



# Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre

## Parent Handbook



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## 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 provincial 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 and develop through play. It is through play that children can 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:

- 1. To promote the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of everyone in the centre.**

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

- 2. To support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff.**

At Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre, we want the children, parents, and staff to feel comfortable and to communicate in a positive manner. Everyone in the centre has a responsibility to act as role models by displaying appropriate behaviour. Children, parents, and staff are greeted politely as they come into the centre and into the rooms. Staff and parents should role model good manners including saying "please" and "thank you".

- 3. To engage in ongoing communication with families about the program and to encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self regulate.**

It is in the best interest of the child for the parents and staff to communicate daily. 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 checked and signed off monthly. The staff greet all families as they come into the room and communicate further through phone calls, notes on the cubbies, letters, seasonal newsletters, interviews, emails, etc.

Throughout the day children are provided with opportunities to engage in individual and group play allowing them to practice positive communication and self-regulation. Staff encourage appropriate interactions while engaging with children. Staff in the centre model positive verbal and non-verbal communication for the children, for example, smiling, waving, saying "please" and "thank you". Staff assist children through a step-by-step process for problem solving. Children can describe how they are feeling about the process. During planned experiences and spontaneous play children can make choices, for example, decide who they want to play with, what materials they would like to use and how to use the materials.

#### **4. To foster children's 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 are based on the observations of the children and related to the *Early Learning for Every Child Today Framework (ELECT)*.

#### **5. To provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences.**

Program plans are completed by staff weekly, they 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).

The staff set up the rooms so that planned experiences are ready for children to engage in and staff are able to support the children in these experiences. In addition to the



experiences that are available through the program plan there are also other materials that the staff make available to the children. This allows children the opportunity to initiate play and make choices about how to use materials provided.

**6. To plan for and create positive learning environment and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported.**

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 the children's initials 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*.

**7. Incorporate a variety of experiences, while considering individual needs throughout the day.**

The staff in each room encourage the children to participate in a variety of experiences throughout the day. The staff plan for children to participate in experiences in the following areas each day and/or weekly:

**COGNITIVE**

Cognitive experiences and materials may include letters, numbers, counting, matching, sorting, math concepts, cause, and effect, reading readiness, puzzles, cooperative games, problem solving, reasoning logically, etc.

**LANGUAGE**



Variety of books, mediums, CD stories, felt stories, 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 /OPEN-ENDED ART MATERIALS

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 while playing instruments, dressing up, role playing with puppets and babies, listening to CD stories, making their own stories with felts, etc.

### BLOCK PLAY

Children can 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.

#### **8. To involve the local community to support children, families, and staff.**

Yonge Hearts incorporates community partners into the program for the children. Seeing that the centre is very close to the North York Central Library we often have the librarians come over to the centre for story time. The librarians spend twenty to thirty minutes with all age groups reading stories, singing songs, etc.

In the spring and summer children can 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**

People in the community, parents at the centre and sometimes the staff present a special program to the children. Some examples of past enrichment programs include, having a Yoga session, a parent coming in to play the violin, a staff member reading stories in another language, etc.

#### **9. To support and provide continuous professional learning.**

The centre strives to provide staff and families with the means to attend and participate in training sessions and workshops. Every year the centre provides Standard First Aid and CPR C Level training for all staff at the centre. A training calendar is provided for all staff to pick any additional training opportunities that they are interested in.

When available the centre also posts training opportunities/workshops for families and Board Members. These are usually posted on the front door and/or 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.

