

## Early Learning Program Family Handbook



"Building the best foundation for our children's future."

10417 – 106th Avenue Fort St. John, BC V1J 2M8 | Phone. 250-785-3200 EXT: 234 | Fax. 250-785-3202 |

[www.cdcsfj.ca](http://www.cdcsfj.ca)



## **Early Learning Program Staff**

Cindy Singer, Early Learning Program Supervisor; Early Childhood, Special Needs, Infant/Toddler Educator **License # 7508 Expires June 6, 2029**

Michela Yuen; Early Childhood, Special Needs Educator **License # 53272 Expires March 12, 2029**

Reetika Rani; Early Childhood, Special Needs Educator **License # 53442 Expires February 23, 2026**

Narinder Kaur; Early Childhood Educator, Infant/Toddler **License # 48976 Expires July 10, 2029**

Kirsten Phibbs; Early Childhood Educator Assistant **License # 86097 Expires June 24, 2029**

Komal Komal ; Early Childhood Educator Assistant **License #68058 Expires October 7, 2027**

### **Casual Staff**

Miranda Leonard; Early Childhood Educator **License # 43410 Expires September 10, 2026**

Sharmin Rahamn; Early Childhood, Special Needs, Infant/Toddler Educator **License # 52970 Expires March 18, 2029**

Melissa Yastremski; Responsible Adult Certification

Alisha Smith; Responsible Adult Certification

## Table of Contents

Welcome Letter	1-3
Overarching Philosophy	3-4
Early Program Goals	4-5
What Our Program Looks Like	5-7
Hours of Operation/Closure/Closure due to Fire/Evacuation	7
Playcare Daily Schedule	7-8
Celebrations and Traditions	8-9
Classroom Job/Communication	9-10
Fees/Payment of fees/ Subsidy/Withdrawing from the program/Late fees	10-12
Dropping off/Releasing Children/Custody and Access/Visitors at Centre	12-14
Suspect Child Abuse	14
Guidance	15-17
Toileting	17-18
Clothing/Footwear/Bedding	18-19
Outdoor Play/Sun Safety/During Colder Weather/Gym Time	19-20
Licensing Standard of Practice Active Play/Screen Time	20
Implementation of Lillio/Wellness and Illness	20-21
Medical Emergencies and Incidents/Accidents/Biting	23-25
Administering Medication/Alert Forms/Immunization records	25-26
Health and Nutrition-snacks/Lunches	26-27
Quiet/Nap Time	27-28
Volunteers/Students in Playcare	28
Field Trips and Short Excursions and Visitors to the Centre	28-29
Family Crisis/Changes/Emergency Drills/ Evacuation Procedures	29-30
Confidentiality	29
Smoking/Complaint/Conflict Resolution	30
Other Services Offered by Playcare/Early Learning Program/Centre	31
"Rowboat Metaphor Model" by Glenn Cooper 2018	32
Gradual Entry Plans	33-34

*We respectfully acknowledge the Dane-zaa lands within Treaty Eight. We are grateful to live, work, and play in this beautiful region. It is an honor to build and maintain our relationships with the Beaver, Cree, and Metis Peoples in peace and friendship.*

## **Welcome to the Early Learning Program (Playcare & Preschool)!**

We are looking forward to your child/ren attending our Inclusive Childcare Programs and want to thank you in advance for entrusting us with their care. As an Inclusive play-based program all children and their families are welcomed, supported, and valued. The Centre staff work together to support children of all abilities as they engage in opportunities to learn through play. ELP offers a group daycare program - **Playcare** (3-5 years old) and a preschool program – **Sunflower** (3/4 years old). Our flow of the day/schedules, activities, guidelines, and expectations are a bit different between the 3hr preschool session and full day Playcare.

### **Notable and Quotable**

*We used to think that schools-built brains.*

*Now we know that it is Play that builds the brains that school can then use. Dr. Gordon Neufeld*

**“Play is the foundation for higher learning (academics)”**

**“Play is the cement that keeps the foundation together”**

**“Play is creating, moving, singing, discussing, observing & reading”**

**“Learning is play and Playing is learning”**

- **Lisa Murphy, The Foundations of Children Learning**

We are excited to be implementing a play-based program while promoting secure attachment relationships with the children in our care and their families. The ELP staff have been trained in **“Circle of Security Parenting - Classroom Approach”** and embrace the philosophy of “using our hands to provide a Secure Base and Safe Haven” when encouraging children to explore their environment and become enthusiastic learners.

**We will strive to:**

**ALWAYS BE: Strong, Kind and Committed**

**WHENEVER POSSIBLE: Follow the child’s need**

**WHENEVER NECESSARY: Take Charge**

We foster Social Emotional Learning by using a variety of strategies, programs & curriculums that will enable staff to support children in their development of self-regulation and social-emotional awareness skills.

**Co-Regulation** is the process through which children develop the ability to soothe and manage distressing emotions and sensations from the beginning of life through connection with nurturing and reliable primary caregivers.

