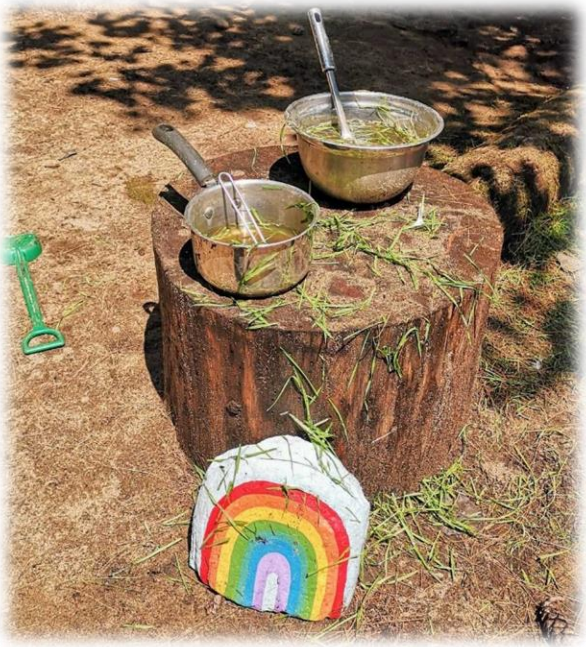
THE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY OF MUSKOKA

Muskoka Home Child Care Family Handbook 2027







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Welcome

The Muskoka Home Child Care Agency (MHCCA) is honoured that you have joined our team. We are excited to begin our journey as we work together to ensure that your child's immersion is one that is rich in experience, meaningful to them and brings joy to their world.

We have been serving the community since 2014 through the District of Muskoka as a licensed Agency who approves Home Child Care spaces. As professionals and paraprofessionals, our Providers care for children ages 0 to 12 years of age.

Program Philosophy

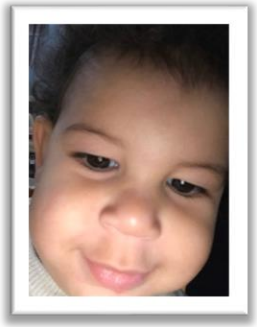
We see children through a lens of being rich in potential as they navigate their first years of life. Children often surprise the world with how capable and competent they are, and we like to propel these talents by giving them rich experiences and space to play to allow their natural curiosities to take flight.



We believe deeply in supporting our team to discover their maximum potential. Doing this requires meeting our providers, families and children where they are on their learning path in order to support their needs and enhance their understandings. Open, respectful and strength-based communication is key to our successful collaboration.

The Child Care and Early Years Act and the document *How Does Learning Happen?* guide our philosophy in all of our interactions with children, families, Providers and staff.

Meet the Team



Children:

The children in our care are the heart and soul of the Agency. As part of our team, we feel that a child-led approach to learning is essential. When children feel they are creators of their experiences and worlds, they become lifelong learners.



Providers:

Our Providers bring creativity, zest and exceptionality to the Agency. Each one is unique with their own set of expertise, beliefs and skills. They are independent business owners who have agreed and signed a Service Agreement with our Agency to deliver quality care guided by our Policies and Procedures.

Families:

You've joined a community when you signed up with the MHCCA. We value your input and want to always keep the lines of communication open and flowing. Share your families' unique needs and interests. Let us work together collaboratively and courteously.





Community:

When children feel a sense of community, they thrive now and in later life. Building these connections at an early age can shape their sense of self. We welcome connections with community members and the natural world around us.

Home Visitors:





Marianne Rivoire and Autumn Robinson are Early Childhood Educators who mentors and supports Providers on their learning journey. They provide support to families and always prioritizes the well-being of children in care.



Manager:

Monica Diefke is not only the MHCCA Manager but she is also an inspirational leader. She oversees the entirety of the programming and offers guidance, support and expertise.

Environment:



The environment is the third teacher. This means that with intentional planning, the set up of an environment, in this case the Providers Homes, acts as an engaging place to follow ones interest in order to make the learning meaningful and authentic.

Our Why

It is important to know what you do and how you do it, but to feel fulfilled, passionate and like your life is on a meaningful trajectory, **why** you do what you do must be at the forefront of your thoughts. We asked our Providers **"What is Your Why?"** and this wordle shows their response.



As you can see, providing caring environments that support and encourage a connection to our natural world is important to our Providers. Research shows how significant it is for physical, spiritual and mental health to not only get outdoors, but to enjoy and embrace the experience. This helps our young citizens learn to be stewards of nature; our Providers value and embrace this knowledge.

As a home away from home, our Providers want your child to feel safe, loved and joyful. Our Providers feel it is important to allow children to grow and flourish in an environment that is child-led, explorative and enriched.

Their passion to help others and create a better world is what elevates this team to go above and beyond.

"There's no greater thing you can do with your life and your work than follow your passions – in a way that serves the world and you."

~ Richard Branson

What Quality Means to Us

At the MHCCA, we have come to understand that quality is beyond something that can be described, defined and measured; it is something that must be felt and experienced.



When you choose the child care home and Provider that is right for you, your family and your child, a sense of contentment, comfort and community should flood over you.

Every child needs to be loved in gigantic quantities and with unbelievable quality.

~Daniel Mackler

As an Agency, we are entrusted to find the right people to join the team. It takes time and commitment to see the process out and an ongoing desire to learn is essential to future success. The Early Childhood Education field is a growing body of science based in brain development and therefore learning about best practices and new research is what we aim to deliver.

What Does Quality Feel Like?

When we asked our Providers what quality feels like, they provided the response found in the wordle.

Onboarding Providers and Agency Requirements



The Ministry of Education and the Child Care and Early Years Act, help to guide our Agencies Policies and Procedures. Following are a list of requirements set out by our Agency:

- Initial Interview
- Overview of responsibilities associated with becoming an Independent Business Owner
- Completion of a Health and Safety Inspection (annually)
- Reference Checks conducted
- Collecting: CAS checks, Criminal Reference Checks with a Vulnerable Sector Screening, medical certificates, immunizations records, valid home and car insurance, rabies vaccines for necessary pets
- Fire Inspection completed and floor plan posted
- Clear or good standing status of Registered bodies: The College of Early Childhood Educators, the Ontario College of Teachers, and the Registry of Child Care Violations
- Ensuring that First Aid Training is up-to-date and that first aid kits are fully equipped
- Policies and Procedures Reviewed (annually)
- How Does Learning Happen? training
- Commitment to a set amount of Professional Learning Trainings
- Posted Menu Plans and Schedules for families
- Collection of necessary documents above for Back-Up Providers, Residence of the Home over 18, Volunteers and Students

Beyond the Requirements

Having the Agency requirements are important to help ensure that children's safety and well-being are at the forefront of our thoughts, but we want to go beyond these measures to ensure that we are meeting the holistic needs of our Providers, families and children. Let us introduce you to some of the ways we do so.

Snapshot Visits for Families: Our Home Visitors attend each of the child care programs regularly and write detailed observations of their accounts. Part of these records, we send to parents and call them "Snapshot Visits." The intention is to give you a window into your child's day and experiences.



Virtual Field Trips: We continue to pivot through the pandemic and field trips are no different. Throughout the year, Marianne plans and organizes virtual field trips. This is a way to help expand a sense of community as we engage with others and learn about the world around us.

Activities in the Home: Our Providers are regularly invested in setting up different learning activities in the home but, sprinkled throughout the year, our Home Visitors like to take on that role. We view this as an opportunity to model intentionality with our ideas and observe the learning outcomes that could occur. It is often a new and curious experience for the children which stimulates creativity and builds on their complex play ideas.



Agency Team Meetings: Belonging is when you feel connected and that is why we view collaboration and community as a central necessity to our program. Several times throughout the year, our Providers are

invited to attend evening meetings where they are able to participate in discussions related to professional learning, the direction of the agency, general questions and team building exercises.

The most valuable resource that all teachers have is each other. Without collaboration our growth is limited to our own perspective.

~ Robert John Meehan

Early Years Workshops: One of the perks of becoming an approved home under the MHCCA license, is that you have access to the District of Muskoka's Early Years Workshops. These are held monthly from September to June and are all related to early childhood development.

Professional Learning Goals: We support and encourage professional growth as much as possible. Several times throughout the year, we provide professional learning trainings to our providers through different sources. Adding "tools" to the "tool box" helps people feel confident, equipped and successful.

A mind when stretched by a new idea never regains its original dimensions. ~Anonymous

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years: How Does Learning Happen? (HDLH) helps to drive our vision of child care. It recognizes children, families and educators as essential to the role of developing positive learning outcomes. It focuses on the four foundations of learning: Belonging, Engagement, Expression and Well-Being. When these foundations are valued and fostered, children thrive.



Belonging

What does Belonging feel like for all members of the MHCCA team?

"Belonging refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual's experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world."



- Authentic and meaningful relationships
- A sense of community
- Connection to others and the environment
- Honoured and valued uniqueness
- Respected and appreciated contributions
- Co-creators of the learning

Well-Being

What does Belonging feel like for all members of the MHCCA team?

- A warm, safe and caring environment
- An appreciation and joy towards nature
- A place to grow and feel nourished
- A supportive foundation that builds a child's sense of future self
- Calm and focused atmosphere
- Strength-based collaboration



"Well-being addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as selfcare, sense of self, and self-regulation skills."

Engagement

"Engagement suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond."

~ How Does Learning Happen? Page 7

What does Engagement feel like for all members of the MHCCA team?

