

SMALL STEPS EARLY LEARNING CENTRE



PARENT HANDBOOK

SMALL STEPS EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

13321 Yonge St. L4E 0K5 – North of King Side Road and South of Bloomington Rd. (St. John's Ambulance Plaza)
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SMALL STEPS EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome you. We hope that your journey through our center will provide you with a taste of what makes the daycare not only a school of excellence, but also a second home to our students.

This Parent Handbook has been prepared to provide you with helpful information which will make your child's transition into a positive one and a bit easier in general for all the family.

At Aurora Early Learning Centre is important to maintain at all times a happy and healthy environment for everyone involved. Please, take the time to go over your handbook to ensure that you understand all the policies, and procedures to follow.

If you have any questions feel free to contact us and we will be more than happy to go over them with you.

Who We Are

Small Steps Early Learning Centre is an Early Learning facility license since 2008 for children aged 3 months to 12 years. Our bright and welcoming Centre offers state of the art equipment, friendly, qualified staff and a discovery-based curriculum designed to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of each child.

Our Program Statement

Small Steps Early Learning Centre has a Play based, Emergent Curriculum that follows the Child Care and Early Years Act (2014). **The program uses "How does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)"** is a document to be used for the purpose of guiding licensed childcare programs. This professional learning resource will support early year's programs and will inspire critical reflexion and discussion among the staff. It is a program development, pedagogy and practice in accordance with the Minister's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy, made under the Child Care and Early Years Act, subsection 55(3), (2014). This will ensure the highest quality and enriched experiences that lead to positive outcomes in relation to children's learning, development, health and safety and well-being. We also use the ELECT document to help qualify the play experience.

We seek to educate the whole child, stretching each child with all of their unique talents and gifts, with an emphasis on intellectual development, service to others, meaningful connections, and personal growth while cultivating innovation and global awareness. We believe that children are competent and capable to use complex thinking and making decisions. They are curious and rich in potential. Our program provides child initiated and adult supported experiences that will encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive and respectful way and support their ability to self-regulate while fostering children's exploration, play and inquiry. We plan for and create a positive learning environment in which each child's learning and development will be supported. The day consists of both indoor and outdoor play. It has both active play and rest/quiet times and gives consideration to the unique needs of the children receiving care.

We focus on children's social emotional, physical, creative and cognitive development in a holistic way. The environment in our centre will provide experiences in which children learn through exploration, play and inquiry, with their initiations and inquiries supported by our teachers. By providing this environment, children will be encouraged to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.

As part of our approach we see families as experts who know their children better than anyone and have important information to share with us. We will foster the engagement and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.

Our educators form a knowledgeable, reflective, resourceful and rich in experience and we value their experiences and environments created for the children. The Centre will support staff with continuous professional development.

Our staff will use pedagogical documentation to study, interpret, make visible and help inform children's learning and development. They will also encourage self-reflection, discussion and will seek ongoing collaboration and

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learning among educators. This documentation will take the form of photos (printed and digital) and written observations. There may be conversations with other staff to interpret and assist in developing the program.

Our program will ensure that the “Foundations for Learning”, Belonging, Well-being, Engagement and Expression are met and children find themselves in an optimal learning environment.

Small Steps Early Learning Centre will review the program statement annually, or at any time when the program statement is modified.

Mission Statement

Small Steps Early Learning Centre is dedicated to meeting the needs and expectations of all families by providing quality education and care in a warm, safe, and supportive environment that will enable all children to reach their optimum in potential.

Philosophy

We provide a warm, safe and stimulating environment that encourages exploration, investigation, problem solving, and discovery. We foster children’s self-esteem and help develop and nurture their love of learning.

What we offer:

- Childcare programs from 3 months to 12 years.
- Full day Kindergarten
- Before and after school programs for Kindergarten to Grade 3.
- Summer camp programs, Spring break camp, Holiday break and PA Days
- Full and Part time care
- Licensed year round quality education and care
- Catered nutritious hot meals and snacks
- Private outdoor play space.
- Qualified, Caring, Professional Educators with police screening
- Cheerful, Child-friendly environment
- Card Access Security System
- Enhanced programs (Art classes, Spanish, Yoga and Robotics)
- Hours of operation: 7 a.m. to 6:00 pm with extended care to 6:30 pm.