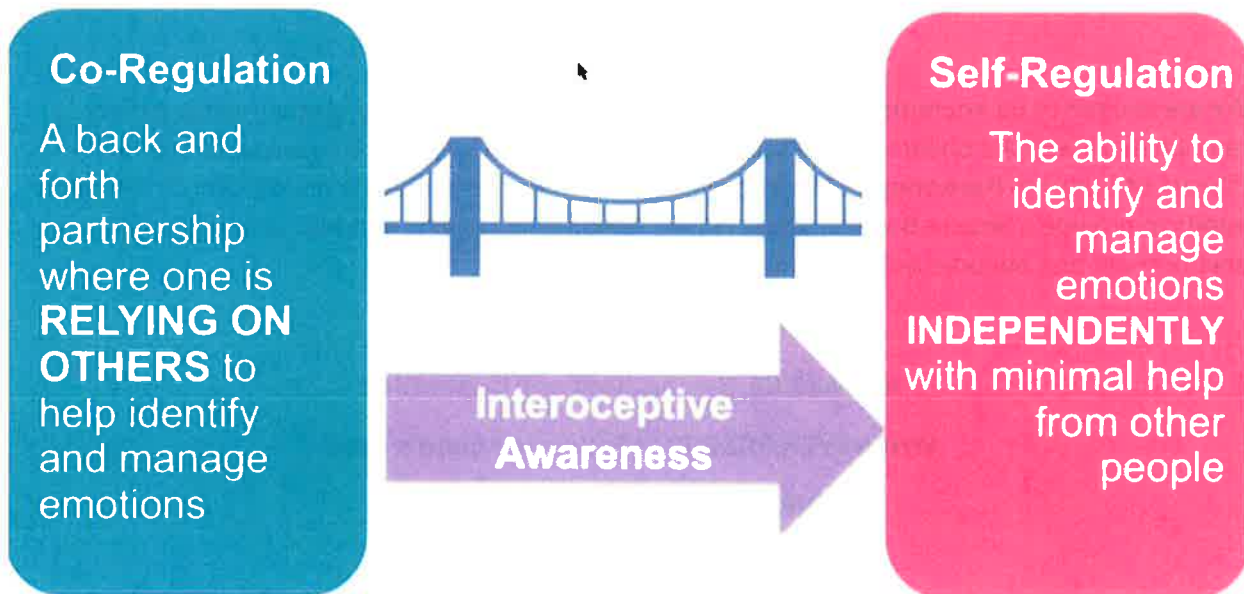
**Self-Regulation** is the ability to manage and modify our emotions to adapt to a situation, it is a very important skill for all of us to have. But children are not born with this skill. It is something that they must see modeled and that they learn over time. Self-regulation rapidly develops in early childhood between the ages of 3 and 7 years old. While children are developing their self-regulation skills, they rely on adults in their lives to co-regulate with them.

**Interoceptive Awareness (IA)** is essential to independent self-regulation. Without IA, a person is reliant on others to help them regulate – co-regulation. We are all born requiring the help of others to help us regulate a variety of emotions / feelings – hunger, thirst, body temp, toileting, sensory overwhelm, frustration, anxiety and so on.

**As we grow and develop the ability to notice, connect and regulate independently begins to emerge –Self Regulation.**

Interoceptive Awareness is the bridge that allows us to move from Co Regulation to Self-Regulation.

## IA & Regulation



For more info on this stage of learning please watch this video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XJX2MlzTd0&ab\\_channel=KellyMahler](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XJX2MlzTd0&ab_channel=KellyMahler)

**Zones of Regulation** are all about connecting body cues to our emotions - teaching children that our body cues are clues to our emotional state. We may be introducing the children to a framework for grouping and thinking about different emotions. This program is used throughout School District 60 to support regulation in the classroom as it groups emotions with similar body energy levels/levels of alertness into colours to help children identify their emotional states and eventually use appropriate tools.

For more info on this stage of learning please check out these resources:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gtq1rolG8Dw&ab\\_channel=ChildDevelopmentCentreofFortSt.John](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gtq1rolG8Dw&ab_channel=ChildDevelopmentCentreofFortSt.John)

"Tucker the Turtle" is a character used in resources and stories to teach children about self-regulation and managing big emotions.

Calm Curriculum is designed to foster the skills of young students need to thrive in their early learning environments, including self-regulation, self-awareness and elf management, executive functioning, kindness, growth mindset and motivation, supporting their learning success today, tomorrow and in the future.

The star of Calm Curriculum is Melvin the Monkey and includes visits from Tucker the Turtle, Sadie the Sloth and Raven.



We will guide children so they can build self-confidence, self-regulation, independence and learn kindness and respect for others and their environment. We believe in nurturing and building relationships between children, their peers, and the educators. We seek to accomplish the goals of our program and give your children a successful start in lifelong learning through the classroom environment, hands on experiences, outdoor play, and relationship building.

## **Open-door Policy**

We have an open-door policy, parents/guardians may visit our classrooms any time. We welcome other family members as well (grandparents, aunts, and uncles), we ask that the enrolling parent/guardian plan with the Early Learning Program Supervisor or a staff member in advance. For security and safety reasons unauthorized visitors will be asked to leave the premises.

## Philosophy

We believe that Children are strong, capable in their uniqueness, and full of potential, Children have a right to quality care that provides opportunities that supports their health and development as they Play Learn and Grow together. We believe in working in partnerships with families to provide quality care and safe experiences for the development of the whole child. We believe that healthy relationships with educators and peers are the foundation of learning.

We support exploration of nature and believe that outdoor play is a cornerstone for children's development. We believe in fostering a learning environment where children of all abilities can grow and develop in a fully integrated and inclusive classroom.

We Strive to incorporate the following values into all aspects of our Early Learning Program / Community of Kindness, Calm & Connection.

*Team work*

*Communication*

*Family*

*Dependability*

*Trust /Honesty/Integrity/Openness/Patience*

## Early Learning Program Goals

When setting up the classroom/outside environment, invitations to play, and planning group/individual activities we ensure that we are offering a balance of structured and unstructured experiences that foster the principals of the BC's Early Learning Framework and provide opportunities for growth and development in all developmental areas (as per Licensing's schedule G):

- **Emotional:** To help children develop their emotional awareness (interoception and self-regulation), independence, self-confidence, and ability to express their feelings (positive and negative). We will provide a comfortable atmosphere where children will feel proud of their heritage, and where the sharing of culture is encouraged.
- **Social:** We will provide an environment for children to work independently and cooperatively in small and large groups, and that offers opportunities to foster positive behavior and develop appropriate social skills as we facilitate a sense of belonging to family, community,



and the world at large. We encourage everyone to appreciate differences and respect the personal feelings and belongings of others.