- Intrinsic curiosity and discovery
- Encouraged creativity
- A healthy attitude towards problem solving
- A culture of inclusivity
- A journey of exploration
- An appreciation of wonder



Expression

What does Expression feel like for all members of the MHCCA team?

- Friendship
- Active listening and positive communication
- Celebrating differences
- Embracing each unique voice
- Fostering different learning styles
- Having the confidence to try new things and have new experiences



"Expression or communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words, and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy."

~ How Does Learning Happen?
Page 8

THE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY OF MUSKOKA

Program Statement

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

~ Anne Frank



The MHCCA Waitlist

1. Complete a waitlist form on the District of Muskoka website. If assistance is required, a member of the MHCCA team will be happy to assist.
2. Children will be placed on the waitlist in chronological order, based on the date and time that the request was received.
4. A few families will be notified via phone or email when a space has opened up. This allows for the Provider to hold a variety of interviews to find the right fit for their program, philosophies and children currently in care.
5. Families are welcome to email homechildcare@muskoka.on.ca about their status on the waitlist.

Enrolling with the Agency

1. Interview different Providers.
2. Choose a Provider that is right for you, your child and your family.
3. As space becomes available, priority will be given to siblings of children currently enrolled at the home child care premises, and/or children who fit a Providers need (days of care, age of child, hours of operation, etc.), while maintaining chronological order.
4. Ask to secure a space and for a predicted start date.
5. Complete a Registration Package for each child you are enrolling. Ensuring that we have a vibrant knowledge of your child's needs and health is of utmost importance to the Ministry of Education and us.

   Here are some tips for a smooth enrollment:

   - Read the instructions carefully in order to deter a delayed start.
   - Have all your paperwork in advance including updated immunizations. If you choose not to immunize, a Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief affidavit will

need to be notarized. Reach out to the Agency for the form and we will be happy to supply one for you.

- Note that submitting the complete document a minimum of 1 week in advance of care beginning is required for processing time.
- Understand that further delays may be required if you have a child requiring an individual plan, there is an error on the package, or more information is required.

Consents

During the Registration Process, there are a number of consents for families to consider. We request that you read over each carefully, in order to meet your families expectations and comfort level.

Preparing For Care

We all want the transition to care to be as seamless as possible for your child. If we can help



to fill them with familiarity by aligning practices and routines at home and within the child care program, your child will have a better opportunity to transition with success.

"Alone, we can do so little: together, we can do so much."
~ Helen Keller

What to Discuss with your Provider

Here are some suggestions we have for you and your Provider to discuss in order to devise a plan that works for you and your child as well as the Provider and her/his program.

- Transition schedule. Consider making an integration schedule with your Provider. A slower transition can give your child more confidence and comfort.

- Nap Routine. Consider timing of naps, noise machines, comfort items, soothing techniques.
- Meal Routines. Consider variety of foods, texture, colour and taste. Discuss what meal times look like in terms of physical space and interactions.
- Toileting Routines. Consistency is best with many things and this is no different. Try to get on the same routine.
- Soothing Techniques. Does your child practice any self-regulation skills? Do they have an item of comfort?
- Likes and Dislikes. What does your child enjoy? Do they have a favourite character, song or game?

What to Bring to Care

Ensuring that your child has everything they will need for care will help to unburden your mind and ease any ambiguity.

We recommend the following to be packed and left at your Providers home. Please remember to **label all items** brought into the home.



- Play clothes. Consider the season and ensure that there are at least two changes of appropriate clothing.
- Diapers, diaper cream, wipes. At least enough for 2 weeks.
- A light blanket to be used for naptime.
- In the Spring/Summer: sunscreen, bug spray, a sunhat and if possible, a bug jacket.
- In the Fall/Winter: extra toque, mitts, socks and if possible: jacket, snow pants and boots.

We understand that outdoor play is essential to children's connection with nature, spirituality and

overall well-being. When leaving your home for the day, please do your best to ensure that your child is dressed for the weather.

What a mess. Yes! We want children to feel fully engrossed in their learning, which means they will get messy and dirty. They are exploring different textures, smells, sounds and sights. Being hands on helps to build their brains and strengthen their understandings. Please be prepared to have your child coming home messy, fulfilled and developing new skills.

"Let them explore in the mud and build dens with boxes. Let them experiment with paint and imagine all day, for a child learns the most when they are allowed to play."
~ Twinklcares



Consider a Transition Schedule

If possible, try to work out a transition schedule with your Provider. The intention is to establish a sense of belonging and comfort for your child as they get to know the program, their peers and their new caregiver. It will also help you and your Provider get to know each other and you will be able to practice your new routine. It will look considerably different for each unique child, family and Provider but the benefits of a planned transition can certainly have a positive impact.

How to Prepare Your Child

Prior to the First Day:

1. Have confidence in your decision and always speak positively and enthusiastically about your Provider and the Program when your child is present.
2. Remind your child about things they enjoyed (or you believe they would enjoy) when they went for the interview or tour.
3. Start practicing successful strategies for your child at home. For example, try to have them eat snack at the

table, encourage them to walk instead of being held, and have them practice self-soothing techniques to fall asleep. Chat with your Provider, to see if there are any specific strategies that they can suggest.

4. Discuss a plan with your Provider for the first day. If your child really enjoys playdoh, mention this to them. Our Providers want to make this transition as successful as possible too and they could ensure that playdoh is available and displayed in an inviting way upon entering the home.

Coming to Care:



1. Children notice parent's emotional cues. Try your best to keep smiling and be positive.
2. Inform your Provider of your child's evening and morning. For example, they had little sleep but they ate well this morning.
3. Remind your child what time of the day you will pick them up. (After everyone is finished eating lunch, after outdoor time, etc.). It is very important to follow through with this as well.
4. Be confident and calm when you go to leave. Give them a hug and kiss and leave. Lingering for that last two, three or four hugs can extend the upset. Also, no sneaking out. Keeping your child's trust is crucial.
5. Be consistent.

Communication and Changes

Children are unique, which makes you the expert on your child and their individual needs. Having a relationship that is built on trust and mutual respect creates a foundation for open and authentic communication and collaboration.

"Building relationships in not about transactions – it's about connections."

~ Michelle Tilis Lederman

We encourage you to make the time to chat with your Provider daily. Topics may include:

- How your child slept, what they ate and their current emotional state. This will give your Provider some perspective of their interactions and needs.
- If there are any new things, events or circumstances in their lives (a move, a pet, a separation, etc.). Incorporating your changing circumstances in the program can assist your child with understanding their situation and the feelings associated with it. For example, if your child is going to be a big brother, our Providers may add a doll and cradle to the playroom to assist your child with their upcoming role, allowing them time to play and act out their feelings, desires and understandings of the approaching situation.



- Things you're working on at home, both successes and challenges such as potty training, dressing independently or talking. Designing a plan with your Provider can create a smoother and more consistent approach, which ultimately will help your child feel more comfortable and confident as they tackle these big tasks.

Please remember to update your Provider and the Agency if any changes occur, in relation to your child's Registration Package. Specifically:

- Allergies
- Special Needs or Exceptions
- Medical Conditions
- Moving to a new address
- Separation (specifically as it relates to custody arrangements and payments)
- Phone number change

Once a year, you will be asked to participate in a Family Survey. We value your advice and insights and ask that

you share your constructive feedback with us. These findings could directly affect the trajectory of the Muskoka Home Child Care Agency.

When Difficult Conversations Arise…

Navigating through an awkward topic or challenging conversation can be difficult. Ideally, we hope to have established a foundation of respect and trust where all parties can feel safe to voice their needs and concerns. The Home Visitor team is happy to assist families in co-constructing solutions with the Agency or Providers.

Appendix B is our Policy and Procedure on Parent Issues and Concerns.

Successful Interactions with Children

Children are individually unique with their own perspectives, ideas and thoughts. We understand that when we set children up for success they are capable and competent. Creating this basis involves assembling a medley of information to meet the best outcomes.

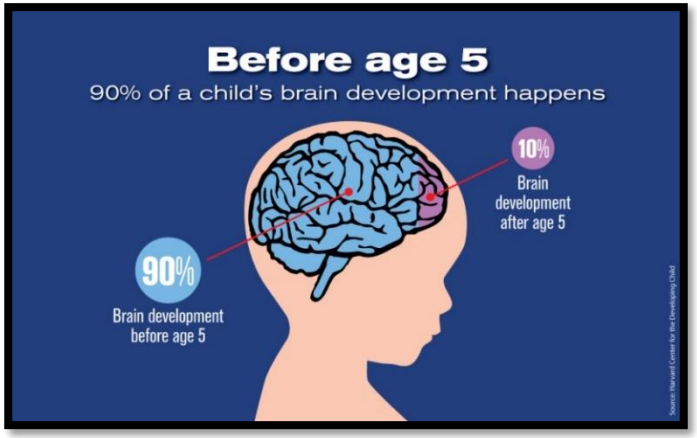


1. Providers work to establish a positive and authentic relationship with your child. This takes time, consistency and a view of the child as uniquely wonderful.
2. Families are the experts on their children, so we look to you to provide insights into what works for your child at home and the different ideas you've tried.
3. Then we turn to the best practices in the field of Early Childhood Education. There has been a great deal of research on the topic of neuroscience.

4. Considering all the factors, we work as a team to develop the best plan for your child's unique needs and circumstances.