#### **10. To evaluate the program and the centre as a whole in order to provide better care for children.**

Yonge Hearts is constantly striving to improve the quality of care provided. 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 can join the Board of



Directors where they can bring up concerns about how the centre is operating. 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) physical restraint of the child such as confining the child to a highchair, 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, herself or someone else, as is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
  - (c) locking the exits of the child care centre or 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 and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
  - (d) 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;
  - (e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
  - (f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will. 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.
- \*No employee or volunteer of the licensee, or student who is on an educational placement with the licensee, and no person who provides home child care or in-home services at a premises overseen by a home childcare agency shall engage in any of the prohibited practices set out in subsection (1) with respect to a child receiving childcare.\***

## **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.

## **Policies and General Information**

### **Sleep Supervision Policy and Procedures**

The purpose of this policy is to protect the safety and well-being of all children by ensuring they are monitored by an adult during sleep time while receiving child care. This policy will provide parents of children who regularly sleep at the child care centre information of the centre's policy and procedures regarding children's sleep. Upon registering a child at the centre, families will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about their child's current sleeping arrangements (times they sleep, sleep patterns, etc). This questionnaire is kept in the room in which the child is in attendance and is updated at the end of each month. Any observances of significant changes in a child's sleeping patterns or behaviours during sleep (for example, unusual behaviours or transitions between rooms) will be communicated to parents and could result in adjustments to the manner in which a child is supervised during sleep. Each child upon registration will be assigned a crib or cot labelled with his/her name on it, in accordance with the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, Ontario Regulation 137/15. All staff, students, and volunteers before commencing employment will review this policy. The policy will be reviewed annually and as needed.

### **Sleep Environment for Infants**

Each infant room has a separate sleep area. Sleep schedules are as per each infant's current sleeping arrangements at home. On the window outside of the sleep room there is a bulletin board called "Who is sleeping". When an infant is going to sleep in the sleep room their picture and name is placed on the bulletin board. Inside the infant sleep room, the lights are dimmed but there is sufficient lighting to do physical checks (every fifteen minutes). In the room there is also soft music playing. In the infant sleep room, each child's sleeping arrangements is posted on a bulletin board for staff to review and is documented in each child's portfolio. The infant rooms also have electronic monitoring devices so that they can hear the infants that are sleeping in the infant sleep room. The



monitor is checked daily by the early staff in the room to ensure that it is functioning properly.

### **Sleeping for Infants Under 12 Months**

Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre understands the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and is therefore following the recommendations set out in *Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada*, published by the Public Health Agency of Canada. The document clearly states that placing infants under 12 months to sleep on their back reduces the risk of SIDS, unless the child's physician recommends otherwise in writing. The cribs are clear of any objects and a firm mattress with a fitted sheet is available to all infants. There are no other objects in or on the crib during sleep time. This information is provided to parents in the Parent Handbook upon registration and is available online.

### **Sleep Environment for Toddlers and Preschoolers**

After lunch the toddler and preschool rooms are cleaned, and cots are placed around the rooms for children to rest/sleep. The maximum rest/sleep period is two hours between 12:30pm and 2:30pm. During this time the lights are turned off in the room and soft music is playing. Large windows in each room allow for sufficient lighting for staff to do physical checks of the children. Each cot is labelled with the child's name. Toddler and preschool sleep arrangements are documented in each child's portfolio for staff, students, and volunteers to review. Staff will position themselves in the room in a way that they are able to see all children. Children's cots are placed around the room and tops of shelves are cleared so that nothing can accidentally fall on the children.

### **Monitoring Children's Sleeping Arrangements**

Upon registration all families fill out a questionnaire about their child's current sleeping arrangements at home. The staff will follow the children's sleeping arrangements that is written in the questionnaire in the registration package. Each month staff will review each child's portfolio with the parents. **During this time parents are required to update the children's sleeping arrangements (changes in sleeping patterns, behaviours during sleep, duration of sleep, etc).**

When three or more infants are in the sleep room, a staff is physically present in the sleep room to supervise the children and conduct physical checks every fifteen minutes for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours, for example changes in skin colour, difficulty breathing, and signs of overheating. When less than three infants are in the sleep room, staff can visually monitor the sleeping children and conduct physical checks every fifteen minutes to monitor for signs of distress or unusual behaviours.