Our Programs

Infant (3 – 18 months) Ratio (Children/Teacher) 1:3

The infant program is licensed for 7 children daily (up to 18 months). Children are nurtured and encouraged to explore the activities in the room. The teachers will provide care and educational experiences to ensure that your child’s growth is well rounded. The teachers use learning opportunities that include gross motor activities, fine motor activities, sensory experiences, cognitive experiences, music and stories. Both group and individual activities will include quiet and active play. These activities will help develop your child’s cognitive, social, emotional and physical well being. All children in the room are able to enjoy the activities at their own level of development in this safe and nurturing environment.

Toddler (18 – 30 months) Ratio (Children/teacher) 1:5

The Toddler program is a wonderful environment to introduce young children to a more structured group environment. Children are encouraged to co-operate and act independently while developing cognitive, life, and creative skills. The qualified staff will guide the toddlers through this phase of their development in a warm and stimulating atmosphere.

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Preschool Program (2.5 – 5 years) Ratio (Children/teacher) 1:8

In the preschool program children are taught in a small intimate groupings with a primary teacher where they can build trusting relationships in order to feel secure enough to explore the world around them. Each child is valued as an individual and is encouraged at the earliest age to become a responsible, independent, productive, problem solving person.

Qualified staff provides care in a warm, stimulating environment. Group and individual activities encourage children to develop creatively, cognitively, emotionally, and physically.

Our teachers strive to provide a curriculum that focuses on the child's entire development, and help prepare them for entry into the school system. The teachers work together to facilitate programming that is educational, fun and keeps the children's interests engaged.

Yoga and Spanish are included in the Preschool Curriculum.

Nursery (18months – 5 years)

Our Nursery program offers a rich learning environment that places an emphasis on learning through play. This is a wonderful introduction to a structured, educational environment to prepare your child for full-time childcare and/or the school years.

Kindergarten Program (4-6 years)

The Kindergarten Program is an enriched JK and SK Program with low teacher/student ratios, allowing for maximum learning while the children are most receptive. The focus is on foundational skills in beginning reading, writing and math while ensuring continued development of the whole child, socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.

Children will learn in a stimulating environment that recognizes that children learn at their own pace. Activities are planned based on teacher's observations and the needs of the children to help them reach their full potential. Children are encourage to develop a creative thinking process with basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Yoga and Spanish are included in the Kindergarten Program.

Before and After School / P.A. Days /March Break/ Holiday Break

Our Before and After School Program operates daily and provides a safe, fun and flexible program for children four to twelve years of age. We also offer full day services for this age group on Professional Development Days, School holidays, and School Closures.

Art Class and Robotics are included as part of the After Care Program.

School busses drop off at our location or close too directly from schools nearby. Parents must arrange with school the School Bus transportation services to our facility.

We are able to service the following schools at this time: Lake Wilcox, Oak Ridges PS, Windham Ridge PS, Our Lady of Annunciation, Our Lady of Hope and Acadamie De La Morraine.

Summer Program

We offer a summer program for children 3-12 years that is curriculum based and yet includes trips to local points of interests like parks, the splash pad and the library. The program also includes special visitors, arts and crafts, special days (bike rodeo, baking, robotics, science in the class). Activities take place both outside and inside the air conditioned rooms!

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Hours of Service/Statutory Holidays

The Centre is open year round from 7:00 am-6:00 pm Monday to Friday. The Centre is closed for the following statutory holidays:

New Year's Day	Victoria Day	Thanksgiving Day
Family Day	Canada Day	Christmas Day
Good Friday	Civic Holiday (August)	Boxing Day
Easter Monday	Labor Day	

Note: Depending on when Christmas, Boxing Day and New Year's Eve fall, Small Steps Early Learning Centre may close for a period of up to one week. Notice of this closure will be posted by December 1st of that calendar year.

Additional Centre Closure

Small Steps Early Learning Centre may close service due to inclement weather. We will follow York Regions District School Board Policies for School Closures. Please note: we will remain open if ONLY busses are cancelled.