Some of the ideas that we suggest are found in Appendix C, Best Practices for Successful Interactions.

"Behaviour is a function of communication. It's not good or bad."
~ Unknown



Health and Safety



Safety is a top priority in all our programs. Our Providers are keen to ensure that the following measures are met in each home:

Out of Reach

All flammable materials, medical supplies, bleach, detergents, insecticides, plastic bags, firearms, and all other hazardous materials are stored out of reach of children.

Capacity

Home capacity is a serious issue that must be followed in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act guidelines. No more than six (6) children may be in care at any one time, including the Provider's own children under the age of four. After September 1 in a calendar year, any of the Providers own children who will turn the age of four in that year do not have to be counted in the

total number of children at a premise. Of the total number of children in care, including the Providers own children, no more than three (3) children may be under the age of two (2).

Smoking/Vaping

Smoking and vaping any substances or having paraphernal accessible to children during hours of operation is strictly prohibited. This includes during pick up and drop off for Providers and families alike.

Standing Bodies of Water

Drowning can be a silent and quick tragedy. The Ministry of Education has clear rules indicating that no child is to have access to any standing or recreational bodies of water on the property during child care hours which we enforce diligently. This includes swimming pools, kiddie pools, hot tubs, lakes, beaches, ponds, etc. Only children over the age of 6 may be able to go to public beaches or regulated pools with a Provider under specific circumstances. Please feel free to contact your Provider or a Home Visitor for any clarification.

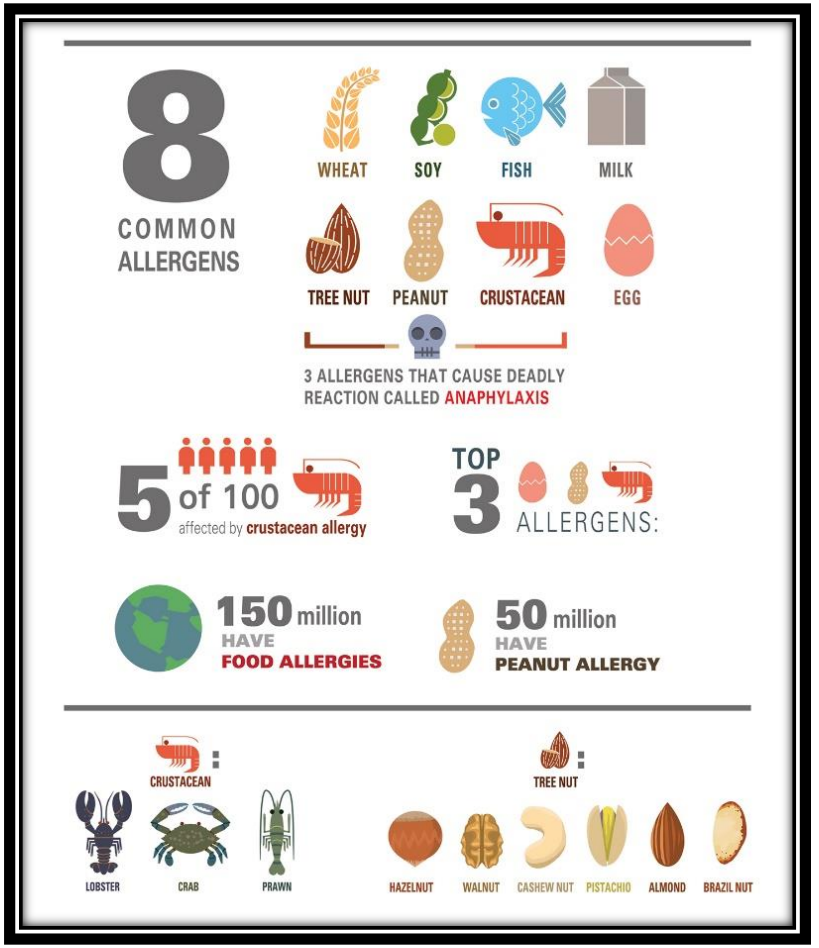
Water Play

We encourage children to engage in water play activities including the use of splash pads, sprinklers, hoses and water tables under the close supervision of the Home Child Care Provider. During this time, children are able to develop gross and fine-motor skills, exercise their problem solving abilities, further their language development, engage in social-emotional learning and enhance their STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematic) learning.

Anaphylactic Allergies - For All Families

As a parent of a child with life threatening allergies, sending your child to care, can cause a great deal of stress and anxiety. As parents of children who don’t have life threatening allergies, we can help ease that concern by being respectful, considerate and mindful of the known allergy. If there is a child or adult in your child care program with a severe allergy, please make the following a priority:

- Be mindful not to bring the known allergy into the home at any time.
- Avoid exposure to the known allergy prior to drop off.
- Maintain good hygienic practices prior to care such as handwashing.
- Be proactive and read labels. If you have a celebration and you would like to provide something, read the labels carefully including whether or not it says “Processed in a factory” or “May contain.” Ideally, if there is a symbol such as “peanut free” that’s the best choice. Avoid homemade foods due to the possibility of cross contamination.
- Talk with your child about allergies. Help them to understand what it is and how your child can be a thoughtful friend.



Source: https://www.behance.net/gallery/10430343/Final-Year-Project-Food-Allergy-Identification

Anaphylactic Allergies – For Families of Children with a Severe Allergy

Prior to securing your placement, your initial interview with your Provider is of utmost importance. This is a chance to discuss your child's unique needs, in this case their allergy and allergy plan. As independent business owners, each Provider makes the decision on which families and children they choose to have join their program and child care family. Being open and honest about an allergy is very important so that our Providers can feel confident that they can ensure your child's safety. For example, if a safety plan includes arriving at the hospital within 10 minutes of a possible exposure but they live well out of town, this may not be a good fit either. We want families and Providers to feel confident.



Once the placement is secure, an Anaphylactic Plan would need to be complete prior to your child beginning care. This plan will be reviewed by all Back-up Providers, Volunteers, Students, Residents of the Home or others deemed necessary prior to your child beginning care or prior to the person entering the program. An Anaphylactic alert sign will also be placed on the entrance of the home indicating that someone in the home has a severe allergy to the specific causation.

In the event that your child develops an allergy while in care, an update to the file and a creation of a plan will occur as soon as possible.

Individual Support Plans

We want to ensure that every child has equal opportunity to participate in the program in a meaningful way to them.

This means that sometimes, an Individual Support Plan (ISP) is needed. A special need is defined as any condition, diagnosis or special circumstance that may affect a child's ability to fully participate in a program (i.e.: speech delays, feeding tubes, broken arm, etc.). If your child requires a plan, we will need to have this in place before they begin care or upon the situation being known.

You will be provided with a form to be completed in conjunction with the child (if appropriate) and any professionals working with your child (Occupational Therapist, Physician, Resource Teacher, etc.). The plan will identify any supports required for your child and how the Provider is to use those supports to meet the child's needs in order to fully integrate them into the program. Any questions regarding completing the ISP can be directed to the Home Visitors. A consent form will be provided to share information with community partners.

When your Child is Ill

It is not uncommon for children to be sick while enrolled in a child care program. Colds and ear infections are frequent as well as other common childhood illnesses.



Beyond diligent disinfecting practices and handwashing, children are still susceptible to illnesses. Children are becoming exposed to more people and inadvertently more germs. They are building their immune systems and the good news is that they will likely have less illnesses in the early years of school, as opposed to their peers who didn't attend a child care program.

Although children are frequently ill, we want to do our part as caregivers to reduce the spread as best as possible. Remember to think of your Provider as a teacher and not a nurse. Although they often wear many hats, it's important to understand that they are here to care for your child and help them grow and learn. They are not equipped to provide health care to your child.

If your child is experiencing the following, please keep them home until they have been symptom free for 24 hours:

- a fever (38º C or 100.4ºF or higher)
- Diarrhea (2 or more loose or liquid stools)
- An unexplained rash

Additionally, the following chart outlines other common childhood illnesses or concerns and the length of time exclusion is required.

Fifth Disease	can attend, unless Provider is pregnant in which case devise a plan with your Provider and Home Visitor for return
Hand, Foot, Mouth	can attend once child is fever free for 24 hours
Impetigo	exclusion for 24 hours after start of treatment and sores are dry
Mumps	exclusion for 9 days from onset of swelling
Lice	exclusion for 48 hours after treatment, and all nits are removed
Pink Eye	exclusion for 24 hours after start of treatment
Ringworm	exclusion until treated
Rubella	exclusion for 7 days from onset of rash
Scarlet Fever/Strep	exclusion for 24 hours after start of treatment
Whooping Cough	exclusion for 3 weeks after onset, or 5 days after start of treatment
Meningitis	exclusion, a note from a physician confirming the child's return to good health is required prior to re-admission
Viral Hepatitis	exclusion for 1 week after onset of jaundice
Chickenpox	spots not a reason to keep home, must be fever free and fully able to participate in program

It's important to understand that if your child is not well enough to participate in the adventures of the day without modification, they should remain home. Remember that you do have absent days for each year.

If your child becomes ill over the course of the day, your Provider will contact you to arrange for an immediate pick-up. We understand that working in Muskoka can

entail being hours from your Providers home. In these circumstances, we suggest contacting your Emergency Contact person for assistance.

If your child is moderately ill, (e.g. headache, mild cough/cold, recuperating from surgery, etc.) and you would like them to attend care, it is important to have an open dialogue with your Provider. Please respect your Providers choice whether or not to provide care, after considering your child's symptoms and ability to participate in the program.