- **Physical:** To provide experiences which help develop children's large and small muscle skills, and self-help skills. To have an environment which encourages a healthy lifestyle.
- **Intellectual:** We offer a flexible daily program that responds to children's needs and interests, our environment facilitates the development of curiosity, reasoning and problem solving, and concept building skills. Our activities are age appropriate, encourage creativity, and offer a greater understanding of our environment.
- **Language:** We encourage the development of language by modelling language and listening skills and provide opportunities to develop expressive and receptive language skills. Our activities encourage communication and introduce children to a wide variety of uses for language.

## Early Learning Framework Principles

The Early Learning Framework set forth ways of thinking about childhood, learning, and practicing that underpin the vision of respectfully living and learning together.

The principles are:

- Children are strong, capable in their uniqueness, and full of potential.
- Families have the most important role contributing to children's well-being and learning.
- Educators are researchers and collaborators.
- Early year spaces are inclusive.
- People build connections and reconnection to land, culture, community and places.
- Environments are integral to well-being and learning.
- Play is integral to well-being and learning.
- Relationships are the context for well-being and learning.
- Learning is holistic.

## What Our Program Looks Like

- **An Engaging Environment:** We believe that an engaging environment is an important piece of children's learning. Our environments consider children's abilities and interests and are set up to encourage creative play and exploration.

- **Free Play/Choice Time:** We give the children plenty of time to explore and play in their environment. As a play-based program, we believe that the time dedicated to play is time dedicated to learning!
- **Group Time:** We gather as large and small groups to do activities such as songs, games, stories, books, rhymes, and finger plays. This time is also used to discuss upcoming events, introduce new topics, and go over other classroom happenings.
- **Gross Motor Play:** We have daily activities and opportunities in our classroom for gross motor play, as well as time outside and/or in the gym.
- **Risky Play:** We encourage children to challenge themselves and take risks in a safe environment **Physically**, by climbing a little higher, running a little faster, or jumping a little further, and engaging in messy activities; **Emotionally**, by feeling out of control or overcoming fear; **Mentally**, by learning how to get out of trouble, and by learning their own boundaries and that of the environment around them.
- **Nature Based Experiences:** We bring in natural materials for the children to interact with and investigate and engage in projects throughout the year to show children our relationship with the natural world around us.
- **Invitations to Play:** We set up play experiences designed to invite children to investigate and interact with different materials and resources. These invitations include sensory play, new tools/materials, and loose parts.
- **Classroom Jobs:** Because the classroom belongs to everyone, taking care of it is a shared responsibility. All children participate in daily tasks such as cleaning up and putting away personal belongings. Each classroom also has specific jobs that children will get a chance to do throughout the year.
- **Open-Ended Arts and Crafts:** We provide and set up art materials for children to have access to as they choose. We invite children to create art without setting specific, prescribed outcomes. We will occasionally use printed patterns; we will not use coloring sheets.
- **Social/Emotional Skill Development:** Throughout the year we will implement a few programs and lessons dedicated to helping children develop their social and emotional skills. We will share with children several strategies and tools to use, as well as help them understand their own emotions.
- **Diversity and Cultural Awareness:** Our classroom, program, and Centre are a diverse community of unique and special people with differing abilities and from different backgrounds. We accept, respect, and appreciate everyone's culture and beliefs and encourage them to share their families' experiences and stories.
- **Cooking and Baking:** We regularly cook and bake with the children, inviting them to be a part of the whole process while teaching them about health and safety.
- **Field Trips and Community Visitors:** We have at least two field trips a year (one of which is to the Cultural Centre for our talent show rehearsal). We might also go on outings/walks into the community. During the year we have a few visitors come into our Centre from the community to share their unique expertise with the children.

- **Documentation of Learning:** Learning is documented and shared in a variety of ways which could include photos, learning stories, journaling, or portfolios. We work to incorporate pedagogical narration into our programming.

## **Hours of operation / Child capacity**

**Playcare** (group 3-5 daycare with a capacity of 25 children)

Monday – Friday, 7:45 AM – 5:15 PM

### **Preschool**

**Sunflower Room, a capacity of 20 children per session)**

**Monday, Wednesday, and Friday/Tuesday and Thursday 8:45-11:45am and 12:45-3:45pm**

### **Preschool Closures**

Preschool follows School District No. 60 (Peace River North) Calendar for all statutory holidays, winter vacation, and **one week of spring break**. We DO NOT follow the same non-instructional days.

### **Centre Closures - Please note families will not be charged for these closures.**

If the Centre is going to be closed for any reason, we will try to give ample notice (please watch for signs on the doors). ELP may be closed for a maximum of 5 Closure days. Please refer to the ELP closure days attached Sept 2025-August 2026 **page 35**.

Please note ELP closures are a part of the preschool monthly fee, fees are prorated monthly on a 10-month program.

Playcare monthly fees include statutory holidays and professional development days. Monthly fees are adjusted during our winter closure.

Preschool & Playcare are closed for two weeks in December as per SD #60 schedule

### **Closure due to Evacuation/Fire/Utility Failure**

In case of fire, extended power, water or heat failure, extreme weather conditions or an evacuation due to the health and safety of the facility, the Centre may have to close. Staff will care for children until families / emergency contacts have picked them up. **Evacuation procedures are on page 29-30.**

### **Playcare Daily schedule**

The schedule is flexible as we follow the children's lead. In addition, to choice time, throughout the day children will be able to engage in facilitated activities such as arts and crafts, baking, small group activities and games.