All infants and toddlers are visually and physically monitored for signs of distress or unusual behaviour (changes in skin colour, difficulty breathing, and signs of overheating). These checks are done and documented every fifteen minutes.

Checks are done by **LISTENING** to hear a child's breathing, **LOOKING** at the child's chest to see movement and **FEELING** close to the child's nose with the back of your hand for breathing. Physical checks must be documented on the **Yonge Hearts Child Care Sleep Time Checks** sheet or on the HiMama App. The sheet documents the date, time the child was checked along with the initial of the staff who conducted the check.

### **Procedures to Follow for Signs of Distress and Behaviour Changes**

#### **Signs of Distress**

If staff observe any signs of distress such as, skin changing colour and/or difficulty breathing, which may be life threatening to the child 9-1-1 will be called and the director and /or designate and the parents will be notified. The Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedure will be followed.

#### **Behaviour Changes**

If staff observes changes in behaviour, they will document the behaviour on the sleep chart and call the parents to notify them of the change. Any significant changes in a child's behaviour may require increased physical checks by staff during sleep time, for example, physical checks may need to be done every ten minutes instead of every fifteen minutes. The changes in a child's sleeping arrangements due to behaviour will be verbally communicated to the staff, written in the room's communication book, and updated in the child's portfolio.

### **WAITLIST POLICY**

There is no fee for the placement of a child on the waitlist. Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre offers care to children from 0-5 years of age. If our program is suitable for your family, you are required to fill out a waitlist form. The form is available on our website at [www.yongehearts.ca](http://www.yongehearts.ca) or you could apply in person at the centre. All waitlist applications are kept private and confidential in a locked cabinet in the office but will be made available to allow the position of a child on the list to be ascertained by the affected persons or families. It is important to note that priority is given to the following:

City of Toronto Employees

Toronto District School Board / Toronto Catholic School Board

Siblings of children already enrolled in Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre



### Application Requirements

Families are required to fill out an application form available online or in person. All applications are kept confidential and in a locked office.

Information required on the form is as follows:

Child/children name(s) and date of birth

Home Address

Parent/Guardian names

Phone number

Workplace information-please note on the form if you are in any of the priority categories

Preferred start date for care at the centre

Submission date

The waitlist is organized by the month and year of your preferred start date on the application (ie. January 2021 or April 2022, etc). If you do not receive a space in the month and year of your preferred start date, we move the application to an immediate list (meaning that you would require care immediately because your preferred start date has passed). Once we move you from the monthly list to the immediate list your position will change on the waitlist but will still be put in sequence based on priority and your original submission date. The waitlist is updated every month to every three months. If your contact information changes you must let the centre know. After two failed attempts to contact a family, the application will be removed from the list.

### Waitlist Admissions

When a space becomes available in an infant, toddler or preschool room applications are reviewed. It is the centre's policy to first offer the space to those on the list who have priority based on the date the application was submitted. If the space is declined, then the centre moves on to the rest of the applications to find the next appropriate application based on the date submitted and the preferred start date for care. The centre also takes into consideration the age of the infant/toddler to be enrolled. For example, if the next infant to be enrolled is seventeen months and we do not anticipate movement to the next age group within the following months, then we will move to the next application. If the centre offers you a space you may decline the spot and stay on the list based on your original submission date; however, if you decline a second spot you will be removed from the list.

### PARENTS ISSUES AND CONCERNS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

At Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre, we strive to encourage open communication and positive relationships with families. The purpose of this policy is to support positive and



responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, students and volunteers and staff of Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre through a fair and transparent process. The policy will set out clear and consistent standards to ensure that all issues/concerns are addressed in a timely and transparent manner. Every issue/concern will be taken seriously and will be addressed fairly and confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, staff, children, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcements authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

The procedure for resolution of issues/concerns is as follows:

1. The individual who has an issue or concern should first discuss the issue with the other individual(s) involved and attempt to arrive at a solution that is mutually agreeable.
  - Issues/concerns that are program related should be discussed first with the E.C.E. teachers(s) assigned to the class.
  - Issues/concerns that are staff-related and may concern the operation of the centre should be discussed with the Director.
  - Issues and concerns regarding the Director should be addressed with the Board of Directors
  - Issues or concerns related to an allegation of abuse should be brought to the Director's attention who will contact the Children's Aid Society.