Accident/Injury and Incident Report

As children develop gross and fine motor abilities and begin to explore their limits and environment in a healthy way, sometimes accidents, injuries and incidences happen. It is important to monitor and track these occurrences to maintain a running record of the health, safety and well-being of each child. Please note, that if your child has an accident/injury or incident, you will be notified and asked to sign an acknowledgement page of the situation.

Emergency Treatment

At the MHCCA, we do our best to ensure your child's safety. In the event of an emergency, your Provider will inform you immediately. If your child has been injured, your Provider may opt to enlist the aid of Emergency Services. Any cost arising from this (e.g. ambulance fee) will be directed to the family.

Immunizations

Immunizations should be in line with the Canadian Immunization Guide. In the event that a family does not vaccinate their child for any reason, a signed affidavit of Conscience or Religious Belief is required. As your child receives new vaccinations, please provide the Home Visitor with a copy of the new record as soon as your child's immunization record has been updated.

Medication

You are encouraged to administer drugs or medications to your children at home if this can be done without affecting your child's treatment schedule. In the event

that medication needs to be administered while your child is in care please consider the following:

- Each medication requires an Authorization for Drug/Medication Administration form to be completed and approved prior to administration.
- Under the counter medication must be in the original pharmacy container showing the physician's name, date of issue, dosage and instructions.
- All medication must be in the original container, labelled with your child's name and must show the dosage instructions and expiry date.
- Medications will be followed only by the manufacturer's written instructions unless accompanied by a physician's note.
- Daily use creams such as sunscreen, insect repellent, diaper creams, lotions, lip balms and hand sanitizer may be used without an Authorization for Drug/Medication Administration as long as its use has been approved in the registration package.

Nutrition



It is our hope that your child plays whole-heartedly while in care, using his body and mind to learn. All this energy gets burned up quickly, so when we refuel the tank, we want to be mindful of filling it with the most nutritional choices. Our Providers meet the recommendations for healthy eating as outlined by the Ministry of Education, amended from time to time. For children in care for 6 hours or more, 2 snacks and a lunch is provided daily. A wide variety of fruits and vegetables are offered, along with protein and whole grains. We encourage different colours and textures and suggest offering a variety of options on the plate. We discourage foods that are highly processed and are high in sodium and sugars.

When your child is on a specialized diet because of food allergies, restrictions or cultural beliefs you may wish to make special dietary arrangements in order to meet your child's unique needs. This may include an arrangement where you supply meals and/or snacks for your child, or you provide substitutions for your Provider to make meals and snacks (i.e. vegan butter, egg substitute, etc). In this circumstance, a Special Dietary and Feeding Arrangements form will need to be completed, which we will be happy to assist you with.

Outdoor Time and Risky Play

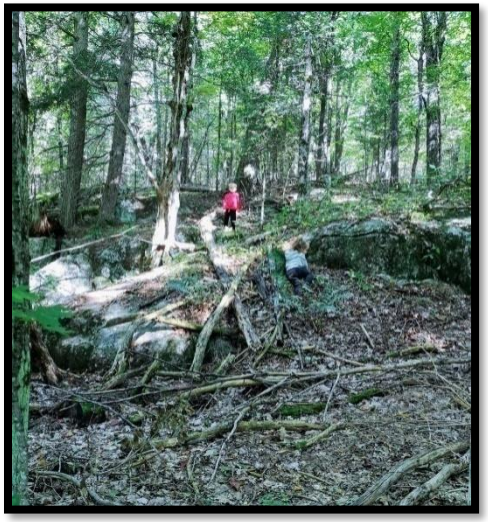


When children have the opportunity to play outside daily, the benefits are indisputable. Oodles of research tells us that not only does this help children's physical well-being, but it also invokes a sense of wonder and curiosity and a deeper level of engagement and connection with the world around them.

Children in care for 6 hours or more are required to spend a minimum of 2 hours per day outdoors. This gives lots of opportunity for children to explore their senses as they manipulate mud and snow, go for walks while listening to the birds chirping, and guess what the sweet smell in the air might be.

"Nature is a tool to get children to experience not just the wider world, but themselves."

~ Stephen Moss



Outdoor time is also a great space to engage in physically exuberant activities. Children can test their bodies limitations as they walk on different terrain, climb on

trees and try to run as fast as their older friends. When we encourage children to engage in these riskier activities, we are building their confidence and knowledge. Children begin to learn how to complete a "risk assessment" of their surroundings. They begin to understand that ice is slippery, rocks can slide and falling can create a skinned knee. Children make observations of their environment and take calculated risks. Research tell us, that engaging in risky play sets the foundation for a skillset that will be used well into adulthood and is one of the most preventative strategies in keeping children safe.



Trampolines

Some providers may have trampolines for enriching gross-motor play in their yards. Children are permitted to use trampolines if written permission is provided. It should only be used one at a time with shoes off and only if it is fully enclosed by netting and the door zips closed.

Sleep/Rest

Nap or Quiet time is important for children to feel well rested and ready to learn and engage successfully. It is important for their ability to self-regulate, focus and have the energy to see out the day. Although some children need less time than others to rejuvenate, the timelines for nap/rest times as well as the health and safety measures surrounding it are guided by the Ministry of Education.

- Children 18 months and younger will sleep in a crib or playpen
- Children over 18 months will sleep on a cot or bed
- Naps cannot exceed 2 hours in length at a time
- Children will be offered a rest period daily
- Your Provider will perform sleep checks daily



These procedures and protocols are devised by the Ministry of Education to maximize children's safety and basic needs but they don't take into account your individual child. In your registration package you are asked questions about your child's sleep schedule and routine, but we request that you continue this dialogue often with your Provider.

If you are in need of overnight care, we recommend speaking with a Home Visitor as there are different needs and requirements. Not all our homes are approved for overnight care.

Under 12 months:

The health and safety of your child is of utmost importance to all of us. The "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Infant Deaths in Canada" is what helps guide our practices regarding sleep for your infant. They are the experts on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and their research has guided these practices:

1. Infants under 12 months will be placed on their backs to sleep.
2. Infants will be placed on a firm surface and no pillows, comforters, quilts of bumper pads will be used.
3. Children will be placed in their own individual playpen or crib to nap.

Release of a Child

We want you to always be comfortable knowing that your child is in care safe and sound and will be there until you return. Know that your Provider can only release your child to the guardians noted in the Registration package unless a legal custody agreement has been supplied, or

to the people indicated on your Emergency Child Care Pick Up list. When someone who the provider hasn't met before comes to pick up your child, they will need photo identification.

If someone arrives to pick up your child and it is probable that they may place the child's safety at risk, the Provider has the right to deny releasing the child to that person. The Provider will call alternative contacts for your child. Your child's safety will always be the top priority.

Field Trips and Criminal Record Checks

When possible, we love to get together as a team and share in a day of adventure and fun. Field Trips have included parks, dance studios, gymnasiums, zoo to you experiences, etc. As a parent you may want to join and we would love the volunteers! Just as you would at the school, you will need to complete a Criminal Record Check with a Vulnerable Sector Screening. We supply the letter and because you're a volunteer it's free! Please be aware however, that these checks can take some time to complete so if you think you may want to volunteer in the future, please reach out right away.

Community Adventures



When your child establishes a sense of community and belonging it cultivates authentic connections and helps them to define a clearer sense of who they are. We encourage our Providers to use their judgement to foster these relationships by going on community walks, enjoying the neighbourhood parks, and utilizing programs such as the EarlyON and Story Time at the Library.

Many of our Providers also feel a strong relationship to nature and are often hiking on nearby trails or on backyard loops.

Transporting Children

With respect to transporting children, the Provider is diligent in taking all possible precautions in attempt to

keep your child safe. Providers will only transport children whose family has signed the permission to transport section of the registration package.

Every child must be transported in an appropriate seat, child safety seat or booster seat as required by the Ministry of Transportation at all times. As the child's age and weight change, ensure that you notify the Provider of any new transporting requirements. The family and Provider will determine who will provide the restraint system for each child. The Agency does not provide restraint systems for children or inspect installation of car seats.

Driving in Muskoka, specifically in the winter can be a challenge. In the event of inclement weather (e.g. heavy snowfall, freezing rain, etc.), Providers are not permitted to transport children in their vehicles. If your child attends school and the busses are cancelled, the Provider may not be able to walk your child to school. If the Provider has space available and you decide to have your child remain at the Provider's home for the day, you are required to notify your Fee Subsidy Case Manager, if applicable.

Pets



Part of the charm of Home Child Care, is that there are often pets who are actively involved in the program. This is a great opportunity for children to learn how to treat animals with respect and kindness, especially if you don't have any at home. We encourage our families to have discussions with their children about the following:

- Treating animals gently and calmly.
- Never hurting, teasing, frightening, chasing, surprising or cornering an animal.
- Avoiding chasing and kissing animals.
- Being mindful not to disturb an animal that is eating or sleeping.

Prohibited Practices

Although we would never suspect the following from our Providers, there is a list of Prohibited Practices that are outlined by the Ministry of Education and are to be included in all Family Handbooks. This policy specifies that no provider, back-up provider, staff, students or other persons normally resident in the home shall, at any time:

- Use corporal punishment on a child
- Physically restrain a 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 only used as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- Lock the exits of the home Child Care premises 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.
- Use harsh or degrading measures or threats or use 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.
- Deprive the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- Inflict any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Serious Occurrences

If a Serious Occurrence (as defined by the Ministry of Education) has occurred in your Providers home (such as an injury, missing child, fire, or disaster) it will be reported to the Ministry of Education by the Home Child Care Agency. A notice of the occurrence will be posted at your Provider’s home and at the Agency.

office. Any questions or concerns regarding Serious Occurrences should be directed to the Agency.