Our Staff

Our educators are trained in Early Childhood Education or are otherwise approved by the Ministry of Education. The R.E.C. E.'s are all members of the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators. All members of our staff and volunteers have undergone a rigorous screening and reference check. Whether being considered for full- or part-time employment, we check for criminal records, request updated immunization and health records, and require that all permanent staff have current First Aid and CPR certification. In addition, our staff is hired for their experience, energy and love of children. We have qualified R.E.C.E.'s in every classroom.

Students and Volunteers

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre, we often have students from various educational institutions and volunteers at our center. Please, be assured that all students and volunteers are required to provide proper immunization information and vulnerable sector screenings that are conducted by the Police, as well as other information. Students and Volunteers are never left alone with children for any reason. All policies are reviewed before interaction with children and reviewed annually. All students and volunteers are encourage to have valid level C First Aid and Child and Infant CPR.

Admission

Small Steps Early Learning Centre will accept new children when there are vacancies on a first -come, first -serve basis, giving priority to siblings of children currently enrolled. No family will be discriminated against on the basis of race, language, culture, sex or sexual orientation. When the program is fully enrolled, applicants will be held on a waiting list until an opening is available. Due to a limited number of childcare spaces, Small Steps Early Learning Centre cannot always guarantee that spaces will be available for your child to move from program to program. However, our staff will make every effort to move children into the next program whenever possible.

Registration, Deposit and Fees

We require parent/guardians/caregivers to complete and sign the registration package by the first day of attendance.

Parents are required to inform the centre of any changes as: Home, Cell and/or work phone numbers. Any change of residential or work address.

In addition to a completed registration package, a non-refundable registration fee of \$100 is required along with a \$300 enrollment deposit. As part of the registration families are provided with one FOB. Additional FOB's will be provided for a \$20 charge each (non refundable).

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The enrollment deposit is refundable and applied to your last month's fees provided 30 days' **written notice is given** (email acceptable). **It is returned only in services.**

Please note for our INFANT PROGRAM - if you choose to not attend Small Steps Early Learning Centre after registration but before your first day of enrollment, the Enrollment Deposit of \$300 is not refundable.

For our before and after school program Enrollment Deposit is nonrefundable if you choose to withdraw from services between September – June of the school year. If you choose to withdraw from services for the Summer Break (July and August) and not return in the following September School Year your enrollment deposit will be refunded and applied to June fees.

Fees are due in advance on the first day of each month. Any N.S.F. check will result in a \$50.00 charge. Please, see a current rate sheet for fee schedule.

Rates are subject to an annual fee increase. Should this occur, families will be notified at least a month prior to the increase

Waiting List

Upon occupation of all spaces in the individual programs, a waiting list will be maintained, subject to the following considerations:

- Separate waiting list will be maintained for each program.
- When a space becomes available in the next program, children in the younger program will be given priority over the children on the waiting list.
- The children will be moved into the available space of the older program according to their start date. If more than one child was enrolled on the same day the date of initial request for care will be used to determine priority.
- Notwithstanding position on the waiting list, preference may be given to siblings of children already enrolled in the center.

When offering spaces staff shall contact parents by telephone at the number(s) provided, noting time and date of the call on the contact sheet. If the parent(s) cannot be reached or calls are not returned within 5 business days, the space will be offered to the next name on the waiting list.

Income Tax Receipts

Income tax receipts will be given at the end of February upon verification that full payments for tax are completed.

Withdrawal/Termination of Service / Change of Program

Small Steps Early Learning Centre can terminate its services to a family under the following circumstances:

- If the Centre determines that a child cannot adjust to the program, or the parent has not upheld the contract, the family is withdrawn and the contract will be terminated
- If fees for services are not paid in full and on time and suitable arrangements cannot be agreed upon;
- If the Centre is unable to satisfactorily resolve a problem with a family;
- If a family member harasses, threatens or commits a violent or unlawful act toward a staff member, child or other family involved in the program;
- If a family picks up their child late three times or more without notification;
- If, in the assessment of the Centre and staff, a child is unable to manage safely in a group of children within the given adult-to-child ratio.

