact on service across the child care centres will be reviewed with the supervisory team for feedback and policies will be adjusted to reflect any changes to practice.
- Once a year a formal survey is handed out for parents/guardians and staff to complete.
- Parent/guardian surveys are reviewed and discussed by Supervisors and their staff. They are then forwarded to the Director of Child Care Services for review. Suggestions for change are discussed and acted upon as appropriate.
- Staff surveys are reviewed and discussed by the Supervisor and Director of Child Care Services. Feedback is reviewed and acted upon as appropriate.
- Annually program staff are given an opportunity to review, reflect and provide input into updating the program statement and its implementation.



APPENDIX C



WAIT LIST POLICY

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, the following wait list policy was developed to provide a clear overview of how YWCA Cambridge determines the order in which children on the wait list are offered admission into its centres and how wait list information is managed. Parents/guardians are provided with their wait list status upon request and are able to review the wait list policy in the parent handbook.

Applying to a Centre

- Parents/guardians must apply to the wait list by submitting an online application through OneList Waterloo Region (www.regionofwaterloo.onehsn.com).
- Through the online application, some details regarding the program are available for parents/guardians (including the type of care available: toddler, preschool, half day, full days, curriculum model etc.).
- Once the online application has been completed on OneList, an application date is automatically generated in the online system which will help to determine your child's status on the wait list at the centre.
- In addition, once the application is completed an email notification is generated to the Centre Supervisor, advising her/him a new application has been completed. The Centre Supervisor will login to view the application and within one week of receiving it will send out a welcome email to the parent/guardian confirming receipt of the application.
- The Supervisor is to choose from the email templates below the one that is applicable as a response to the application.

Email for receipt of application with no space available:

Thank you for choosing to put your child on the wait list at (insert centre name). At this time there is no space available in the program. I will contact you when a space becomes available to discuss enrolling your child. If you have not heard from me as your preferred start date gets closer, please feel free to contact me to inquire about your status on the wait list. In the meantime if you would like to come for a centre tour. I would be happy to arrange that for you.

Email for receipt of application with space available:

Thank you for choosing to put your child on the wait list at (insert centre name). I currently have space available. Please contact me by (insert date) and we can make arrangements for you to come for a centre tour and parent orientation.

Email for receipt of application with start date further away:

Thank you for choosing to put your child on the wait list at (insert centre name). I will contact you when a space becomes available closer to your preferred start date to discuss enrolling your child. If you have not heard from me as your preferred start date gets closer, please feel free to contact me to inquire about your status on the wait list. In the meantime if you would like to come for a centre tour I would be happy to arrange that for you.

- Parents/guardians are able to log in at any time to view their current applications, update any information or withdraw their application.
- There is no fee charged to parents/guardians to apply to the wait list and parents/guardians can apply to up to ten child care programs on line.

Wait List Management

- The Centre Supervisor reviews wait list information online through the OneList Administration site on an ongoing basis. Any conversations with parents/guardians on the wait list are noted in the comments section of the wait list application within the online Administration site for reference purposes.
- In the event that a parent/guardian inquires about the status of their application on the wait list, the Supervisor will provide information about the program and spaces that are available or may be coming available. Personal information about wait list applications is never disclosed to maintain privacy and confidentiality for all families.
- As child care spaces become available at the centre, the Supervisor will follow up with the parents/guardians to offer child care spaces in priority order. Priority will be given to staff and families with siblings already at the centre. It should be noted however that these two groups will be applying on OneList as early as possible.
- Once a parent/guardian has been contacted by the Supervisor regarding an available space, they will be asked by email to provide confirmation that they want to register within 48 hours.

Email response for space becoming available:

As a result of your application to OneList a space has become available in the (insert age group) program at (insert centre name). Please let me know by (insert date and time 48 hours from when space becomes available) if this space is still of interest to you or if you wish to remain on the waitlist. Should I not hear from you I will move on to the next family on the wait list.

- If no reply to the email is received within 24 hours the Supervisor will leave a message by phone stating that an email was sent and a reply is needed within the next 24 hours.
- If a response is not heard from the parent/guardian within 5 days, the Supervisor will remove the application on the OneList Administration site. This will move the application from active to inactive. The Supervisor will then update the comment history.
- The Supervisor will send the following email should there be no response within 5 business days.

Follow up email after 5 business days if no response:

As there has been no response to my email of (insert date of email sent to offer space) requesting confirmation that you require child care for your child or wish to remain on the wait list for (insert centre name), your application has been deactivated. Should you wish to reinstate your child on our waitlist please reply as soon as possible and I will reactivate your application.

- Once a start date is in place for the child, the Supervisor will go on the OneList Administration site and “place” the child’s application. The Supervisor will then be prompted to complete steps 2 and 3. Under step 2 the Supervisor will select the application to remove the child from their wait list only. Step 3 reviews and confirms the Supervisor’s work.