In most instances, matters are resolved through mutual discussion and generation of agreeable courses of action.

2. If an issue/concern cannot be satisfactorily resolved through discussion between the parties involved, a formal complaint may be lodged.

Formal complaints must be presented in writing to the Director, with a copy to the other individual(s) involved, except where the Director is the complainant or is the individual with whom the issue/concern was first discussed in step 1, in which case the written complaint is presented to the President of the Board. Formal written complaints will be responded to within 7 business days following the receipt of the complaint.

3. The Director or the President will investigate the complaint and discuss it with the individuals involved. Every attempt will be made to reach a solution that is mutually agreeable to the parties involved.





4. If an agreement cannot be reached, the complaint is referred to the Board of Directors. All parties involved will be given an opportunity to present their views, which will be considered by the Board in arriving at a decision regarding the most appropriate solution.
5. If the complainant is not in agreement, or considers the decision unjust, an appeal can be forwarded to the next meeting of the Board of Directors. The decision of the Board of Directors will be final.

**Procedures for staff and/or Director to follow in responding to Issues/Concerns:**

1. Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or arrange a meeting with the parent/guardian within two business days
2. Document the issue/concern in detail. Documentation will include:
  - date and time the issue/concern was received
  - the name of the staff who received the issue/concern
  - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern
  - the details of the issue/concern
  - any other steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information regarding the next steps or referral
3. Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter
4. Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within two (2) business days or as soon as reasonably possible. Document reasons for any delays
5. Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent/guardian who raised the concern.

An individual with an issue/concern may, instead of following the formal complaint process, request third party facilitated problem resolution, whereby the individuals involved discuss and attempt to resolve the problem with the assistance of a qualified resource person who is not involved with the problem. Requests for third party facilitation should be directed to the Board of Directors.

A complaint may be withdrawn at anytime. Formal complaints must be communicated to the Board of Directors by the Director, along with the outcome of the process. It is



understood that any individual who elects to use this procedure will be always treated courteously.

### **Emergency Management Policy and Procedures**

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear direction for staff and licensee to follow when dealing with emergency situations.

"Emergency" at a child care centre means an urgent or pressing situation in which immediate action is required to ensure the safety of children and adults in the child care centre. O. Reg.126/16, s. 42

Communication with parents/guardians when dealing with an emergency

- The Director will notify parents/guardians of the emergency, evacuation (if necessary) and the location to pick up their children.
- Where possible, the Director will update YHCCC's voicemail box as soon as possible to inform parents/guardians that the centre has been evacuated and include the details of the evacuation site location and contact information in the message.

## **Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures**

Date Policy and Procedures Established: December 2023

### **Purpose**

This policy and the procedures will help to support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the Centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

### **Policy**

#### **General**

**Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre** will ensure that any child receiving care is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care centre may release the child to.



- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

## **Procedures**

### **Accepting a child into care**

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
  - greet the parent/guardian and child.
  - ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the child's enrollment forms or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).
  - document the change in pick-up procedure in the room's daily written communication book.
  - sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

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

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
  - inform the Director/Designate by 10:00 a.m. and call the parent to inquire the reason for absence. Staff shall contact the parent/guardian by a phone call or through the LILLIO app which the Centre uses.
2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the room's daily written communication book.

### **Releasing a child from care**

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual), the staff;
  - confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
  - where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name in the child's file or written authorization.