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Written notice of withdrawal must be given one month in advance.

When notice is received, the \$300 deposit will be applied to the last month's fees. If notice is not received, full program fees will be charged for this month in lieu of the notice and the deposit will not be refunded.

Changes to Program

If you require a change in your child's program or days between September – June, we will do our best to accommodate your inquiry. Please, note that all changes may not be possible due to maintaining ratios. We require 30 days' notice of these changes to be able to adjust the fees.

If you require a change in your child's program during July and August this must be confirmed at time of registration. Please note that accommodations are not guaranteed as this would depend on waiting lists and enrollment at that time.

Arrival and Departure / Late Pick-Up Policy

Safety is our priority. We ask that you, upon arrival, escort children into their room, make contact with a staff member to ensure that they are under the supervision of the centre's staff. This allows us to welcome your child and record attendance. It also allows parents an opportunity to communicate relevant information regarding the child to the staff. At departure time, we also require families to make contact with staff. This allows staff an opportunity to share significant information regarding the day's events and to record children's departure.

Children depend on regular routines for their own sense of security; moreover, we must maintain a correct child/staff ratio. Please, inform us of any changes in your arrival or departure times.

The Centre closes at 6:00 PM. The parent must inform the Centre in advance of any delay. There is a late fee charge of \$1/min per child. This fee is to compensate the staff that stay late to care for your child. The fees should be paid directly to them.

- Any charges not paid will be considered delinquent and may result in termination of service.
- In addition, the lateness will be recorded in a logbook and repeated occurrences may be cause for your family to be withdrawn from the program.
- Please respect the closing time of the center and remember that staff are on their time after 6:00 p.m. and have their own families to attend to as well.
- The center is required to contact The Children's Aid Society if a child is left for longer than one hour after the center's closing and there is no contact with the parent. This is according to the Ministry's regulations.

Alternate Pick-Up

If someone other than the regular parent/caregiver/guardian is picking up your child, that person's name must appear on the Authorized to Pick-Up list. It is helpful if the staff knows in advance that this person will be arriving, although they are still required to check the identification of any new person. Please remind the person picking up your child to bring photo ID. Children will not be released without notification of the change or appropriate I.D.

Parking Policy

Please do not leave children unattended in the parking area. During peak drop-off and pick-up times, cars are constantly moving in and backing out, creating great potential danger for all children. Please be cautious!

Clothing and Possessions

We prefer children to wear comfortable, washable clothing that is suitable for active play. Messy art projects, sand, Play-Doh, and water play are an important part of our curriculum. Even though smocks are provided, accidents can and do occur. For your child to fully enjoy all activities at our Centre, we ask that dress be extremely casual. Upon enrollment, we ask that your child's belongings are clearly labeled with their names or initials. This prevents confusion and misplacements of personal items. This includes shoes, blankets, hats, extra clothes, sunscreen and outer wear.

Lunch, Snacks and Being Peanut Free

We are committed to providing healthy meals and snacks for the children based on Canada's Food Guide. We offer two nutritious snacks as well a hot nutritious catered lunch.

Meals and snacks are an important part of our daily curriculum. We believe that these times should be enjoyable and educational for each child. Food is served family style encouraging self-help skills. Staff members eat snack and lunches with the children, encouraging good manners, good eating habits and lively conversation. With the exception of the rare special occasion, junk food will not be served.

Due to allergies, especially nuts and other anaphylactic triggers, parents are asked to refrain from sending any outside food into the center. Any food that does not have an ingredient list will not be served, the exceptions being fruit and vegetables. Allergies and special dietary restrictions are accommodated and posted in all playrooms, the kitchen and dining area. We strive to be a nut free center and do not serve any nuts. We ask that you do not bring any food or snacks with nuts into the center, even if it is for after the child leaves the center. Having the nut foods in our environment puts other children at serious risk.

Catered lunch will not be provided for Kindergarten and School Age children attending full day program on PA Days and Snow Days. If you require full day care for your child you will need to provide a bagged lunch for your child that adheres to Small Steps Early Learning Centre Outside Food Guidelines.