As independent business owners, our Providers are able to have Back Up Providers, Volunteers and Students in their homes, but not all do. In order to do so, the person must go through similar screening processes as our Providers do, including attaining a Criminal Record Checks with a Vulnerable Sector Screening.

Back Up Care, Volunteers and Students

Back Up Providers



Back up Providers may be active in the following ways:

- Independently caring for the children, in the event that the Provider is unavailable due to emergency circumstances or a schedule time off.
- Dependently, working alongside the Provider in whatever capacity is needed.

Back Up Providers are:

- Trained by the Provider and the Agency
- Are familiar with Individual Support Plans and routines of the home
- Are only able to provide care in the Providers approved home, during field trips or while on community walks.
- Parents are notified in advance if a Back Up Provider will be used. This will allow families to make the decision to place their child in care during that time or make alternate arrangements. Whenever possible, families and children should meet the Back Up Provider, prior to an emergency situation.

Back Up Plan, Professional Training Days and Vacations

Although our Providers may have a Back Up Provider, not all do. Just like everyone, your Provider may need time off now and then due to illness, a family emergency

or a scheduled appointment. As much as the Agency would love to assist with a temporary placement, that isn't always possible and it is why we highly recommend arranging an independent back up plan such as a friend or family member.

When your Provider goes on vacation, they will provide you with a minimum of two weeks written notice. The same courtesy is appreciated, when you choose to go on vacation.

Our Providers often commit to Professional Learning workshops, trainings and meetings outside of their scheduled program hours. We are very grateful to them for their level of commitment and dedication and we know that their time is precious. On occasion throughout the year, we will host PD days with our Providers during the work week to support a better work life balance. You will be notified of these days 4 weeks in advance and you will not be charged for the day. We appreciate your support and understanding.

Financial and Attendance

Financial Arrangements

As of November 1, 2022, the Muskoka Home Child Care Agency has opted in, to implement the Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care (CWELCC) plan, making quality child care more affordable, accessible and inclusive. Please see the District of Muskoka website for more information.

As an Agency-Placed Family, all financial arrangements are communicated to and from the Agency. If you have an invoice question or concern, we encourage you to reach out to the finance department. Receipts will be provided to every family who has paid for Child Care services through the year in February of each year for the previous year. The Rates are found in Appendix D – subject to reduction with CWELCC agreement.

As part of the Agency, we require that families consent to a pre-authorized debit format to align with our financial program capabilities. Payments will be made on a bi-weekly schedule.

A deposit equal to two weeks of care is required and will be held in trust. The deposit will then be applied to the final bill.

The Family Contract will be completed during the registration process and should be updated to reflect any changes to the schedule that occur over time.

Please note when your child's birthday occurs, an adjustment in fees will occur in the next bi-weekly period, if the "Type of Care Code Changes".

Hardships and financial strain can happen to anyone. If you have accumulated overdue payments, we ask that you connect with the financial department in order to develop a plan. When a family is behind more than 15 days, a past due notice will be sent. When a plan has not been devised and agreed upon, fees that remain unpaid by 30 days after receipt of invoice will be referred to collections and the child will be discharged from care.

Two Weeks Written Notice

We understand that circumstances change and there will come a time when you will no longer need care for your child. As this time approaches, we ask that you reach out to the Agency with two weeks written notice homechildcare@muskoka.on.ca. This time will help your Provider prepare your child for the departure. It also allows the finance department to apply your deposit and it will give your Provider some time to fill the vacant space.

In the event that no notice was provided, the family will continue to be billed as per the current Family Contract until two weeks has passed from the last day of care to assist in supporting our Providers.

Fee Subsidy

If you are an Agency family, you are eligible to apply for the Fee Subsidy Program. If you qualify, you may be able to have a portion or all of your child care fees paid for by the District Municipality of Muskoka. Subsidy is based on a few factors including income levels and can be accessed when families are working, attending school or have special family circumstances as identified by a third party agency. We encourage all families to visit the website for more information or to apply. You can also contact fee subsidy intake at 705-645-2412 ext. 4638.

Statutory Holidays

The following statutory holidays do not required payment unless your child attends care:

- New Years
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Civic Holiday
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas
- Boxing Day

As independent business owners, our Providers have the option to open or close during these days and we recommend that you communicate with them if you require care on these dates.

One exceptionality to the above is during our extended District administration office closure between Christmas and New Years. These dates will be provided to families by November 1st of each year. Families are required to notify the Agency prior to December 1st and confirm they require care during this closure. This will allow the Agency to assign staff coverage in case of a serious occurrence or other emergency. Unless approval has been granted prior to December 1st all Providers will be closed during the closure.

Attendance

Ensuring your child's safe arrival and departure is vital. If you are running 15 minutes late or longer, from the time outlined in your Family Contract, it is important that you inform your Provider. Everyday your child will be signed into the program by your child care provider. If you disagree with the attendance records, please discuss with your Provider and/or Home Visitor.

Continue to communicate clearly with your Provider about when your child will not be present. Your Provider cares about you and your family and they may become concerned if you don't arrive for a scheduled day. Our Providers also put a lot of time and energy into preparing

for their day including consumable materials and menu items. When possible, letting them know in advance of days your child will be away will help them plan accordingly.

"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."

~ George Bernard Shaw

In the event that a child consecutively misses days without the Provider being informed, all attempts will be made by the Provider and Home Visitors to ensure that the child and family is ok. If 10 consecutive days pass without any contact, termination of the child care space will unfortunately occur.

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What is Play-Based Learning?



Play is children's work. It was a societal misconception that play does not promote learning concepts such as literacy and numeracy. In fact, it is quite the opposite. When children engage in activities that provoke and stimulate thinking in open-ended materials within social stories of their own making, children are able to process, commit to memory and extend their experiences in play. For example, these play experiences develop turn taking and patience by waiting for a turn, learning about literacy through books and materials related to their favourite animal and problem solving when challenged through personal interactions throughout their day. It could be how to get along with peers, how to make their tower taller without falling over, or any topic that engages their interest and curiosity. When they are personally invested, learning is happening.

https://blog.himama.com/the-importance-of-play-in-early-childhood-education-programming/

https://www.ontario.ca/document/kindergarten-program-2016/play-based-learning-culture-inquiry

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/kindergarten/parents-guide-play-based-learn-en.pdf

This is a video that showcases classroom learning but still discusses the importance of play.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=31gZZZ-XG94

"Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood."

~ Fred Rogers

The Benefits to Home Child Care – The Importance of Continuity of Care



When making the transition from home to enrolling your child in care, Home Child Care is a wonderful option. Your child will be cared for in a loving and nurturing home-like environment with small group sizing. One primary caregiver will care for your child from the time they enter care to the time they leave care. This consistent caregiver model allows for a deeper connection where cue-reading and responding becomes more accurate and responsive resulting in a solidified foundation of trust. Establishing this level of trust, results in optimum learning and development.

https://www.ontario.ca/page/types-child-care

Think, Feel, Act Video Series

This video format of information discusses Positive Relationships and Brain Development, Pedagogical Leadership, Pedagogical Documentation, Inclusion, Parent Engagement, Learning Environments, Self-Regulation Skills and Observation and Documentation: there are 28 videos in total. It is easily accessible and helps adults understand how children develop and learn, as well as the best ways to encourage a child's learning.

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/research.html

Videos range from 1:30 minutes up to 6 minutes in length with most between 3 to 4 minutes.

An Overview of the Document How Does Learning Happen?

How Does Learning Happen? A Pedagogy for the Early Years describes the four foundations of learning for children: Well-Being, Engagement, Expression and Belonging. Each foundation is interconnected and

essential to the overall development of children. When we see children as curious, competent and capable of complex thinking, we are better equipped to support them in reaching their maximum potential. This document guides ECE philosophies and principals as we work together as educators, families and children to be co-learners.

The following link is the entire document as used by RECEs to support, extend and document children's learning. Through this document, all child care Providers are co-learners with children and attempt to see the world through their eyes. As they observe and document the learning taking place within the child, they are able to program plan and provide materials, experiences and activities to enhance a child's growth. Why not learn letter recognition in the sand box with dinosaurs? Let's measure and pour while engaged in water play to learn about numbers.



"Children must be taught how to think, not what to think."
~ Margaret Mead

When children are actively engaged in play, they are learning all the skills that will help them in their ability to learn new concepts and face challenges. This documented scientific approach enables children to learn because they have had an opportunity to explore, problem solve, self-regulate and be co-constructors of their environment. This ground work is a solid base for successful learning throughout their life.
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/howlearninghappens.pd

Risky Play and the Benefits

This is an easy, readable and informative page regarding the boundless benefits of risky play and how to adapt the habits into children's play. This type of play as it relates to children's mental health, creates lifelong positive effects on wellbeing.

https://www.cbc.ca/natureofthings/features/risky-play-for-children-why-we-should-let-kids-go-outside-and-then-get-out



Loose Parts and Open-ended Materials



"In early childhood education settings, loose parts mean alluring, beautiful, found objects and materials that children can move, manipulate, control, and change while they play. Children can carry, combine, redesign, line up, take apart, and put loose parts back together in almost endless ways. The materials come with no specific set of directions, and they can be used alone or combined with other materials. Children can turn them into whatever they desire: a stone can become a character in a story; an acorn can become an ingredient in an imaginary soup. These objects invite conversations



and interactions, and they encourage collaboration and cooperation. Put another way, loose parts promote social



competence because they support creativity and innovation. All of these are highly valued skills in adult life today." (Community Play Things)

"Play is the highest form of research."

