

YONGE HEARTS CHILD CARE CENTRE PROGRAM STATEMENT

As part of providing a quality program we are following the regulations of the *Child Care and Early Years Act 2014. How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years 2014* (HDLH) is used as a guideline for licensed child care programs. HDLH views children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. The foundations of learning are belonging, well-being, engagement and expression. For more information on this please go to <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/pedagogy.html>.

At Yonge Hearts we believe that children learn through play. It is through play that they have the opportunity to initiate their own experiences, engage in communication with their peers and staff and explore different materials provided in the environment. Yonge Hearts has the following goals and approaches to meeting the needs of all the children in the centre:

PROMOTE HEALTH, SAFETY, NUTRITION

At Yonge Hearts we strive to provide an environment that is safe and hygienic. Public Health policies and procedures, such as Hand Washing, Diapering, Toileting, are posted and followed by staff and children throughout the centre.

IMMUNIZATION

Upon enrolment at the centre all children must submit an up-to-date immunization record. If a child is not being immunized then an exemption form from Toronto Public Health must be submitted. In this case, if there is a communicable disease outbreak then it is the parent's responsibility to find alternate care arrangements until the outbreak is over. For more information on communicable diseases please see resource bins outside of the rooms.

WHEN YOUR CHLD IS ILL DURING THE NIGHT

If your child is ill during the night (high fever, vomiting and/or diarrhoea, etc) please phone the Centre the next morning to advise us that your child will be absent due to illness. Your child must be symptom free for 24 hours before he/she can return.

WHEN A CHILD BECOMES ILL AT THE CENTRE

Group care is not a good environment for children who are ill. If your child is not well enough to participate in all aspects of the program, your child is not well enough to attend. Under Public Health Regulations, staff are required to perform a daily health check on each child as they arrive. Centre staff, because of their familiarity with the children are quickly aware of changes in appearance or behaviour of the children. Therefore, the staff are frequently the first to detect the earliest signs of possible communicable disease or illness. The Centre is required to document, notify the parent and possibly exclude children who are ill in order to prevent the spread of contagious disease or illness. If your child develops a high fever and/or vomiting and/or

diarrhoea three times in a day, you must pick up your child as soon as possible. In addition, your child must be symptom free for 24 hours before they can return to care.

Whenever a child shows any of the following signs of illness, we will call you to inform you of the illness and let you know if your child needs to be picked up immediately:

Abnormal temperature 101 Farenheit / 38 Celcius
Earache (pulling at ear)
Thick yellow mucus discharge
Alarming cough
Upset stomach – vomiting
Extreme lethargy
Discharge from eyes/ears
Diarrhoea
Swollen neck glands
Unexplained rash
Behaviours that may indicate that your child is unwell

In the event of an extreme emergency, when a parent is not immediately available, a child may be sent to hospital in an ambulance (accompanied by a staff member). If non-emergency care is required (example – stitches) and parents cannot be reached, a taxi will be used as a means of transport to the hospital.

CHILD RETURNING AFTER AN ILLNESS

If your child has been diagnosed as having a communicable disease, the Public Health Department has set quarantine periods that we are required to enforce. A copy of these regulations is available in each room and in the office.

If your doctor diagnoses an ear or throat infection, for example and has put your child on medication, you are required to keep your child home for a minimum of 24 hours after your child's temperature has returned to normal. This is also the case if your child is vomiting or has diarrhoea. They must be symptom free for 24 hours before they can return to the Centre.

MEDICATION

The centre is **ONLY ALLOWED TO ADMINISTER PRESCRIBED MEDICATION**. A Medication Form must be filled out and signed by the parent before we can dispense any medicine to a child. The medication must be in the original container with the child's name, name of the medicine, dosage, date of purchase, and instructions on the label.

Over the counter drugs (example – Tempra) can be administered only when accompanied by a current doctor's note (within one year). For safety reasons, medications are kept in locked containers. All medications are returned to parents when completed.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents must make other arrangements for their children when they are ill. As a working parent this is not always easy; therefore, we ask you to make alternate arrangements in advance with a neighbour, friend, grandparents, or other persons. Equally important, we require that you

provide us with an alternate emergency telephone number so that when a parent cannot be reached, the emergency substitute can pick the child up.