### **7:45 Classroom choice time**

Breakfast - children who are hungry can have something from their lunch or families may bring in their breakfast.

Clean up

### **9:45-10:00 Morning snack (CDC provides)**

Books and group time (singing songs/nursery rhymes and talking about the d:



Outside play or gym play/facilitated large muscle group play in classroom

### **12:00/12:15 Lunch (families provide)**

Book Time



Group Time

Nap/Quiet time - Nap: A time to sleep, rest/calm. Nappers go into the nap room with an adult. Non-nappers sit or lay on their cots in the classroom with 1 adult. We rest for 30-45 minutes, then move to quiet activities.

**2:00** Quiet table activities.

**3:00** Lights on in the classroom/Afternoon snack (CDC supplies)



Outside Play or Gym time / Home

### **5:15 Playcare Closed**

**We adjust our daily schedules from September to April & May to August to accommodate for hotter weather. Please speak to Playcare staff for specific details.**

### **Preschools Daily Schedule**

Preschool classrooms will develop their daily schedule, please refer to the visual calendar in the classroom. The schedule is flexible as we follow the children's lead and outside play is based on weather conditions.

**Please note** All Children, staff, and visitors in ELP area wash their hands upon entering the classroom/ before and after eating.

## **Celebrations and Traditions**

**Celebrations** - Throughout the year there will be materials available at the craft table for children to create cards & gifts for family and friends. Playcare staff will plan specific activities for children to make gifts for: Christmas, Mothers & Father's Day!

**Traditions**- Early Learning Program traditions; throughout the year we will have Costume, Pajama and Wacky hair days. We will plan the following "Family Activities \Open Houses, times, and dates to be determined.

**Preschool Orientation/ Open House**  
**Playcare Family Potluck**  
**ELP National Child's Day celebration**  
**ELP open house / visit with Santa & Mrs. Clause**  
**Preschool Family Day Celebration / Playcare Family Potluck**  
**Preschool Family Picnic**

**\*Most family Preschool activities/open houses are during daily sessions**

## **Classroom Jobs**



Throughout the year we will be implementing a system for classroom jobs. Because the classroom belongs to everyone, taking care of it is a shared responsibility. Everyone has jobs. Some jobs are a part of our daily routine: cleaning up during choice time, putting away personal belongings and cleaning up after snack. Some jobs/tasks are designated as "Adult" only and other jobs/tasks are shared between the adults & children. By having children care for their space they will learn to be responsible. They will also become competent and organized.

## **Communication**

The Child Development Centre values professionalism and positive communication, Early Learning Program (ELP) staff are expected to communicate with parents/guardians accordingly. In return ELP expects that parents and guardians will communicate with our employees in a manner that also reflects professionalism and positive communication. We will not tolerate yelling, swearing, or any other behavior that is discriminatory or disrespectful.

Early Learning Program Staff will communicate with parents/guardians in a variety of ways (face to face conversations, Lillo formally Hi Mamma software program, newsletters, signs/posters in the entrance, email, and telephone). Early Learning Program staff generally communicate with parents/guardian's face to face when you are dropping off and picking up your child/ren. This allows staff to keep you informed of your child's progress, accomplishments, dislikes, difficulties,

and behavioral challenges. Staff may identify that they have concerns regarding your child's development, their safety, and/or the safety of their classmates by:

- Requesting a meeting to share their observations/concerns regarding your child. These meetings will be scheduled at a time that is convenient for you, they will be held in a room at the CDC ensuring privacy/confidentiality. Staff will ask parents/guardians to make childcare arrangements for their ELP child while they meet.
- Request and obtain written permission to observe and document observations of the child/ren during preschool. This written observation will be shared with the parents/guardians.
- Recommend referrals to other services (within the CDC or community)
- Request and obtain written permission to have the Supported Child Development Consultant come and observe your child in the classroom. The SCDP consultant will make recommendations to both the parent(s) and Early Learning Program Staff. Please note at times children may present actions that are harmful to themselves, or others and they may require a support worker to accompany them during the daily routine/activities. Parents may be asked to withdraw their child until such support is put in place.

## **Fees**

Non-Refundable registration fee of \$50 is payable upon registering for a Preschool or Playcare space.

The CDC is participating in the BC childcare fee initiative, which helps to offset family's monthly fees.

### **Playcare**

Daycare is full time from Monday to Friday at a monthly fee of \$1225.00, families pay \$680 after reduction. When registering/ committing to / reserving the space there is a \$340.00 (half a month of family fees) deposit required. The deposit goes towards the first month's fee. If you withdrawal one month prior to the agreed start date, CDC will charge \$200 non-refundable deposit. CDC will charge \$340.00 if you give less than one month's notice. \$60 a day is charged when starting halfway through the month.

### **Preschool Fees**

There is a \$50 non-refundable registration fee. Fees are charged monthly, and they are pro-rated for the year based on the yearly number of sessions. Monthly fees are: 2 days a week - \$155.00 and three days a week - \$210.00.

**Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB):** Some families are eligible for ACCB from Ministry of Children and Family Development to assist with monthly fees. Information about the application process will be provided upon request. It is the responsibility of the family to pay the monthly fees to the CDC while they are awaiting approval of the ACCB application.

CDC ELP accepts affordable childcare benefits. Applications are accepted online: [www2.gov.bc.ca](http://www2.gov.bc.ca)

### **Late Fee**

Please be punctual when picking up your child/ren at the end of the preschool session (11:45 or 3:45) or to Playcare closing at 5:15. **If you are not here at the end of the session, ELP staff will call parents / guardians, if we are unable to contact parents, we will call the person / people you have designated as emergency contacts. Please make sure all phone numbers are current. After 30 minutes, the Ministry for Children & Families will be contacted (as per licensing regulations).**

A late fee of \$25.00 will be charged then the fee will increase by \$10.00 every 15 minutes up to a maximum of \$75.00. Late fee forms will be completed by ELP staff and the person picking up the child will sign the form. Fees may be paid at that time or will be invoiced. ELP staff will go by the Centre clock.