~ Albert Einstein



The websites below give examples and discuss what loose parts are and their value in children's development compared to ridged, structured play items. The possibilities are boundless and therefore, enables exponential growth.

https://www.guardian.edu.au/blog/explaining-loose-parts-play/; https://fairydustteaching.com/2016/10/loose-parts/

http://www.communityplaythings.com/resources/articles/2015/loose-parts

Self-Regulation Strategies and Suggestions



Dr. Stuart Shankar is an Ontario leader and pioneer in self-regulation in children and why it is so important to their well-being. The following 3 links are helpful in understand what self-regulation

is and how to support your child to develop this enduring life skill.

https://self-reg.ca/self-reg/self-regknowledge-series/

https://self-reg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/PARENTS_printable.pdf?pdf=parents-guide

https://self-reg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/5DOMAIN_printable.pdf?pdf=5-domains

The following link to the Think, Feel, Act Videos help reinforce these concepts of self-regulation. They discuss what is happening to your child during times of stress and how to help them find strategies that will help them cope during stressful times.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLm_tt7Z1gBlDnt-6CrbyCn7iZ0e-H_-v – access videos 4, 25, 27, 28 – short videos no more than 3 minutes in length.

Information on Healthy Eating (Paint Your Plate)



The following links are to the latest information provided by the Government of Canada and Ontario Dietitians in Public Health. These are helpful with menu planning and how to ensure healthy eating practices for children. Nutrition is a key component to children's well-being and ability to learn. https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/

https://www.odph.ca/upload/membership/document/2018-01/pg-final-en-aoda-jan-19-2018.pdf

What to Do About Biting

Biting behaviour can cause many issues and emotional responses for all parties. It is often a stressor that can be

very challenging to redirect in some children. This website offers some insight and suggestions on what may help to alleviate this behavior.

https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/232-toddlers-and-biting-finding-the-right-response

What is Infant Mental Health and Why is it Important

Infant Mental Health is a newer science that is heavily focused on brain development. The following link provides a wide range of articles on Infant Mental Health which platforms how infant mental health is key to children's development and success. Dr. Charles Zeanah states that "Infant Mental Health is a multidisciplinary professional field of inquiry, practice and policy concerned with alleviating suffering and enhancing the social and emotional competence of young children". Essentially when a child is cared for by a loving and responsive care Provider, it lays the foundation for positive growth, resiliency and health. When a child's cues are met by a Provider that will answer their needs, interact positively with them and are committed to developing a trusting relationship, the child can then engage curiously with their environment; allowing the child to make sense of the world around them. Adversely, if a child does not have a responsive care relationship with someone who cares for them by responding to their needs, infants' brains will not be able e to develop other higher thinking skills because they will always be focused on their essential needs. Children can recover from poor relationships if they are provided with a responsive caring Provider. The first 2 years of life are even more critical than was originally thought by health care professionals. A Mother's health is directly connected to their child's so supporting the mother is just as important as supporting the infant's mental health.

https://books.google.ca/books?hl=en&lr=&id=xS5bDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=infant+mental+health&ots=g0AVpXruk6&sig=XDjQneKmU0jmoNz7ItXXTrxjh-M#v=onepage&q=infant%20mental%20health&f=false

Development Charts to Track Your Child's Early Development Up to the Age of 6

This is the latest comprehensive chart that outlines what your child should be doing at every age and stage. It does require a sign up but it's free and can be used on your phone. It is helpful when you aren't sure if there is an issue and something to bring to the attention of your doctor for further evaluation.
https://www.lookseechecklist.com/en/



Speech and Language Information

This is a local link that supports children and families that may be experience speech or communication issues with their child. It has helpful tips and discusses milestones for each age level and where to go when you have concerns. You do not need a referral from a medical professional to seek help. (See also the *Look See document* for milestone information.)

https://www.onekidsplace.ca/services/speech-language-pathology/;

Ticks and Lyme Disease

This is a link to various questions you may have and covers quite range of topics that look at what Lyme disease is, its symptoms, treatment and how to prevent bites.
http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/DiseaseInformation/FactSheetsIL/lymedisease.aspx

Home Child Care and Unlicensed Child Care



This website of the government of Ontario discusses the differences of the two types of care.

https://www.ontario.ca/page/types-child-care#section-0

Home Child Care and Unlicensed Child Care: How Many Children Are Allowed?

This link will give you the most current information on what the Ontario government has set in place for numbers of children in licensed and unlicensed Home Child Care.

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/childcareallowance.pdf

Ontario's Routine Immunization Schedule

Vaccines help build up and strengthen your immune system, protecting you against disease.

This web page will help you learn about Ontario's free vaccine program and makes it easy to keep your family up to date with the recommended vaccinations.

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/immunization/static/immunization_tool.html

Water Safety

Drowning is a preventable tragedy. Educate yourself so that you can educate your child. It is important to note that drowning is a quiet tragedy. Children will stop struggling within 3 to 5 seconds upon immersion. You

will not hear a young child call for help as they will not be able to.

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/pdfs/hcca-bodies-of-water-tips-and-instructions-en.pdf

This link is to a Canadian website that discusses all types of possible injuries and how to prevent them; such as, poisoning, accidents, drowning, etc.

https://parachute.ca/en/

There are simple things you can do to keep you and your family safe. Drowning is a leading cause of injury-related death for Canadians, and it often happens quickly and silently.

https://parachute.ca/en/injury-topic/drowning/

This information is from the Canadian Pediatric Society and addresses essential precautions to help protect children, using a life jacket and/or a PFD for children, what to do if you have a pool at your home, other water safety tips and when can children take swimming lessons.

https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/water_safety

Playground and Water Safety

This parental/Provider resource talks about active supervision, rules for safe play, water appropriate footwear, broken or damaged equipment, pools, ponds and toddler pools.

https://parachute.ca/en/injury-topic/drowning/play-parks-and-water-features/

https://parachute.ca/en/injury-topic/drowning/lifejackets-and-personal-flotation-devices-pfds/

Canadian Poisonous Plant Information System

This is the Government of Canada's website with information on what plants are poisonous and what the symptoms are when consumed.

https://www.cbif.gc.ca/eng/species-bank/canadian-poisonous-plants-information-system/canadian-

poisonous-plants-information-system/?id=1370403266274

Head Lice Information and Treatment

The Canadian Pediatric Society provides information for parents on head lice and how to treat it. It discusses everything from transmission to prevention and is helpful with this annoying infestation.

https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/head_lice

Home Safety – Play Time

Here are some tips and tricks to keeping your child's play time at home a safe time. It discusses toy safety and suggested uses per age, drowning prevention, baby walkers, stationary activity centres, baby jumpers and trampolines.

https://parachute.ca/en/injury-topic/home-safety/play-time/

Fire Arm Safety

The RCMP and Government of Canada provide information on storing, transporting and displaying firearms safely. This must be followed to the letter of the law and will be discussed and viewed by the Muskoka Home Visitor.

https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/firearms/storing-transporting-and-displaying-firearms

Severe Allergic Reactions

The Government of Canada provides information on food allergies, what reactions can look like and common food allergens.

https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-allergies-intolerances/food-allergies.html

Safe Disposal of Prescriptions Drugs

The government of Canada discusses safe disposal, take back programs and garbage disposal. It also mentions pharmaceuticals and the environment, and provides additional resources to refer to for further information.

https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/safe-disposal-prescription-drugs.html

Child Car Seat Safety

This Government of Canada website has articles and information for parents/Providers to access such as choosing a booster seat, installing a car seat/booster seat properly, safety alerts and recalls on products. It also contains a recall data base and articles on cross border shopping, how long car seats are good for, and other travel information on other modes of travel.

https://www.tc.gc.ca/en/services/road/child-car-seat-safety.html

Licensed and Unlicensed Child Care Violations

This link allows an individual to look up violations for licensed and unlicensed Providers (individuals providing informal or private child care in their homes or at other locations). The registry covers violations recorded and verified since January 2012.

It also allows individuals to report a complaint or ask about a violation.

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/unlicensed.html

Appendix A

PROGRAM STATEMENT

Children have the right to grow and learn in a caring, stimulating, flexible and respectful environment. The Muskoka Home Child Care Agency promotes warm, kind, and safe environments where families are valued and respected.