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

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care by the parent or authorized pick-up



person and the child has not been picked up by closing time (6:00 p.m.), the staff will follow the steps below:

- Staff will call the parents/guardian and leave a message if no one answers.
- Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
- Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian, the staff shall **wait until program closes and then refer to procedures under "where a child has not been picked up and centre is closed"**) below;

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

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 6:00 PM., staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling 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 staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall continue with the emergency contact numbers. If by 6:30 PM you have received no commitment regarding a pick-up time from the parents, authorized pick-up person or the emergency contacts, the staff shall call the Director/Designate and explain the situation.
4. The staff shall then proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (numbers listed below). Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

Children's Aid	(416) 924-4646
Catholic Children's Aid	(416) 395-1500
Jewish Family and Child Services	(416) 638-7800
Native Child and Family Services	(416) 969-8510

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

*General Hours:* Monday to Friday - 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**Note:** If an emergency arises and your child has not been picked up by 6:30 p.m. and the Centre has been unable to reach you or your emergency contacts, we are obligated to



contact the Children's Aid Society. A staff member will stay with your child at the Centre.

### **Exceptions**

Yonge Hearts is closed for all statutory holidays and the period between Christmas and New Years, including:

New Years Day

Family Day

Good Friday

Victoria Day

Canada Day

Simcoe Day

Labour Day

Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Day \*The Centre closes at 4:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve

### **AGES SERVED**

Yonge Hearts is licensed to provide care for 114 children, ranging in age from birth to 5 years. The two infant rooms have a capacity of 10 children each, ranging from birth to 18 months. The three toddler rooms have a capacity of 10 children each, ranging from 18 to 30 months. The four preschool rooms have a capacity of 16 children each, ranging from 2½ to 5 years.

### **ADMISSION**

Yonge Hearts has a waitlist for all ages served at the centre. We give priority to City of Toronto workers. If a space becomes available, we will contact you and give you twenty-four hours to decide. Should you decide to take the space you will be required to come in for an orientation and pay the required deposit/registration fee to secure the spot. Upon receiving the deposit and registration fee we will set up a transition period to help the parents and child with adjusting to the new environment. You know your child and we advocate that you handle this in a manner with which you feel comfortable. We will support you through this period. If you want to bring your child in for several days, gradually elongating the day, this is fine. If you want to go "cold turkey", this is fine too. However, the day will come when you must go, and your child must stay. Try to maintain a positive approach, give your child a hug and a kiss and say something like, "I have to go now, but I will come back after work/school to take you home". Then leave. Give us a call when you get to work to see how your child is. So often a parent goes to work upset, while the child has soon recovered and is busy playing. The degree of anxiety experienced by a child upon separation from parents varies and manifests itself in many ways. A period of adjustment for both children and parents, is to be expected. A reminder that you, as parents, you are welcome to visit and participate in or share an experience with your child within the classroom. Please call us to set up such visits so we can prepare the children and/or rooms.



A child who has been at the centre for a considerable period will sometimes "regress" and decide that he or she does not want to come to school on a particular day. There are some days that we would rather stay at home too. This can sometimes arise after a child has been away sick, on holiday, or Grandma and Grandpa have been visiting. Again, the straight approach is the best, with some recognition of the child's feelings: "I know it is hard for you to come back to school after having so much fun at home, but I have to go to work, and I know you will enjoy playing with your friends again." When your child moves up to the "next" group, an orientation package will be given to you.

#### PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

It is a legal requirement that your child is protected by the appropriate child restraint system (car seat). Yonge Hearts is situated a short walk away from the North York Centre subway station. Short term parking for arrival and departure is available on the east side of the building. Extreme care for the safety of pedestrians is recommended in the parking lot. Please park your car only in a designated area. Children must be escorted to the entrance of the centre.