### **PAYMENT OF FEES**

All monthly fees are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, if there is a date that works better than the 1<sup>st</sup>, please notify reception.

Families are welcome to:

1. Email payment to [cdcpayment@cdcfsj.ca](mailto:cdcpayment@cdcfsj.ca) (please put child's name in message box)
2. Fill out form for EFT (Provide VOID Cheque, payments will come out your bank account on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month).
3. Interac during reception hours 8:30-4:30.
4. Visa or Mastercard (pre auth or pay at reception hours), there is a fee of \$5 to use credit cards.

**Please keep all receipts in case of account discrepancies – receipts will be required to show proof of payment.**

When a transaction is not completed by the bank (for any reason) it will be treated as a non-payment. A \$30.00 administration fee will be charged. Special arrangements for parents with financial difficulties may be made with the Early Learning Program Supervisor / Financial Manager in advance of the payment date.

If your bill is not paid:

1. You will be given a reminder
2. A letter will go home from the Financial Manager with a deadline of payment date.

3. Your child's space will be offered to a child on the waitlist

**The process for Non-Payment of fees is strictly enforced. Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB):** Some families are eligible for ACCB from Ministry of Children and Family Development to assist with monthly fees. Information about the application process will be provided upon request. It is the responsibility of the family to pay the monthly fees to the CDC while they are awaiting approval of the ACCB application.

**CDC ELP accepts affordable childcare benefits – applications are accepted online: [www2.gov.bc.ca](http://www2.gov.bc.ca)**

## **WITHDRAWING FROM EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM**

One month's written notice must be given when withdrawing your child/ren from the Early Learning Program or you may choose to pay one month's ELP fees in lieu of notice. If your child is absent for a period of two (2) weeks and we are not informed of the reason, their space will be offered to another child on the waitlist. Families/Staff will complete the withdrawal from services form.

## **Dropping off children**

**The ELP entrance and Playcare door will be open at 8:00 AM. Children/adults will wash their hands upon entering the classroom.**

**The preschool doors will be opened by the ELP staff at the start time of the session.**

When dropping off children at Playcare/Preschool, the adult dropping off the child/ren will be asked to check in with staff. Please bring your child right into the building and stay with them until you hand them over to the ELP staff. ***We will be implementing digital sign-in on our Lillo App. Sign in can be completed by staff or families. Families can check their child in / mark absences and make notes for the staff prior to entering the building.***

**Please do not leave your child/ren unattended in the entrance/playground.**

Playcare and Preschool are licensed by the Ministry of Education and Childcare as Group Settings for 3–5-year-olds, only children registered in the program may attend a full day/ session. We recognize that sometimes it is difficult to say goodbye when dropping off your child/ren at the Centre. Parents/guardians are welcome to accompany their child into the classroom and get them settled. We have found it best to say good-bye before leaving. Parents are welcome to phone the Centre and ask staff to check on their child, ELP staff will use "Lillio" to send you a quick photo / note update as soon as your child is settled. ELP staff implement the "Rowboat Metaphor Model" by Glenn Cooper **refer to page 32.**



We recognize that this plan may not work for all children and families, please feel free to discuss one of the Gradual Entry plans with ELP staff. We are open to other gradual entry plans that will best meet your child's needs with the intent that you will be comfortable and confident in leaving your child with the ELP staff. We ask that you plan for childcare for siblings during Gradual Entry. ELP have planned events that families (siblings and other family members are invited to attend)

During the gradual entry we ask that the Parent attending spend time interacting with their child in the classroom and encourage communication / interaction with their peers and the ELP staff. Gradual Entry Plans attached Page 33 & 34.

## **Releasing children**

Children will only be released to an "authorized adult" as per the admission form. Staff will not release a child prior to confirming that their name is on the "authorization to release" portion of the child's admission form. Parents / Guardians may add / remove names at any time by using ink and:

- Drawing a line through the name & contact information they are removing
- Adding the next name and contact information (if there is no space left, an additional consent form for "authorization to release child from the Centre" will be completed)
- All forms will be completed, signed, and dated by the parent or guardian.

**When a staff does not know the person picking up, they will ask for photo ID to confirm the adult's identification.**

### **Staff will not release a child/ren when:**

When staff suspect the person picking up the child is under the influence of any substance or if they suspect/feel the child will be in danger. The ELP staff will use their observation skills to make this tough decision; staff will have a conversation with the person away from the child/ren's hearing range and in private. Offer to call someone to pick them and the child up or keep the child if they choose to leave. If the authorized adult insists on driving, he/she will be informed that by doing so would be breaking the law. The police will be called immediately. If "authorized person" leaves the child with ELP staff, they will call the other parent/ guardian first then the other people on emergency contact list.

## **Custody and Access**

When parents live separately, CDC Early Learning Program expects that the information provided by the enrolling parent is accurate. Without a custody agreement or court order on file at the Centre, staff cannot deny access to the non-enrolling parents.

If a family has a custody agreement or court order, a copy must be provided and placed in the child's file. Custody orders will be reviewed by Tana Millner, Executive Director and Cindy Singer, Early Learning Program Supervisor. The pertinent information regarding access/parental responsibilities will be photocopied and placed for classroom staff to view. The court order will be placed in a sealed envelope with the child's admission forms. Authorization to open the envelope will be given by the Executive Director/ELP Supervisor.

When both parents have access, it means you both have signing authority on the admission and consent forms, when it comes to authorizing people to pick them up from the Centre or who staff can release information to about your child's day. We will follow what both of you have authorized us to do. It is the parent's responsibility to agree on the information presented on the authorization forms.