At the Agency and at Provider homes, children are viewed as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. The Child Care and Early Years Act and the document *How Does Learning Happen?* guide our philosophy in all of our interactions with children, families, Providers and staff. With the regulations, principals and pedagogy in these documents, we commit to the following:

a. Children shall always feel and be safe and welcomed in their program. Children shall always be valued for who they are and their contributions to their program will be respected and appreciated. Their health, safety, nutrition and well-being in all areas are the first concern of Providers and staff. This will be met through:

- Constant supervision of children;
- A mixture of announced and unannounced home visits by our Home Visitor, as required by the Ministry of Education;
- Nutritious meals and snacks are provided as set out in the Health Canada documents "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide", "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide – First Nations, Inuit and Métis" or "Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants;"
- A variety of learning experiences based on children's interest and abilities;
- Inclusion of children with special needs;
- All Providers, Back-up Providers and Agency staff trained in standard first aid with infant and child CPR;
- Warm and caring interaction and;

- A holistic view of the child that fosters well-being, belonging, expression and engagement.

b. Interactions among children, parents, Providers and Agency staff and students will always be positive and responsive. This will be accomplished by:
    - Using a tone of voice that is calm and nurturing;
    - Listening to each other;
    - Helping children identify their emotions;
    - Encouraging families to participate in the program and;
    - Respecting individual differences.

c. Children shall be encouraged to interact and communicate in a positive way. Children will also be supported in their ability to self-regulate. We will model and encourage positive interactions through:
    - Using positive reinforcement;
    - Guiding children through problem solving;
    - Actively listen to children and model appropriate empathy and;
    - Providing environments that encourage children to express themselves in positive ways.

d. Children's natural curiosity and development will be fostered through exploration, play and inquiry. This will be accomplished by:
    - Providing a variety of experiences for children through hands-on learning and various types of play (sensory, gross-motor, fine-motor, quiet, loud, social, solitary, etc.);
    - Providing resources based on the children's interests;
    - Guiding children with open-ended questions to encourage inquiry;
    - Providing flexibility in daily routines and activities to allow children to continue their exploration at their own pace;

- Focus on process, not product, and;
- Provider observations and documentation.

e. Providers and Agency staff will provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences. We shall:
    - Play with the children at their level while maintaining supervision of all children;
    - Engage with the children as co-learners and use the environment as a third teacher;
    - Provide resources for children based on their interests and natural curiosity and;
    - Observe and document children's interests and create experiences based on those observations.

f. Providers and Agency staff will plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported.
    - Providers will be offered support and training to understand children's individual abilities and appropriate developmental milestones.
    - Homes will have a variety of toys and equipment available to support each child's needs and interests. Providers will also be encouraged and supported to include resources that show multiculturalism.
    - Individual Support Plans for children with special needs will be developed to ensure they are able to meet their full potential, their individual needs are met and they can engage in each program in a meaningful way.
    - Providers will support children as they engage in manageable levels of risk taking to strengthen their sense of self, competence and development of self-help skills.

g. Indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time will be incorporated into the day with consideration given to the individual

needs and abilities of the children in care. This will be met through:

- A minimum of two hours outside play time per day (weather permitting);
- A minimum sleep, rest or quiet period of one hour per day;
- Encouraging families to share their knowledge of their children's needs and interests;
- A variety of gross and fine motor experiences and;
- A flexible daily schedule that is enriched with positive learning experiences to meet the children's developmental and individual needs.

h. Providers and Agency staff will foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.
    - Families will be welcomed into the program every day and consulted regarding their child's needs, including, but not limited to sleep, food, preferences, etc.
    - Families are encouraged to ask questions regarding their children's care.
    - Providers will communicate with families regarding their children's day in care.
    - Providers are encouraged to document children's experiences and share with families. Some methods of communication encouraged are individual and closed Provider Child Care Facebook pages, using documentation tools such as Seesaw, taking pictures throughout the day and documenting the children's learning.

i. Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff.
    - Providers are encouraged to have community partners come into their homes to educate the children and/or visit local

partners (fire station, local legions, music stores, etc.).

- Providers are encouraged to visit local Libraries and Ontario EarlyON programs.
- Agency staff will provide resources and information on local partners to Providers and parents and encourage Providers and children to utilize supports as required, i.e. Speech and language supports, local health unit, etc.
- Resource teachers will be encouraged to participate in Provider homes as required.

j. Support staff, Providers, students and others who interact with children at a Provider's home to engage in continuous professional learning. This will be accomplished by:
    - Encouraging Providers, Back-Up Providers, Students, etc. to attend District of Muskoka offered workshops and training.
    - Throughout the year the Provides will be able to engage in professional learning and appreciation days organized by the MHCCA.
    - Providing information on training opportunities that occur locally, provincially, web-based, etc.

k. Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families.
    - The Program Statement and relevant Policies and Procedures will be reviewed annually with Providers, Back-up Providers, persons normally resident or regularly present in the home, staff and students. The Program Statement and Policies will be reviewed with all new Providers, staff, etc. before interacting with children or at any time when the Program Statement or Policies have been modified.

- The Agency will provide opportunities for families and Providers to give feedback on the Program statement through surveys, conversations, annual training day (Providers), etc.

l. All Home Child Care Providers and District of Muskoka employees will engage in a courteous and kind manner in the home and in public spaces, by conducting themselves to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. This will be demonstrated by:
    - Respecting and complying with all applicable licencing requirements of the District of Muskoka and the Ministry of Ontario;
    - Demonstrating honesty and integrity in their interactions with children, parents, Providers, Managers, Home Visitors, and all other agencies' staff and professionals;
    - Respecting differences in people, their ideas, and opinions;
    - Treating all others with dignity and respect at all times, even when disagreeing;
    - By respecting and treating all others equally, regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability and;
    - By respecting the rights of others.

Appendix B

PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the home child care agency licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each home child care agency it operates (i.e. the Muskoka Home Child Care Agency).

Home Child Care Provider: The individual with which the home child care agency has established an agreement for the provision of child care in their home premises.

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. Manager or Home Visitor).

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our Muskoka Home Child Care Agency and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our staff and home child care Providers. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care Providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our Home Visitors are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All formal issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the MHCCA and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Formal issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. Home Visitors will be required to make written notes about concerns to be placed in the child's file. The level of

detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, home child care Providers, other persons in the home child care premises, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities and/or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

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

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

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per

the “Duty to Report” requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.

For more information, visit http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx

Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the MHCCA Manager.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 must be reported to the Ministry of Education’s Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

<table>
<tr><th>Nature of Issue or Concern</th><th>Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:</th><th>Steps for Provider, Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:</th></tr>
<tr><td>Program-Related

E.g.: schedule, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, menus, etc.</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to

- the home child care Provider directly

or

- the Home Visitor and/or licensee.</td><td rowspan="3">- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised; or

- arrange for a meeting or teleconference with the parent/guardian within two business days.

Document the issues/concerns in detail.

Documentation should include:

- the date and time the issue/concern was received;

- the name of the person who received the issue/concern;

- the name of the person reporting the issue/concern;

- the details of the issue/concern; and

- any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</td></tr>
<tr><td>General, Agency- or Operations-Related

E.g.: fees, placement, etc.</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to:

- the Home Visitor or licensee.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Provider-, Staff- and/or Licensee-Related

E.g.: conduct of Provider, Home Visitor, agency head office staff, etc.</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to

- the individual directly

or

- the licensee.

All issues or concerns about the conduct of the Provider or staff that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the agency head office as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</td></tr>
</table>

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Provider, Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Related to Other Persons at the Home Premises	Raise the issue or concern to - the home child care Provider directly or - the Home Visitor and/or licensee All issues or concerns about the conduct of other persons in a home child care premises that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the agency head office as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter. Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within two business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing. Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.
Student- / Volunteer-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the person responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or - the Home Visitor and/or licensee. **Note:** All issues or concerns about the conduct of students/volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the agency head office as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	

Appendix C

BEST PRACTICES FOR SUCCESSFUL INTERACTIONS

Children are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential. They come together in families with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. Every child should feel that he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor to his or her surroundings, and deserves the opportunity to succeed. When we recognize children as capable and curious, we are more likely to deliver programs and services that value and build on their strengths and abilities.

> Viewing children as active participants in their own development and learning allows care providers to move beyond preconceived expectations about what children should be learning, and focus on what they are learning" (CMEC, 2012).
>
> In the Think, Feel, Act, Document children learn best in an environment that focuses on relationships, and that if kids are strongly connected to their care providers, they will learn more and have less challenging behaviours. (TFA.2013)

Simple Ways to Build Connections:

Things we can do are simple, but we need to make them more intentional. Here are some examples of ways to build connections modified from the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (Ostrosky, M. M. & Jung, E. Y., 2010):

- Be at the child's level for face-to-face interactions.
- Use a pleasant, calm voice and simple language while making eye contact.
- Provide warm, responsive physical contact.
- Follow the child's lead and interest during play.
- Help children understand your expectations by providing simple but clear explanations (not by directing).

- Take the time to engage children in the process of resolving problems and conflicts, rather than reiterating program rules.
- When children's behavior is challenging and disruptive, think about where and how they might have more success and redirect them there.
- Foster thoughtfulness and caring by listening to children and by encouraging them to listen to others and share ideas.
- Be genuine in acknowledging children for their accomplishments and effort by clearly saying what it is they have done well.

Beyond these specific strategies; adults can speed up the process of relationship-building by:

- Carefully analyzing each compliance task (e.g., "time to go to paints") and shifting that compliance task to a choice for children (e.g., "Do you want to paint or do puzzles?"); and
- Carefully considering if some forms of "challenging" behavior can be ignored (e.g., loud voice)—this is not ignoring behavior designed to elicit attention but ignoring in the sense of making wise and limited choices about when to pick battles over behaviour. When there is more connection, there is less need for correction and directing. (TFA 2013)
- Children may at times, present challenging behaviours to their parents and caregivers. This is not uncommon as children use their behavior to explore limits and rules. When dealing with challenging behaviours, be patient with the child.