**Do not stop / park on the street in front of the centre. Please use the designated parking spaces at the side of the building (not in front of the Director's office).**

#### ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

It is important that the centre is aware of anyone other than a parent is picking up a child. Children will NOT be released to anyone other than a parent without written authorization. If a custody agreement is legally enforceable, and the parent wishes this to be enforced, a copy of the agreement must be provided to the Director and will become part of your child's file.

**Please notify the centre when your child is going to be away.**

**NOTE: If your child will not be attending daycare, please message the centre via HiMama messaging, emailing or a phone call. The staff will call families about absences after 10:00 a.m.**

#### LATE PICK-UP FEE

Parents will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute for any pick-up after closing time. The late fee has been established as a deterrent for parents who are late and to cover staff overtime. We request that you respect our opening and closing times. In the event of inclement weather or other emergency, the late fee may be waived (at the discretion of the Director of the centre). If you are delayed, please be sure to call the Centre. Any child whose parent(s) is habitually late for pick-up may be asked to WITHDRAW FROM THE PROGRAM.





## FEES

Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre has enrolled in the Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care program. A current fee schedule is available upon request. Fee reminder letters are sent monthly to parents and posted in the lobby of the Centre.

A two-week fee deposit is required upon enrolment. The deposit will be held by the Centre and will be refunded when the child leaves the Centre after giving the required notice or used in lieu of four weeks' notice.

Fees are payable for all days of absence, sickness, and holidays, other than the non-holiday days that the Centre is closed between Christmas and New Year's Day.

Fees are due on the first working day of the month. This may be provided with one cheque for the entire month's fees or with two cheques, each for one-half of the entire month's fees dated for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Fees are paid through E-Transfer or by cheques. Cheques should be made payable to Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre.

Parents who are habitually late in paying fees may be asked to withdraw their child(ren) from the program. Payment plans can be arranged; however, any deviation from this plan will result in withdrawal. For any Not Sufficient Funds charges (i.e., NSF), a charge of \$25.00 will be assessed automatically as a processing fee. An NSF payment must be replaced within 48 hours, and the processing fee paid, or child care services will not be provided. After 3 submitted NSF payments you will be required to submit payments by certified cheque or money order only.

If your child becomes of age to move to the next age group (infant to toddler, toddler to preschool) and there is no space available, you are required to pay the fee for the group that your child is in. If he/she must remain in that group for longer than six months, then you will pay the fee of the older group.

Fee assistance may be available through the City of Toronto for those who reside within city limits. Please see the Director for further information.

For income tax purposes, the Director will provide a record of the previous year's fees (paid to the Centre) to all parents before the end of February of the following year. Fee receipts will not be issued until all outstanding fees and penalties are paid.

## WITHDRAWAL

Four weeks' notice in writing is required to withdraw your child from the centre or two weeks' fees in lieu of notice (initial deposit) are held.

Yonge Hearts will make every effort to meet the needs of all children within the programme. However, children who persistently display behaviours that are injurious to the well being of themselves or others (see below), or who are persistently resistant, may be asked to withdraw from the programme. Any parent/guardian who places the



achievement of programme goals at risk by their behaviour may be asked to withdraw from the programme.

Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre reserves the right to withdraw services for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to, the following:

**CHILD:**

- Persistent opposition to authority
  - Wilful destruction of property
  - Use of profane or improper language
  - Conduct that is injurious to the physical or mental well being of others in the Centre
  - Behaviour that manifests itself into a potential safety hazard to other children and staff
  - Inability to work/play cooperatively to accommodate children with special needs
- Staff will observe and document incidents of behaviour and attempt to identify areas of concern. If the behaviour continues, the Director will observe the situation. The parents will be informed. If it is decided that an outside agency needs to be consulted, parents will be asked to fill in a permission form. The agency will work with the child, family, and staff. If the behaviour persists, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss alternative care options. If the decision is made that the programme cannot meet the needs of the child, parents will be given one month's notice of withdrawal in writing. If the parent does not give permission for the Centre to consult an outside agency and the behaviour persists, the parents will be given two week's notice of withdrawal in writing. The President of the Board of Directors and the Toronto Children's Services Consultant will be notified in all cases. All meetings and phone calls will be documented and kept on file.