SMOKING

Yonge Hearts is a non-smoking facility. Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the property.

WASHROOM ROUTINE

Staff and children will follow Public Health policies and procedures as it relates to changing diapers and using the washroom. Children will be accompanied to the washroom by a staff. Each child will wash his/her hands after being changed and/or using the washroom and prior to eating. Change pads and toilet seats will be cleaned with a disinfectant after each diaper change and toilet routine by the staff.

COTS AND SHEETS

Cots, cribs and sheets are not shared; each child has his/her own. Cribs and cots will be cleaned with a disinfectant once a week. All sheets are washed on the premises weekly or as needed. Infant, Toddler and Preschool blankets are sent home every Friday to be laundered and are to be returned the following Monday.

GENERAL CLEANING

Toys and equipment in the rooms are cleaned and disinfected as required. Professionals clean the Centre at the end of each day. During the day, floors are swept as required.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Monthly fire drills are held to ensure that all staff and children understand the routine and the importance of fire safety. The Director is responsible for taking attendance once the children are outside the building. Children will exit the centre from the same doors during each fire drill in order to maintain consistency. Regulation fire signs with procedures are posted in each room in the centre. All doors leading outside are properly labelled “exit” doors. Each fire pull station, as well as the front lobby, have the emergency evacuation site address posted for reference.
North York Central Library – 5120 Yonge Street

GENERAL NUTRITION

Yonge Hearts provides a catered breakfast, hot lunch and two afternoon snacks. Breakfast is usually cereals, multigrain breads, waffles, etc. served with milk and fruit. The afternoon snacks have a little more variety: vegetable sticks and dip, yogurts, pizza buns, etc. served with water. The caterers provide lunches that are prepared fresh everyday and include a balance of proteins and other essential nutrients

The Centre does not allow “outside food” to be brought in by parents, with the exception of the food for infants. Parents should advise the Centre of any allergies or dietary restrictions for their child/children. Where severe restrictions prevent the child from following the regular menu, alternate arrangements should be discussed with the Director.

Meal times are pleasant and enjoyable times for the children. We encourage the children to taste all of the foods offered. This is also a time when there is open discussion about the day's activities and the food that is being offered. The menus for the current and upcoming weeks are posted on the bulletin board outside of each room.

INFANT FOOD

Parents supply infants with formula and baby food until they are on regular food. Please label all bottles and food. We supply 2% and homogenized milk. There may be a transition period when some meals provided by the centre are appropriate with modification (ground or finely cut). If the catered food is not appropriate, parents may provide "Junior Food" for their child. Please discuss your child/children's dietary needs with the staff.

SUPPORT POSITIVE AND RESPONSIVE INTERACTIONS

CODE OF CONDUCT

We have the right to feel safe and comfortable in our centre. The Yonge Hearts Code of Conduct sets clear standards of behaviour that apply to all individuals in our centre including children, parents or guardians, volunteers, teachers and/or Board members. These standards apply whether they are on the centre property or at centre-sponsored events and activities.

All members of the centre are to be treated with respect and dignity regardless of sex, race, creed, sexual orientation, disability or any other ground protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

All adult members have a responsibility to act as role models for appropriate behaviour in and around the centre. Everyone should be greeted as they come into the centre and into the rooms. Adults including staff and parents should role model good manners. Foul language (swearing, name calling, shouting, being disrespectful) is not appropriate; therefore, individuals engaging in such behaviour will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

Inappropriate behaviour or harassment of any kind towards a child, student, parent or staff will result in immediate intervention up to and including the family's expulsion from the centre and/or police intervention. This type of behaviour includes but is not limited to harassment or intimidation by written note, e-mail, words, gestures and/or body language.