## **Visitors at the Centre**

As the safety and security of children, families and staff is critical, visitors need permission from the Early Learning Program Supervisor prior to visiting the classrooms. Community resources/partners and immediate family members of children enrolled are welcome to visit, however, arrangements must be made in advance with the staff.

## **Suspected Child Abuse**

The Child, Family and Community Service Act states that all children in the Province of B.C. 'are entitled to be protected from abuse, neglect and harm or threat of harm'. The Act also states that any "person who has reason to believe that a child needs protection must promptly report the matter" to the Ministry for Children and Families. Early Learning Program Staff follows the Centre's policies and procedures when making a report. If you have any questions, or would like more information, we invite you to talk to the Early Learning Program Supervisor.

## **Apprehension by The Ministry for Children and Families**

The Child, Family and Community Services Act defines when a child needs protection. Decisions related as to when, how, and where the Ministry for Children and Families can apprehend a child rest solely with the Ministry. If and when a Social Worker from the Ministry for Children and

Families intends to apprehend a child at the childcare Centre, the senior staff person on duty will be responsible for responding to the situation. Prior to the child being removed, the Centre staff member will verify with a Ministry supervisor that the social worker is authorized to apprehend the child. It is the responsibility of the Ministry to make all reasonable efforts to notify the family of apprehension.

## Guidance

We respect and value each child as an individual and understand that they will experiment and make mistakes, their behavior is influenced by their age, temperament, family, culture, environment, and adults who care for them. Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy learning environment in which each child can feel secure.

Our ELP staff understand and appreciate principles of child development and family & cultural influences will develop attitudes and practices that are based on realistic expectations of children's behavior. We will offer guidance and explanations to help children gain confidence, competence, and problem-solving skills. We will promote strategies and techniques outlined in the booklet **"Guiding Children's Behavior"**

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/.../guiding\\_childrens\\_behaviour\\_april\\_2017.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/.../guiding_childrens_behaviour_april_2017.pdf)



### Families can expect the staff to:

- Promote the development of positive social skills including self-esteem and self-control
- Encourage children to understand and follow simple rules
- Be alert and actively engage with the children & anticipate potential difficulties and step in to prevent problems
- Always supervise the children, using Proximity & Nearness as they learn to play together.

### Staff will strive to:

- Set Clear, Consistent & Simple limits ("Inside we walk.")
- Give Easy to Understand Explanations for Limits ("sand stays down low, so it doesn't get in people's eyes.")
- Say Limits in a Positive Way, rather than in a Negative Way ("It's to put the blocks away.")
- Focus on the Behavior, Rather Than on the Child ("When you grab the truck it makes Sammy angry")
- Say what is Expected, rather than ask ("it's time to clean up now")

- Provide Choice (“Do you want to have carrots or cucumbers with your sandwich”)
- Give Children Enough Time to Respond (“In five minutes it will be cleanup time”)
- Ignore Minor incidents (“If the child’s activity is safe, not harming others or the environment it’s often best to take a breath rather than speak.”)
- Reinforce Appropriate Behavior, With Both Words and Gestures (“Thank you for taking turns with Joe, that’s called being kind”)
- Encourage Children to Use the Adults as a Resource (“I’ll stand beside you while you ask Mary for a turn”)

We encourage families to ask about guidance methods as any questions arise. We are committed to working with families and to enhancing knowledge of child development and approaches to child-rearing practices.

No corporal punishment or any form of verbal degradation shall be used by any person or employee in the Child Development Centre.

While we strive to create a positive environment and minimize inappropriate behavior, at times there will be episodes of inappropriate behavior where adults will need to intervene. We will use a combination of the following Strategies.

- Get the Childs Attention in a Respectful Way
- Use Proximity & Touch
- Use Reminders
- Acknowledge Feelings Before Setting Limits
- Offer Appropriate Choices
- Redirection
- Limit the Use of Toys/Equipment
- Model Problem Solving Skills
- Provide Opportunities for Children to Make Amends

## **Challenging Behaviors**

### **Redirection**

Redirection strategies can be effective for all ages of children. Time away is a redirection strategy for caregivers to direct a child away from an over stimulating activity or environment to a more calming area. Time away should not be a ‘timed activity’ (i.e. the child sits on a chair for 5 minutes); time away it is not a punishment - but rather an opportunity for the child to co-regulate with an adult and develop self-regulation and regain control of their emotional and physical state. This strategy invites the child to return to the previous activity when they have decided they are ready to. Children learn self-regulation when they feel encouraged, when they feel they belong and are valued, and when they feel they have control in their lives. As children mature, this strategy enables them to recognize their

emotions and behaviors. Children can learn to redirect themselves away from an activity or environment before inappropriate behaviors occur or escalate. Redirection/time away environments could be anywhere that a child can begin to “feel good, calm and in control” again, while still being supervised.

### **Holding/Restraint**

Holding/Restraint will only be used for safety reasons as a last resort: after all other strategies and techniques have been unsuccessful. It may be necessary to protect a child by using a hold/restraint if a child has lost self-control, placing themselves or others at risk of imminent serious physical harm. A hold/restraint of this nature would be considered an emergency restraint. The Child Care Licensing Regulation defines an emergency restraint as “a restraint that is necessary to protect the child or others from imminent serious physical harm that is not approved and documented in a child's care plan”.

When a Hold/Restraint has been used: the staff member will inform the Supervisor, Parents/Guardians. After staff have discussed the episode /concerns with the parent / guardian and supervisor, a report will be made to Child Care Licensing, and a care plan will be developed to help reduce the frequency of inappropriate behavior.