**PARENT:**

- Conduct that places the achievement of programme goals at risk by their behaviour including harassment of staff.
- If any parent becomes verbally/physically abusive to children, staff, board members, other parents, students and/or volunteers.
- Failure to comply with policies agreed upon in the Parent Handbook.
- Failure to comply with programme regulations and limits.
- Fees are more than two weeks in arrears, with no explanation or payment schedule worked out with the Director.
- Refusal to co-operate if outside intervention to assist with the child's well being is deemed necessary by the Centre.

Depending on the severity of the situation as determined by the Director and the President of the Board of Directors, the family will be notified in writing of termination of services and the time frame. Toronto Children's Services will be notified.

If any type of threat is uttered or any physical, verbal, or sexual harassment ensues, the police will be notified.

There will be no refund of fees upon suspension and/or termination of services.



If a child/family is denied admission to Yonge Hearts due to the centre's inability to accommodate the child's needs or family circumstances, the President of the Board of Directors and the Consultant from Toronto Children's Services will be notified, and the situation will be documented. Every attempt will be made to find a placement for the child with another agency (in consultation with Toronto Children's Services).

### INFANT SCHEDULE

Please complete the Infant Questionnaire, which will provide us with information regarding the progression of your child's day - mealtimes, nap times, position the child likes to sleep in, treatments to be given at diaper changes and any other special things you want to tell us about your child - special toys, soother, security blanket, etc. The Infant Programme reflects the wide range in development during the first year and a half of life. When young babies enter group care, their day is planned to support their adjustment by following individual schedules for eating, sleeping, and diapering.

### QUIET TIME

All children at Yonge Hearts have a quiet time after lunch. This is necessary for the child to regain his/her energy in a hectic day. Provision for quiet activities is made for children who do not require sleep. If your child is having difficulty going to bed at night, please speak to us regarding rest time. Quiet time does not exceed two hours and children are checked every 15 minutes for potential signs of distress.

### HOLIDAY AND BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We celebrate many holidays at Yonge Hearts, as we feel that this provides an important learning experience for the children. If you have a custom or tradition that you would like to share, please let us know. However, if, for personal and/or religious reasons, you do not wish your child to participate in a particular celebration, please make other care arrangements for that day. The centre allows **NUT FREE** items for birthdays. Please speak with your child's teachers for ideas of treats. We usually celebrate birthdays at p.m. snack time.

### INDIVIDUAL PARENT MEETINGS

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's development, the programme, etc., an individual meeting can be arranged with your child's teacher. The teacher may request a meeting with you if the need arises in addition to parent meetings, which are scheduled twice annually.

### 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 diarrhea, etc) please phone the Centre the next morning to advise us that your child will be absent due to illness. Public Health advises that any child who is enrolled in a childcare program should be excluded from their group if he/she has:

- Two or more episodes of diarrhea within a 24-hour period
- Two or more episodes of vomiting within a 24-hour period
- One or more episodes of diarrhea and one or more episodes of vomiting within a 24-hour period

Your child must be symptom free for 48 hours before he/she can return.

If your child develops Hand, Foot, and Mouth (HFM), the time away from the centre should be until the blisters are dried up and your child is fever free for 24 hours.

### **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, 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 two times in a day, you must pick up your child as soon as possible. In addition, your child must be symptom free for 48 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 Fahrenheit / 38 Celsius

Earache (pulling at ear)

Thick yellow mucus discharge

Alarming cough

Upset stomach - vomiting

Extreme lethargy

Discharge from eyes/ears

Diarrhea

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 48 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 48 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.