Birthdays

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre, we believe that a child's birthday can and should be a special day. Many children choose to bring a special treat to share on their birthday. We serve nutritious, low-sugar snacks on a daily basis and feel that an occasional sweet treat on a birthday may be shared. Please be aware of our Outside Food policy. All food must come from an approved food source with an ingredient list on the packaging. Some children and parents decide to follow an alternative route of donating a book or toy to the Centre in honor of the child's birthday.

Rest Time Policy

Rest and sleep is an important part of a child's development. At Small Steps, we offer a 2 hour window for children to rest or sleep. We create a calm, soothing environment that allows children to rest whichever way their bodies need. If children are not sleeping but resting, they will be allowed to do so. If children do not need the rest time, quiet activities will be provided for them. This may include books, puzzles, creative activities, sensory, etc.

Alternate Place of Shelter

In event that the Centre needs to be evacuated for whatever reason, our emergency place of shelter is **Anytime Fitness in our Plaza**. Parents will be notified of our location by telephone and/or email. If we are forced to evacuate, you will be required to pick up your child.

Field Trips/Special Visitors

As part of our regular curriculum, children will occasionally take part in field trips and/or have special visitors. We view these occasions as valuable opportunities to reinforce learning that is taking place at the center. Parents will be notified of any planned outings/visitors and are welcome to join the fun. Parents wanting to volunteer should speak to their child's teacher and sign a volunteer form. A parent's signature will be required on a Field Trip Authorization Form prior to your child attending any excursion off the premises. Parents will be notified of any additional costs prior to the event.

Parent Involvement

At Small Steps Early Learning Centre, we believe that parent participation enhances the quality of care a child receives. As partners in the education of your child, we feel that communication and cooperation with parents is essential. We encourage you to discuss your child's progress with our staff at any time. Parents are welcome to participate in our program in several ways. We enjoy having parents join us for lunch, snack, special days, and field trips. Parents are encouraged to share a hobby or interest with our children and an invitation always stands for you to read a book during story time. Please remember that our centre has an "open door policy" and that you are welcome to be here at any time during the day.

First Day Checklist

All forms need to be filled out in entirety and returned to the Centre before care can be provided.

Parents of all children will need to send the following items with your child:

- A change of clothing; pants, shirt, underwear, and socks in a gallon size Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name (we sometimes have painting mishaps or spills while eating, so please send this change of clothing regardless of toileting status).
- Proper outdoor attire and seasonal needs :

Spring / Fall

Splash pants

Rain boots

Sweater/light jacket

Mittens, extra socks

Summer

Sunhat

Rain boots

Sunscreen

Winter

Snowsuit

Hat and neck warmer

Sweater

Mittens, extra pair of socks

- A reusable water bottle, pair of indoor shoes and a blanket and/or stuffed animal for rest time. No pillows.
- Diapers and Wipes (if child not toilet trained)
- **PLEASE LABEL ALL YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS**

Extra-Curricular Activities

Small Steps Early Learning Centre provides children with a variety of different experiences on top of our daily program planning to further enrich their experiences.

These activities are instructed by trained facilitators.

An additional fee may be required.

Policies

Health Policy

Prevention of illness is the basis of our health policy. By ensuring that all parents strictly follow our health policies, we are ensuring the best possible environment for each child's development. Prior to admission, each child must be immunized as recommended by the local Medical Officer of Health, unless otherwise approved.

The Daily Health Check

A daily health check of each child is made on the child's arrival at the Centre. This check is carried out in the presence of the parent(s) with the greeting of the staff so that they can exchange information about the child's health

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status and make decisions about the best ways to meet the needs of the child and parents and fulfill the expectation of the Centre.

By checking children at the beginning of each day, staff can identify specific signs or symptoms of illness in time to prevent the spread of infection. Staff is not expected to be able to diagnose illness but to become sensitive to a child's condition. On occasion, this examination may lead to a decision that the child is not well enough to attend the program. When there is disagreement, the Director or Supervisor will make the final decision.