Gentle Comfort Hold: ELP staff may use comfort holds to keep your child safe and calm during a emotionally dysregulated situation. When using a comfort hold, staff will not let go until your child is calm. Staff may use one of the following comfort holds: back to chest/chest to chest/sideways lap sit or a shoulder hug.

### **Toileting**

CDC staff will provide constant supervision while children are toileting. Children will be changed or reminded about toileting every 3 hours.

As toileting of young children involves close adult-child contact, each child will have a designated staff member whenever possible to assist them with toileting. Staff will involve the child by encouraging him/her to help as much as possible.

Staff will:

- follow the toileting procedures posted in the washrooms
- wash their hands and encourage/assist children to wash their hands
- encourage and assist children to undress and dress themselves as they are able
- decide with the family when, and if, a child is physically and emotionally ready to start to learn to use the toilet
- be patient, supportive and understanding during this learning process
- be respectful of the child's needs

## Supplies

Families are to supply diapers/pull ups/wipes and diaper cream if needed. Staff will send notes via Lillio when more supplies are needed.

## Clothing/Footwear

Our activities are messy, and accidents happen, please send your child/ren in comfortable play clothes.

**PLEASE PROVIDE A BACKPACK OR CLOTH BAG TO STORE CLOTHING. Staff will remove plastic bags from cubbies.**

We ask that at least two complete clothing outfits, including socks, be supplied daily; when clothing is soiled staff will place it in a Ziploc bag in your child's backpack.

Everyone in the Centre is expected to have indoor shoes (preferably with a rubber sole, a non-marking sole is best)

**We ask that Children; Staff & Visitors always have appropriate outdoor clothing.** Waterproof splash/snow pants, boots, coats, mittens, etc. Refer to our Outdoor Play & Sun Safety on page 18.

Please label all your children's belongings with first initial and last name, e.g. "G. Smith".

ELP staff are not responsible for personal items that are lost / left at the Centre (shoes, boots, and outerwear) after hours. We will do our best to keep your entire child's personal belongings in their cubby. When clothes are not labeled, we take the children's word when sorting out "what belongs to whom".

## Bedding, Blankets and Snuggle Buddies

Playcare will provide cots/mats for Nap/Quiet time. They are cleaned/disinfected on a weekly basis or immediately if needed. Families are required to provide their child with supplies needed for nap/quiet time. We ask that you provide bedding (blanket or sleeping bag) and snuggle buddy with a cloth bag or backpack for storage. Staff will ensure your child's belongings are stored separately. Nap/quiet time supplies will be sent home Friday's to be laundered, unless they've been soiled/contaminated prior they will be sent home at the end of the day. Please label all your child's belongings.

## **Outdoor Play & Sun Safety**

ELP follows the weather forecast (air quality and UV index) and hourly temperature on the Environment and Climate Change Canada website and Weather Canada App.

### **During the warm weather Spring / Summer (May to September)**

Children will be spending time outdoors enjoying the fresh air and sunshine. We play outside in the rain/splash and run in puddles (as long as there is no thunder / lightning or a downpour). If we are outside and we hear thunder everyone will come inside immediately, we will return outside ½ hour after hearing the last sound of thunder.

To protect the children from an over exposure to the sun we are recommending the following precautions:

- A sun hat
- A light, loose fitting shirt
- Sunscreen that is at least **50 SPF** (refer to Sunscreen consent forms for specific details)
- Staff will limit the outside time between the hours of 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM to a maximum of 30 minutes at a time when the UV index is between High and Extreme.

### **During the colder weather Fall /Winter (October to April)**

During the winter months we will play outside with temperatures as low as –20 (including wind chill)

To protect the children from the cold /wetness we are recommending the following precautions:

- Waterproof mittens
- Winter boots
- Hats that cover their ears fully or a balaclava
- Winter clothing i.e. warm jacket and snow pants

Staff have found that children who wear wool mittens / gloves get their hands cold quickly when playing in the snow. Waterproof mittens tend to be best.

**Parents & Guardians please take your children to use the bathroom before getting them ready for outside time. Then meet the teachers outside in the playground**

## **Gym Time**



When it is too cold to be outside, we will have gym time (Playcare will use the gym twice a day).

## **Licensing Standard of Practice Active Play**

### **What is Active Play?**

Active play is a physical activity which includes moderate to vigorous bursts of high energy, raises children's heart rate, and may make them 'huff and puff' such as running or jumping. For an infant or toddler, active play may include reaching out for a toy, rolling over, balancing in a sitting position and crawling/walking.

### **Why is active play Important?**

Active play helps to promote healthy growth and development and supports body control and movement. Active play can help build strong bones and muscles, improve balance, coordination and assists with the development of gross motor and fine motor skills. Active play also helps to promote children's confidence, improves concentration and thinking and learning skills and provides opportunities to develop social skills and make friends.

**Early Learning Program staff will implement our Active Play Policies daily. Active Play policy is posted on the parent board.**

### **Screen Time**

We feel that in today's world, managing screen time is an ongoing challenge that is a responsibility of the families.

**As per the Licensing Standard of Practice Active Play #5. All licensed childcare programs must limit screen time (TV, computer, electronic games) to 30 minutes or less a day.**

- **Programs where children are in attendance for 3 hours or less should not include screen time activities into the daily routine.**
- **Screen time is not offered to children under two years of age.**

**\*ELP staff may use screens for therapeutic music/ technology and to supplement learning experiences in ways such as showing photos, pictures, or short video clips.**

***Early Learning Program has chosen to be screen time free. We ask that Staff and Families respect our screen time free and use phones for photographing only in our program. Please step out of the classroom when talking or texting.***

One designated member of staff will carry a cell phone when they are away from the Centre to be used in case of emergencies.