For a child to have successful interactions within a Home Child Care Program, Providers need follow these three steps as outlined Dr. Stuart Shanker in his paper (found within Think, Feel, Act 2013), Calm, Alert, Happy:

The Three Key Steps to Self-Regulation

1. The first step is to reduce the child's overall stress level. This can be as simple as making sure the child is well-slept, getting nutritious foods, and lots of exercise; turning off the radio or the TV in the

background if we suspect that our child is sensitive to noise; or limiting the amount of time spent on computer or video games if these seem to leave the child agitated. Sometimes a weighted object can make a child feel grounded and calm, like a bean filled stuffy or heavy blanket.

2. The second step is to become aware of what it feels like to be calmly focused and alert, and what it feels like to be hypo- or hyper-aroused. A large number of Canadian children lack this basic aspect of self-awareness. At group time, practice slow breaths in and out so that when they are stressed they can use this technique (with Provider guidance) to calm themselves.
3. The third step is to teach children what sorts of things they need to do in order to return to being calmly focused and alert and what sorts of experiences they may need to manage or even avoid. The Provider must be observant and help the child verbalize their feelings. Once a feeling is recognized as to what it does to our bodies, then a child can apply the calming strategies to help them feel relaxed, calm and safe.

Maintain a positive approach to successful interactions

Building a relationship with children has many aspects. It involves caring about the child, respecting the child and her/his rights, trusting the child and teaching the child to be responsible for her/himself. The way in which the Provider deals with behavioural challenges will influence the atmosphere in the home. The Provider's role is to guide the child, and to help her/him learn to self-regulate and identify her/his emotions while understanding clear and concise expectations. This not only takes patience and caring but also relies on the Provider to co-regulate with the child. Providers must model and teach techniques that will assist the child to grow and develop as a healthy individual.

Encouraged Practices:

a) Redirect the child(ren) to another activity when undesirable behaviour occurs. This is one of the most useful techniques when dealing with children of toddler age or younger. Provide time announcements to let children know a transition is approaching, i.e. “In 5 minutes children, we will get ready for outside time”. Provide as many as needed for the child. For those children experiencing adverse behaviours or stress during transition times, it may be helpful to have a visual schedule so that the child sees what is coming up next to help alleviate their anxiety.

b) Give logical and natural consequences, appropriate to the developmental level of the child. For example: If a child tears a page out of a book, let the child know they cannot look at the books for an appropriate length of time.

c) Establish clear, **consistent** and simple limits:

Offer straight forward explanations for limits.
For example, “Please walk up the stairs because you might fall if you run.”
State limits in a positive, rather than a negative way. For example: “Please colour on the paper.” Instead of “Do not colour on the table.” Focus on the behaviour, rather than the child. The child is not undesirable, the behaviour is.
Make statements of expectation, rather than pose questions. For example: “We do not hit our friends.” Rather than, “We do not hit our friends, okay?”

d) Offer appropriate choices. For example; If a toddler is prone to biting people when upset, have an infant teething toy available for him/her to bite on instead.

e) Anticipate trouble and plan to avoid difficult situations. Know when to step in and to

take action before the child does behave inappropriately.

f) Reinforce appropriate behaviour with words and gestures. For example: “That was excellent turn taking.”

g) Remind the child(ren) of the rules and expected behaviour. For example: Read stories about acts of kindness or being helpful.

h) A time-in is utilized when a child needs time to compose themselves so they can voice their emotions. The Provider will sit with the child and allow them the necessary time (a few minutes, dependent on age) to regain their composure. This time-in will then allow for a discussion about the situation and what options the child has to resolve the issue.

The Successful Interactions Policy shall be discussed with both Providers and parents. Parents will sign a written statement as part of the registration process acknowledging their understanding of the Best Practices for Successful Interactions Policy that will remain in the child’s file.

The Home Visitor shall monitor and record types of Positive Interaction Strategies (Behaviour Guidance) used within the Child Care Homes during visits.

APPENDIX D: RATES TYPE of CARE	CODE	HOURS	BASE FEE	FEE REDUCTION portion (age 0-5*, up to June of the year the child turns 6)	Rate of Child Care space
Under age 2	U	Up to 10 Hours	$20.79	$23.21	$44.00
Preschool	P	Up to 10 Hours	$17.95	$20.05	$38.00
JK/SK Age, Full Day (age 0-5*)	K	6-10 Hours	$17.01	$18.99	$36.00
Before School (age 0-5*)	B1	Less than 3 Hours	$12.00	$1.00	$13.00
After Achool (age 0-5*)	A1	Less than 3 Hours	$12.00	$1.00	$13.00
Before and After School (age 0-5*)	BA1	Less than 3 Hours Each (BF&AS)	$12.29	$13.71	$26.00
Extended Before School (age 0-5*)	EB1	3 to less than 6 Hours	$12.00	$10.00	$22.00
Extended After School (age 0-5*)	EA1	3 to less than 6 Hours	$12.00	$10.00	$22.00
Weekend (age 0-5*)	W1	Up to 10 Hours	$22.00	$34.00	$56.00
Extended Hours (age 0-5*)	EH1	Over 10-23 Hours	$22.00	$29.00	$51.00
Extended Weekend/Overnights (age 0-5*)	EWO1	Over 10-23 Hours	$22.00	$39.00	$61.00
Provider Early Closure (no lunch, age 0-5*)	C1	Less than 6 Hours	$12.00	$10.00	$22.00
Provider Early Closure (with lunch, age 0-5*)	CL1	Less than 6 Hours	$12.29	$13.71	$26.00
Age 6-12 full day	S	6-10 Hours	$33.00	n/a	$33.00
Before School (age 6-12)	B2	Less than 3 Hours	$13.00	n/a	$13.00
After School (age 6-12)	A2	Less than 3 Hours	$13.00	n/a	$13.00
Before and After School (age 6-12)	BA2	Less than 3 Hours Each (BF&AS)	$26.00	n/a	$26.00
Extended Before School (age 6-12)	EB2	3 to less than 6 Hours	$22.00	n/a	$22.00
Extended After School (age 6-12)	EA2	3 to less than 6 Hours	$22.00	n/a	$22.00
Weekend (age 6-12)	W2	Up to 10 Hours	$56.00	n/a	$56.00
Extended Hours (age 6-12)	EH2	Over 10-23 Hours	$51.00	n/a	$51.00
Extended Weekend/Overnights (age 6-12)	EWO2	Over 10-23 Hours	$61.00	n/a	$61.00
Provider Early Closure (no lunch, age 6-12)	C2	Less than 6 Hours	$22.00	n/a	$22.00
Provider Early Closure (with lunch, age 6-12)	CL2	Less than 6 Hours	$26.00	n/a	$26.00

Appendix E

Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care Plan – Base Fee

Included in Parent Base Fee	Excluded from Parent Base Fee
Play materials, equipment, and furnishings: cot, crib, bedding, play materials	Late pick up fees for child care provided beyond operational hours outlined in the family contract. These are specific to each child care home.
Supervision by adult during operational hours	NSF Fines $25.00
Development and implementation of individualized plans (Medical, special needs, anaphylaxis)	Field Trips - dependent
Registration fee, deposits, administration fees – any fees that are mandatory for a parent to pay to receive child care	Transportation (if optional)
Food	Diapers, sunscreen (if optional)

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Accepting a child into care

The home child care provider is responsible for signing children in on the attendance record as children arrive at the home premises where care is provided.

The home child care provider is responsible for ensuring any communication from parents/guardians related to drop-off or absences is noted on the daily written record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the home child care premises and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off or that the child will be absent (e.g., left a voice message or advised the home child care provider at pick-up) the home child care provider must:
   - contact the child's parent/guardian no later than 30 minutes after their Family Contract arrival time. Home child care providers shall call, text or email the parent/guardian, two attempts to contact the parent or guardian, and then leave a message.
   - If the home child care provider is not able to reach any parent/guardian to confirm the child's absence from care, please contact the home child care visitor.

2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, the home child care provider shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

70 Pine Street, Bracebridge, Ontario P1L 1N3
www.muskoka.on.ca

Phone: 705-645-2100
Fax: 705-645-2207

Phone: 705-645-2412
Fax: 705-645-4272

Releasing a child from care

The home child care provider shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or another individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child may be released to.

Where the home child care provider does not know the individual picking up the child, the home child care provider must 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 provided by parent/guardian.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected

1. Where a parent or guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived within an hour of the designated pick up time. The home child care provider shall offer the child a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. The home child care provider shall contact the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the home child care provider will contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.

3. Where the home child care provider is the person contacting the parent/guardian and they have been unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the home child care provider shall contact the home child care visitor/ home child care manager.

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4. Where the home child care provider, home visitor, manager, is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., emergency contacts) by 7:00pm , the home child care provider shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society [Simcoe Muskoka 1-800-461-4236]. The home provider shall follow CAS's direction with respect to next steps. The home child care provider shall also advise the home child care visitor and manager.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

Where a parent/guardian has provided written and signed authorization for their child to be released from care without supervision, the home child care provider must be responsible for dismissing the child from care. Prior to dismissing the child from care, the home child care provider shall review the written instructions for release provided by the parent/guardian and release the child at the time set out in the instructions. The home child care provider shall document the time of departure from care and as well as their initials on the attendance record.

Thank you for referencing our Family Handbook. We hope that we have answered any questions you may have has and that you have a fulsome understanding of the quality programming we offer.

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