Please note: Through each step of the process the comment history should be updated to reflect ongoing communication with the family.

Updating of Waitlist

In order to manage its integrity it is necessary to contact the families on the wait list a minimum of once per year to see if they wish to remain on the list. The purpose of doing so is to ensure speed of placement for families when spaces do become available. The frequency with which this is done will depend on the number of families placed in a given year.

Mass email for updating wait list:

I am currently updating our centre’s wait list and require confirmation that your family wishes to remain on our list. This will ensure speed of placement for families as space becomes available. If you would like to remain on the list please reply by (insert date and time 48 hours from when the message is sent) stating:

1. Whether or not you would like to remain on the wait list.

2. If you wish to remain, please indicate your preferred start date.

If I do not hear from you by the date specified, I will remove your application from our wait list. If you would like to know your status on the wait list, please feel free to contact me and we can discuss this further.

APPENDIX D



PARENT/GUARDIAN ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Our child care centres have an open door policy. Parents/guardians are welcome any time and their feedback is valued. As an organization that has adopted the Reggio Emilia Philosophy it is important parents are viewed as partners, collaborators and advocates for their children.

Parent concerns are addressed on a number of levels:

Staff

- Staff are empowered to help parents/guardians to the best of their ability.
- Staff will inform their Supervisor of issues and how they were resolved.

Supervisor

- Parents/guardians have access to the Centre Supervisor or her/his designate on a daily basis.
- Parents/guardians may choose to have a conversation with the Supervisor in the office or by phone at a time more suited to their schedule.
- Parents/guardians may also wish to arrange an appointment with the Supervisor that is convenient for everyone in order to sit down and discuss a concern.
- The Supervisor will inform the Director of Child Care Services of any concerns that may require further action or may be of consequence to the department as a whole.

Director of Child Care Services

- Parents/guardians are welcome to contact the Director of Child Care Services should they have a concern to discuss.
- Should an issue arise that requires a discussion regarding a change or clarification of a child care policy the Director will place the item on the agenda of the next Supervisors' meeting. If necessary a meeting may be called in advance of one that is regularly scheduled.

- At the meeting, Supervisors and the Director of Child Care Services will review current policy and procedures and determine the effect a change to policy will have on the Child Care Department as a whole. Any changes to policy are written by the Director.

All issues are initially addressed by the next business day at the latest.

Parent/Guardian Survey

- Annually a parent survey is distributed.
- Feedback is reviewed by the Supervisor with her/his staff.
- Issues are addressed and decisions made for change as necessary.
- Surveys are forwarded to the Director of Child Care Services for her/his input.
- Should any feedback reflect something that should be addressed at all YWCA Cambridge Child Care Centres the Director of Child Care Services will put it on the next Child Care Supervisors' meeting agenda.
- Any policy changes that come from the meeting will be written by the Director of Child Care Services.

HiMama Childcare App

The YWCA uses the HiMama daycare software to document your child's attendance, health check and take photos and send them to families. It also allows educators to communicate directly to families through the App.

Families: to learn more about how to use the app once your child has been registered– go to this link:

<https://support.himama.com/s/article/Introduction-to-the-parent-portal>

Educators: to learn how to use the app with basic information to get your started– go to this link:

<https://support.himama.com/s/article/Teacher-Training-Webinar>





Bag Lunch Policy

Certain programs offered by the YWCA Cambridge requires parents to send a lunch on school-closure days. This includes any day where your child attends for a full day (i.e. PADays, Winter Break, March Break and Summer Camp), unless otherwise stated.

The bagged lunch must be clearly labelled with your child's name.

Include a cold pack in order to keep the lunch cold until it is consumed. Hot foods should be kept warm in a thermal container. Utensils must be provided. We do not have the ability to heat food for your child.

All packaged items must remain in the original packaging from the store, so staff are able to review the ingredient list. We are a nut sensitive environment. Please do not send food that contains nuts or foods with labels "may contain nuts".

Children will not share lunches due to various other food sensitivities and restrictions. If further life-threatening allergies are identified, families will be notified of the food restrictions.

Bagged lunches should include plenty of vegetables and fruits, whole grains and protein to meet Canada's Food Guide requirements. A healthy lunch limits processed foods and foods that are high in sodium, sugars and saturated fats. Examples include;

Ham and cheddar cheese sandwich on whole grain bread with lettuce and tomato, carrot and celery sticks, and an apple.

A whole grain tuna salad wrap with lettuce, carrot and celery sticks with hummus, yogurt and a clementine.

Please provide milk or milk substitute, real fruit juice, or water for drinking. Do not send pop, Kool aid, Gatorade, or fruit drinks high in sugar. Please label your child's drink bottle with their name.

If bagged lunches do not meet the requirements as set out above, or are forgotten, educators will provide a snack replacement and/or a cold pack and contact parent/guardian to provide food that meets the requirement.

Please note: child care centres will still be providing AM and PM snack.



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