ENCOURAGE POSITIVE COMMUNICATION AND SELF-REGULATION

Throughout the day children are provided with opportunities to engage in play with others. During this time staff are able to encourage appropriate interactions while playing with them. Staff in the centre model positive verbal and non-verbal communication for the children. Children are encouraged to greet others and use their manners, for example, saying "please" and "thank you".

In times of conflict between children, staff will encourage children to describe their feelings and label others emotions. Infant and toddler guidance techniques typically involve labeling feelings and redirecting children's attention or making choices. Preschool guidance techniques may be more complex and involve describing feelings as well as trying to negotiate and problem solve.

The staff at the centre try to encourage children to through self-help skills to develop an appropriate level of independence. For example, infants can use walkers to practice walking, toddlers are trying to serve their own food and preschoolers are trying to dress themselves. During this time staff are guiding and encouraging children through a step by step process. Children also have the opportunity to describe how they are feeling about the process. During planned experiences and spontaneous play children are able to make choices, for example, decide who they want to play with, what materials they would like to use and how to use the materials.

FOSTER EXPLORATION, PLAY AND INQUIRY

One of the four foundations of learning in *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, is engagement. It states the following:

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 (Page 7).

We provide a varied and stimulating programme that meets the developmental needs of the individual child as well as the whole group. There are a variety of materials available in the rooms and on the playground for children to explore and play. The staff at Yonge Hearts plan weekly programs that is based on the observations of the children and related to the *Early Learning for Every Child Today Framework (ELECT)*.

For children, play is the way they learn about themselves and their world. Therefore, we believe in and are committed to a play based programme. Through play, children begin to master fundamental concepts – social, emotional, physical and intellectual. The staff are available to the children when they have questions and the staff help research or guide children in the right direction.

Each program plan is completed; however, each day there is opportunity and space to write in any changes as the children's interest may change throughout the day/week. This allows children and staff to be engaged in spontaneous play and inquiry.

CHILD-INITIATED EXPERIENCES AND ADULT SUPPORT

Children are observed frequently. Based on the observations the staff develop a program plan that includes individualized experiences. This allows the child to work on a specific skill. Staff also provide additional experiences to peak children's interests, such as science experiments.

Children's individualized experience plans are included on the weekly program plan. Rooms are set up in advance by the staff to allow children to explore as soon as they enter the room. Staff reinforce and help children with the process of learning. Children are praised for all attempts at learning and developing new skills.

Program plans are completed weekly, are diverse and include: creative experiences, circle time, language and literacy, sensory, science, dramatic play, cognitive experiences, block play, sleep time with wake up experiences and outdoor play which happens twice a day for an hour (weather permitting).

In addition to the experiences that are available through the program plan there are also other materials that the children have available to them. This allows children to initiate play and make choices about how to play.

PLAN FOR POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT

Children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems, and make meaning from their experiences – especially when the spaces contain interesting and complex open-ended materials that children can use in many ways. *How Does Learning Happen ? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (Page 20).*

The staff at the centre do a written observation of the children each week. Staff use these observations along with the *ELECT* to plan a program that meets children's individual needs and skills, as well as, a program that meets the needs of children as a group. The program plans cover a wide range of experiences in different areas of development. Every week when you review the program plan you will see your child's initial and the skill from the *ELECT* which they are working on.

Each child has his/her own portfolio in each room. Once a month staff review the portfolio with the parents. The portfolio contains art, photos, observations and/or developmental checklists that shows what skills children have been working on for the month and is based on the *ELECT*. A parent will sign-off on the portfolio at least monthly.

VARIETY OF EXPERIENCES THROUGHOUT THE DAY

THE CHILDREN PARTICIPATE IN MANY EXPERIENCES THROUGHOUT THE DAY:

COGNITIVE

Cognitive experiences and materials may include: letters, numbers, counting, matching, sorting, math concepts, cause and effect, reading readiness, puzzles, cooperative games, lacing, etc.

LANGUAGE

Variety of books, mediums, CD stories, felts, puppets, writing materials are available to the children and incorporated throughout the rooms.