In completing daily health check, staff is asked to observe or learn through discussion with parents, whether any of the following are present:

- Elevated temperature, flushed coloring, unusual pallor
- Nasal discharge or repeated, severe coughing
- Stomach ache, vomiting or diarrhea
- Red or discharging eyes or ears
- Undiagnosed skin rashes, sores or swellings
- Unusual activity levels, irritability, restlessness or fussy listless behavior.

Please inform staff if the child has been given over-the-counter or prescription medication overnight. Fever control medication should not be given to your child before coming to the Centre.

Tiredness is also a health concern. A tired child is more prone to infection and communicable disease. Please ensure that your child has adequate rest and a reasonable length of day at the Centre. Although, we are open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. we suggest that your child's day be not much longer than your own working day.

Sick Children Policy

Children cannot attend the Centre if illness prevents their ability to participate in regular daily routines or if attendance could be harmful to themselves or others. Families will be advised to make alternative care arrangements and/or seek medical attention for the following conditions:

- Unexplained or undiagnosed pain
- Acute cold with fever, runny nose and eyes, coughing and sore throat
- Difficulty with breathing
- Fever over 38.5 degrees centigrade
- Fever accompanied by listlessness
- Sore throat and difficulty swallowing
- Undiagnosed skin or eye rash
- Headache and stiff neck
- Unexplained diarrhea or loose stool combined with vomiting and abdominal cramps or on their own
- Severe itching of body and scalp
- Known or suspected communicable diseases
- Unexplained lethargy
- If the child is deemed to be unable to participate in the program

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In accordance with the Ontario Ministry of Health Guidelines, if a child has any of these symptoms or is sent home due to illness, they must remain away from the center until they have been without symptoms for a period of no less than 24 hours.

The Centre follows York Region Health recommendations on dealing with other illness.

Administration of Medication Policy

1. The Centre will administer medication when it is required during program hours.
2. A physician must prescribe all medication.
3. Medication will be administered to a child only from the original container.
4. The container must be clearly labeled with the child's name, name of medication, the dosage, the date of purchase, and instructions for storage and administration.
5. Documentation is required from a physician for medications that are non-prescription.
6. Parents must complete a signed Medication Authorization Form indicating the times the medication is to be given, as well as the dosage. Staff will document the administration of the medication.

All medication must be placed in a lockable container. Should the medication be required in the evening, it is the parent's responsibility to take it home at the end of the day. Any medication that is not to be refrigerated will be placed in the medication box in the kitchen. Please get the staff to help you place and retrieve the medication.

Allergies and Anaphylaxis

Small Steps Early Learning Centre will accept children with allergies that require the use of an epinephrine auto-injector as long as certain conditions are met. Consent to administer the auto-injector will need to be signed and an Emergency Action Plan will need to be on file. The Parent will train the supervisor and the staff in the use of their child's Epi-pen. The supervisor will ensure that additional staff, volunteers or students are trained on the epi-pen if the parents are unavailable. This training will be documented. It is a good practice for parents to provide Small Steps Early Learning Centre with no less than two auto-injectors labeled with the child's name.

ISP (Individual Support Plan) & IP (Special Needs and Medical Needs) Policy

Small Steps Early Learning Centre will ensure that there is an up-to-date ISO or IP for each child or staff with Special and/or Medical needs. All ISP's and IP's must be reviewed before employment by staff and volunteers and volunteers annually and when changes occur in the individual's plan.

Sanitation Policy

Staff members understand the importance of illness prevention in their day-to-day practices. These practices, such as proper hand washing, diapering, toileting, and food preparation, will limit the spread of bacteria and viruses and will promote a healthy child care environment. All areas of the day-care are cleaned and disinfected according to the York Region Public Health guidelines. Disinfectants are prepared according to their recommendations and used following their guidelines. All rooms follow a disinfecting schedule and document it.

Harassment Policy

Our center policy follows the guidelines as outlined in the Canada Labor law regarding harassment in the workplace

Child Abuse Policy

Child abuse is a serious occurrence. The four areas covered under the term child abuse are physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and child neglect. In an individual case, there could be only one form of abuse or a combination of types of

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abuse. It is the legal responsibility of every person including volunteers, students, or support staffs who have contact with a child in a Child Care Centre to report the suspicion of child abuse to Child and Family Services of York Region. Persons failing to report the suspicion of child abuse are subject to legal action and a fine if convicted.