## 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.

### STUDENTS FROM COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Yonge Hearts host to students in Early Childhood Education programs. The students may do a placement in an infant, toddler, or preschool room. The goal for the student is to gain an understanding of what it is like to be an Early Childhood Educator. Students are never left alone with children and are not considered to be a part of child-staff ratios. Students are supervised by the full-time Early Childhood Educator that is in the room.

### **GENERAL NUTRITION**

Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre is a peanut and tree nut free facility. The centre does not allow these products for the safety of the children, families and staff that have a severe life-threatening reaction (anaphylaxis) to these products. The catering company which provides meals to the centre is also a peanut and tree nut free facility. There could be other anaphylactic allergies in the centre such as eggs, fish, dairy, seeds, fruits, etc. The centre and catering company are willing to attempt to accommodate various dietary restrictions. The office, kitchen and rooms have a list of all children's allergies and restrictions. Children who have an anaphylactic allergy have individual plans posted in office, kitchen, and room that they attend. If your child has any changes in allergies or restrictions, please inform the centre as soon as possible.

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, except for 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.





Mealtimes are pleasant and enjoyable times for the children. We encourage the children to taste all 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.

### **TOILET LEARNING**

Home and centre work together. Each child needs time to adjust to the routines, staff and other children before we begin toilet learning. The amount of time involved in toilet learning depends on the individual child.

### SIGNS OF READINESS

#### Physical Maturation

Aware of "need to go" and shows it through language or facial expression.

Able to stay dry for at least 2 hours.

Experiencing frequent successes on the toilet.

#### Intellectual/Emotional Readiness

Asks to be changed out of a wet or soiled diaper.

Has language to express needs, i.e., "pee-pee", "potty", etc.

Interested in using potty or toilet.

### TOILET LEARNING TECHNIQUES AT YONGE HEARTS

Once a child is out of diapers, we use diapers only for sleep time and outdoor playtime.

Adult attitude is very important - we try to be relaxed and positive. Successes are applauded and advertised while accidents are dealt with in a low-keyed manner. Children are reminded to the washroom at regular intervals (after snacks, before going outside, etc.) - frequency depends on each individual child. We encourage the children to take their time and feel comfortable on the toilet by providing toys, books, etc.

Being consistent is essential. Once a child is wearing underwear, please provide enough changes of clothes for the whole day. Inconsistency leads to confusion. Be prepared for lots of laundry! As the child becomes familiar and relaxed with the toileting routine, the teachers take a less active role. We will remind the child periodically about going to the washroom, with the final goal being independence in the washroom routine. It is important



that the child receive positive reinforcement when deserved and acceptance when an accident occurs. This process takes time. It is not uncommon that the child may temporarily regress. We feel that it is important that the toilet learning period be a happy time for everyone involved.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

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.

We have the right to feel safe and comfortable in our centre. It is the policy of Yonge Hearts Child Care Centre that all members (listed above) are entitled to a care and work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment based on the Human Rights Code. This includes discrimination or harassment by an employer, employee or parent because of citizenship, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, sex (pregnancy and breastfeeding), creed, age, record of provincial offences, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, receipt of public assistance (in housing only), and record of employment (in employment only) or disability.

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.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Monthly fire drills are held to ensure that all 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 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, has the emergency evacuation site address posted for reference:

**North York Central Library - 5120 Yonge Street**



## **SMOKING**

Yonge Hearts is a non-smoking facility. Smoking tobacco, medical and recreational cannabis, electronic cigarettes are not allowed anywhere on the property.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

All staff are aware of the Child Abuse Regulations prohibiting corporal punishment, deliberate harsh or degrading measures that would humiliate a child or undermine his/herself respect, deprivation of a child's basic needs and the use of a locked room to confine a child.

As teachers, we are **REQUIRED BY LAW** to report any symptoms that may indicate child abuse. **IF A REPORT IS MADE TO THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY, THE CENTRE CANNOT NOTIFY THE PARENT UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO DO SO BY THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY.**

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