SCIENCE EXPLORATION

Science exploration includes: magnets, learning about animals, experiments, weighing, measuring, planting seeds, bug catchers, magnifiers, view bottles, nature exploration, etc.

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Children have an array of materials available to them such as, crayons, markers, pastels, pencils, different textured paper, paints, brushes, sponges, pompoms, glue, magazines, rubbing plates, loose parts, multicultural items, etc. The staff provide children with smocks to wear during art experiences, but sometimes children do get dirty!

CIRCLES, MUSIC, DRAMA, PUPPETRY, AND STORIES

Circles can be a time for discussion, stories, cooperative games, experiments, singing and much more. Children get to use their imagination playing instruments, dressing up, role playing with puppets and babies, listening to CD stories, making their own stories with felts, etc.

BLOCK PLAY

Children have the opportunity to use their imagination and construct a variety of objects using different textured blocks and building materials. Block play may also include cars, trucks, train tracks, Lego, people, books, workshop with tools, etc.

SENSORY ACTIVITIES

Sensory includes: sand, water, clay, cornmeal, cooking, play dough, pasta, beans, potato flakes, etc. Sensory activities allow children to explore their senses.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

The centre is required to plan outdoor activities twice per day for one hour, weather permitting. We feel that this is an important part of our programme. If a child is not well enough to take part in all aspects of our program, including outdoor play, other arrangements should be made for that day, as we are not equipped to supervise the children apart from their group.

Outdoor play improves general overall health, stimulates the appetite, and helps prepare children for sound sleep. Please send appropriate clothing to ensure your child enjoys outdoor play. Please provide extra mittens, hats, and at least one extra pair of socks in case your child gets wet. In warm weather, we request that you provide a sunhat and sunscreen.

OFF PREMISE ACTIVITIES

During the spring, summer and fall there are times when the children will leave the centre. Parents are always notified in advanced and there are opportunities for parents to volunteer. Off premise outings for infants may include walks in the stroller to Gibson Park or Mel Lastman Square. Toddlers may go for short nature walks. Preschool children go to the North York Centre Library, Dempsey Park, Farmers Market and pumpkin picking in the fall. Notification and permission forms for off premise activities will be put in each child's cubby prior to the activity.

COMMUNICATION

Staff communicate with families on a daily basis. We encourage the participation of families into the program by making suggestions for programming, bringing in recycled materials, being a part of our monthly enrichment programs, attending community events and joining the Board of Directors.

It is in the best interest of the child for the parents and staff to communicate on a daily basis. It is important that we know whether your child had a restless night and is tired, or you have moved to a new house, or Grandma is in town, because these changes will show up in a child's behaviour and we like to know why a child seems overly excited, or is having a "down" day. Similarly, it is important that you know what kind of day your child had. We will endeavour to keep you informed.

We publish newsletters approximately every three months. We like to keep you up-to-date on the Centre's affairs. We welcome your input and suggestions.

Daily record sheets are sent home for the infants and toddlers. Monthly calendars are published for the toddlers and preschool groups. Portfolios for each child are signed off monthly.

Please check the bulletin board outside your child's room. We post all programming information and special events. Resource bins outside of the rooms and office have pertinent articles and health information/updates. From time to time, notices or letters are posted on the front door of the centre or placed in your child's cubby. Please read these and respond as necessary. At Yonge Hearts we are trying to be environmentally friendly. We can also communicate with you through email.

If you have a suggestion or concern, please feel free to speak with any of the staff or the Director. There is also a locked box outside of the office that you can leave a message or suggestion in. If you feel that your concern has not been adequately addressed after speaking with the Director, you may wish to contact the President of the Board of Directors. His/her number is available on the bulletin board outside the office.

Please provide any changes of address, home phone number or work information to the Director. Also, please keep the centre informed of any immunizations that your child receives.

COMMUNITY

Yonge Hearts incorporates community partners into the program as well. Seeing that the centre is very close to the North York Central Library the centre is well connected. We take children over for special programs or sometimes the librarians come over to the centre for story time.