Fire and Emergency Evacuation Policy

Aurora Early Learning Centre conducts a fire drill monthly to familiarize the children with the proper escape procedures. All drills are documented. The plan for evacuating the building during fire drills, fires and other emergency situations is posted at strategic points throughout the Centre.

In the event of a fire, gas leak, flood water/power shortage, or any other emergency where the children need to be evacuated from the building and cannot return to the Centre, they will be accommodated in an emergency shelter. Our designated emergency shelter is at **Anytime Fitness** - 13311 Yonge St #112, Richmond Hill, ON L4E 3L6. Parents will be notified by email or phone calls as soon as possible and arrangements will be made for the pickup of the children.

Emergencies

Emergency telephone numbers are posted in each room, as are our emergency, fire, and evacuation plans. Parents are requested to review these plans. In the event of serious accident or illness, the parent will be contacted immediately. If the parent is not available we will notify the emergency contact person. Parents **MUST** fill out a child **EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE PERMISSION FORM** that will allow Small Steps Early Learning Centre to seek emergency aid for their child. The centre also provides emergency management policies and procedures

Program Statement Implementation Policy

The principles of ELECT help our educators with their documentation of children's play and help to interpret meaning and development within their play. Combining ELECT with HDLH? provides pedagogical direction and examples educators can refer to as they think and plan on how to act on goals for the children. Educators become researchers and co-learners with children, parents, and colleagues – learning about children, with children and from children. It also helps educators focus on building and maintaining relationships with themselves, children, families and the early year's environment.

Accident Procedure Policy

At least one staff on premises shall have basic first-aid training and know how to identify and treat minor injuries which do not require hospitalization.

When an accident involving a child in the program occurs, the staff will administer first aid if required. An accident report will be completed by the staff for all accidents within 24 hours of the occurrence. Parents will be asked to read and sign these reports.

If an injury is more serious in nature, the parents will be contacted immediately and informed of the situation. If emergency treatment at the hospital is necessary, parents may be told to meet the staff at the hospital. In addition to an accident report, a serious occurrence report may be completed. All reports will be kept in the child's individual file.

Minor Accidents

A minor accident shall be defined as any accident which results in superficial injury to a child. In the event of a minor accident, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The teacher shall secure treatment for the injured child.
2. The parent or guardian shall be notified by a teacher of the accident upon arrival at the center.
3. The teacher involved shall complete an accident report within twenty-four hours.
4. The teacher will have the parent sign the report. The Supervisor will sign it off.
5. The accident report shall be kept in the child's file.
6. A copy of the accident report will be given to the parental guardian

Serious Accidents

A serious accident shall be defined as necessitating an immediate hospital visit. In the event of this type of injury, the following procedure must be followed:

1. Parents or an ambulance will be called immediately.
2. The Director / Supervisor will be informed.
3. The child's teacher will accompany the child to the hospital with the child's emergency sheet if the parents are not available.
4. The Director/Supervisor will contact the parent to meet the child and teacher at the hospital, if parents are not taking the child.
5. Accident form will be filled out and signed by the teacher, parent and Director/Supervisor.
6. A serious occurrence form may be filed with the Ministry of Education.

Serious Occurrence

A Serious Occurrence is a category set out by the Ministry for extreme situations/accidents. These would require that a Serious Occurrence report be filed with the Ministry. These incidents may or may not require investigations by the Ministry or other agencies. In the case that a Serious Occurrence is filed, a Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted beside our license within 24 hours of us filing the report or in some cases after an investigation is complete. It will remain posted for 10 business days after the last update and on file for 2 years. The information posted is non-identifying and will not indicate in anyway who a child is what program the child is in or if applicable, which staff were involved. This information is confidential and will not be disclosed.

Vulnerable Sector Screening

A Vulnerable Sector Screening Check is a precautionary measure designed to ascertain whether employees or volunteers providing direct service to children have a criminal history which could potentially make them unsuitable for certain positions of trust. All of our employees and volunteers must have this screening completed by their local Police Department.

Playground Safety Policy

Staff-to-child ratios are maintained on the playground at all times and cannot be reduced for any reason. All staff are aware of the number of children in their group at any given time and attendance is recorded. The Staff position themselves to ensure all areas of the playground are visible, and teach children the safety rules for all the equipment and riding toys.

Activities are planned to enhance the child's creative, motor and social skills, based on their interests and inquiry and to encourage children to engage in constructive play. Our outdoor play schedules reflect the seasonal weather conditions and time of year. Staff inspects the playground area and equipment for potential hazards and litter each day.

Children are required to be outdoors for at least two hours per day, weather permitting. This is an important part of their development. Please ensure that your child has appropriate clothing for the weather.

Summer Sun Safety

From May to September we pay close attention to daily ultra violet radiation (U.V.) ratings. We ask that you apply sunscreen in the morning and we will do it in the afternoon. It is our practice to apply sunscreen 20 minutes before going outside. You will be asked to provide Small Steps Early Learning Centre with a labelled bottled of sunscreen of your choice. While on the playground, children must wear their own hats as additional protection from the sun.

Smoke Free Policy

In accordance with the Smoke Free Act, Small Steps Early Learning Centre has a Smoke Free Policy. The intent is to protect our children, parents and staff by prohibiting smoking in all enclosed workspace/public places at all times whether or not children are present. Under this policy:

1. No person shall be observed smoking or handling a cigarette on the premises, in the Centre or playground whether or not children are present.
2. No smoking signs are posted at all entrances, exits and washrooms.

Prohibited Practices

No staff, student or volunteer shall engage in any of the following prohibited practices:

- Corporal punishment of the child;
- Physical restraint of a child, such as confining a child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or something one else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- Locking exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining a child, or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision;
- 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 undermined his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Monitoring Compliance Procedure

All Staff, students and volunteers will be monitored to ensure compliance to this program statement. It will be reviewed before there is any interaction with the children and reviewed annually, or at any time changes are made to it. They will sign that they have read and understood the statement. Staff, students and volunteers will be observed on an ongoing basis and the Supervisor or Director will address any incidents that do not comply with the statement. There will be a written record that everyone has read the statement and understands it. This will be kept in their file. Any non-compliance will be noted in their file and may result in discipline or termination.

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, Small Steps Early Learning Centre and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

General

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

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

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Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 5 business day. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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

Confidentiality

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

Conduct

Our center maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children.

Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

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

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

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

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

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

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

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Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program Room-Related</p> <p>E.g.: Schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The classroom staff directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The supervisor or licensee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 5 business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The date and time the issue/concern was received; -The name of the person who received the issue/concern;
<p>General, Centre- or Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g.: Child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The supervisor or licensee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The name of the person reporting the issue/concern; -The details of the issue/concern; and -Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
<p>Staff-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related</p> <p>E.g.: Child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The individual directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The supervisor or licensee. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, volunteers, etc. that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 5 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p>
<p>Student- / Volunteer-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The supervisor and/or licensee. <p>-All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

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

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

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

Contacts:

Children's Aid Society of York Region (905)-895-2318

York Region Public Health Department (905) 865-4511

College of Early Childhood Educators (416) 961-8558

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk 1-877-510-533 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

Safe Drinking Water Procedure (Safe Drinking Water; Act 2002; O.Reg. 243/07)

Small Steps Early Learning Centre will ensure that the guidelines of the Safe Drinking Water Act 2002 are followed.

Community Partners

We welcome our local community partners such as York Region Early Interventionist (E.I) into our centre to support our children, their families and the staff. Their knowledge in specialized areas help us to create a more inclusive environment.

Partnerships with Parents

Our program builds and supports positive and responsive relationships between staff, children and their families. We aim to engage with families and value their strengths, contributions and unique perspectives. We value parents as experts in their child that know them better than anyone else and seek that information to help us in providing care for their child. We foster this relationship by ensuring that we are meeting their individual needs for communication. We take the time to talk with parents both in the morning and the evening regarding their child's day. We use photos to help them see their child's activities during the day. Parents are always welcome to call and discuss their child or any concerns that they may have.