In the spring and summer children are able to walk over to the Farmer's Market at Mel Lastman Square. They purchase fruits and/or vegetables and they learn where honey comes from.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Enrichment program takes place at least monthly. People in the community, parents at the centre and sometimes the staff present a special program to the children. For example, having a Yoga session, a parent coming in to play the violin, a staff member reading stories in another language, etc.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The centre provides staff and families with the means to attend and participate in training sessions and workshops. A large majority of the staff at Yonge Hearts are Registered Early Childhood Educators in good standing with the college. All staff are trained in Standard First Aid and Infant CPR C Level. The kitchen staff has a Food Handler Certificate and there is at least one other staff in the centre with the same certification. Staff at the centre are required to go to training at least once per year.

There are training opportunities available to families outside of the centre. When available they are posted on the front door and put in the resource bins outside of the office and rooms. On occasion some parents may participate in staff trainings with the approval of the Director.

CENTRE EVALUATION

Yonge Hearts is constantly striving to improve. We welcome any comments and suggestions that parents may have. The staff are open to ideas that help contribute to the program plan for the week. Parents also have the opportunity to join the Board of Directors where they can bring up concerns about how the centre is run. Any other general concerns can be left in the Drop-Box/Suggestion Box that is outside of the office.

PROHIBITED PRACTICES

Child Care and Early Years Act 2014

No licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving child care at a child care centre it operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of child care,

- (a) corporal punishment of the child;
- (b) deliberate use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- (c) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding;
- (d) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.
- (e) locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child; or using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;

(f) physically restraining a child as in 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 the child from hurting himself.

This Program Statement will be available to anyone that comes into the centre, reviewed before the commencement of employment or volunteering, reviewed annually for changes, reviewed annually with staff, students and volunteers and used as a means to document its effect on families.

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CONTRAVENTION OF PROHIBITED PRACTICES

1. Anyone observing or hearing a prohibited practice being used shall immediately report to the Centre's Director or, in her absence, the designate. The reporter, or anyone else having knowledge of the incident shall maintain the strictest confidentiality and the incident shall only be discussed further with the Director.
2. The Director will complete a written, objective account of the verbal report, to be signed by the person reporting.
3. The Director will immediately advise the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the report. The Director will also determine if the Children's Aid Society (or appropriate agency) should be notified. Subject to the involvement of C.A.S., the Executive Committee will determine the appropriate course of action, including whether an internal investigation will take place and whether the Province and City of Toronto should be informed.
4. An investigation may require observation, private discussion with the staff involved, and in some cases, other staff. Complete documentation will be part of the investigation process. In some cases, it may be necessary to suspend the employee during the investigation, prior to disclosure of the complaint to the employee.
5. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, several courses of action are possible:
 - If the investigation is inconclusive, the Director will continue to monitor the activity of the employee providing further documentation.
 - If the investigation proves that the initial report was unfounded, no further action will be taken.
 - If the Director finds the report to be based on fact, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the severity of the situation.

- If the Director is reported to be using a prohibited practice, the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee will conduct the investigation and take appropriate action.
 - The Board of Directors will make all final decisions regarding suspension and payment of salary while under suspension.
6. In severe situations, the Director may immediately suspend an employee. Immediately after such a suspension, the Director shall advise the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. If there is evidence that indicates that harsh discipline was used, or that a child was sexually abused in any way, the employee will be dismissed immediately. The reason for the dismissal will be noted in the employee's personnel file and notification will be sent to the Province and Toronto Children's Services.
 7. In less severe situations, the employee will be interviewed by the Director and a representative of the Board of Directors. The employee will be placed on probation and encouraged to develop positive practices through self development and/or training.
The employee will be advised in writing at the time of the interview that prohibited practices must not be used, stating specific practices. This written advise will form part of the employee's personnel file.
 8. If a second instance of the use of the prohibited practice is substantiated, the employee will be dismissed. The reason for the dismissal will be noted on the employee's record and depending on circumstances, written advice may be sent to the Province and Toronto Children's Services.

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