### **Implementation of Lillio (formerly Hi Mamma) Software Program**

The Early Learning Program staff will be using "Lillio" to record activities and share updates about your child's day. We will also be sharing portfolio photos via Lillio which you can choose to download.



Families will also be able to access other program information such as menu plans and lesson plans.

Once families have submitted their “consent to participate in Lillio” they will be enrolled in the program.

- ELP Staff will be using Ipads to share information, photos, and daily reports. Preschool reports will be completed after each session.

The use of “Lillio” will not take away from our staff being fully engaged with the children. All staff will have designated time for inputting information, either in the office or a designated space in the classroom.

## **Wellness and Illness**

**To promote health and wellness in our program, we encourage healthy habits:**

- Regular Handwashing
- Coughing / sneezing into our elbows
- Daily access to outdoor play, nature, and fresh air
- Drinking water for snack & eating healthy food

All areas of the classroom are cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected as needed on a daily and weekly basis (mouthed toys are removed immediately).

While we are sensitive to the stress that illness may cause for families, we ask that you keep your child at home or make alternate arrangements for them if they are not well. If your child is not well enough to go outside or participate in the daily activities, they are not well enough to be at the Centre. If a child is sick the staff may refuse to admit the child to the Playcare/Preschool. That is, if in their opinion, there is a risk that the child is contagious or if the child requires additional attention.

If your child becomes ill during Playcare/Preschool, we will notify you as soon as possible and ask that you pick them up. If the staff is unable to reach you, we will call the person you designate as your emergency contact. Staff will give your child a place to rest away from the other children and care for him or her while we wait for them to be picked up.

We recognize that children can get 8-10 colds a year, green/yellow discharge does not mean it is infectious, and they may have a runny nose / coughs from allergies / asthma. ELP staff will communicate with the parent / guardians on an individual basis to review the child’s symptoms and determine if they are able to attend preschool or daycare.

**Children should be excluded from the Centre for the reasons below**

- Fever over 38.3 degrees Celsius / 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Nausea and or Vomiting
- Diarrhea (any episodes of Bloody Diarrhea, more loose bowel movements than usual or Bowel Movements that are more watery or unformed than usual. 2 or more liquid or watery



stools within 24 hours). There is a risk of spreading germs from Diarrhea to surfaces used by others.

- Difficulty in breathing – wheezing or a persistent cough (young children often are unable to maintain the “cough / sneeze into your elbow” & “wash hands immediately”)
- Excessive coughing that impacts their ability to participate in the daily activities and routine (coughing that lasts continuously for 30 seconds or more within a 10-minute span i.e. if a child is coughing excessively and only stops coughing for 1- 2 minutes before starting again)
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Pain, Headaches
- Has influenza or symptoms
- Has a communicable disease
- Has a contagious infection
- Has a skin infection or an undiagnosed rash especially if it spreads rapidly
- Has an acute change in their behavior: lethargy, lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, and difficulty breathing

**Children can return to Playcare/Preschool when they are:**

Symptom free for a full 24 hours and can participate in all the daily activities.

If your child has been prescribed antibiotics or other medicine, they should stay home 24 hours after the first dose of treatment.

**Please notify the Centre if:**

Your child or someone in your household has a serious illness or contagious communicable disease.

We are obligated to make serious incident reports to Licensing/ Public Health Department when there is a “reportable communicable disease”

We email notices via the Lillio app with a copy of the BC Health files, when we are informed if a child has a communicable disease or other illness.

**Children Who become Symptomatic While at Playcare / Preschool**

If a child starts to show signs and symptoms of what could be influenza or other illness, they will be moved to the isolation area in the ELP /SCD office and the child’s parent, or guardian will be called for immediate pickup.

A CDC Staff will supervise the child until their parent / guardian arrives.

Once the child has been picked up, staff will clean/disinfect surfaces/ isolation/equipment in the area.

## **Medical Emergencies & Incidents/Accidents**

If your child is injured or becomes ill while at the Centre, staff will quickly assess the situation and follow the appropriate procedure as outlined in the Centre's Policy and Procedure manual.

As per Child Care Licensing Regulations, staff "must immediately notify a parent or emergency contact if, while under the care or supervision of the licensee, the child"

(a) becomes ill or is injured, or

(b) is involved in, or may have been involved in, a reportable incident described in Schedule H.

- Parent/caregivers will be informed as soon as possible when their child/ren has been involved in an incident / accident that requires immediate medical assistance.
- When your child/ren are involved in an incident/accident that requires staff to provide First Aide (washing/cleaning a scrap / bite that doesn't break the skin, ice, or cold cloth for a small bump etc.).
- Staff will first tend to the injured child and then complete an accident /incident or reportable incident form.
- Staff will inform families at the end of the session/day.

## **Biting**

Biting in early childhood is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. This phase catches many parents and caregivers off guard. One minute the child is playing nicely, and the next, they've bitten someone. It is usually a temporary phase that is most common between 13 and 24 months of age. In some cases, 3-5-year-old children also bite. The part of the child's brain that handles emotions, patience, and impulse control is still under construction. Their Impulse control is a skill that grows with adults co regulating with the child & modeling proper behavior. A Child's Impulse control comes to grow with the enhancement of language skills, and with the child becoming self-aware & able to self regulate.

Children bite other children for many reasons. While it might seem shocking, biting is common among little ones. However, it doesn't mean your child is intentionally being mean. A child might be teething, overly tired and frustrated. They might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of an adult or their peers. A child could be reacting to another child trying to take their toy or get into their space. Self-control is not yet available and vital language skills are still developing. Children have limited verbal skills and are impulsive without a lot of self-control. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason.

**When Biting occurs:** When the incident is seen, staff will move quickly to the scene and get down to the children's level and respond to the child who did the biting. Another staff will comfort the child who was bitten and follow the "CDC ELP procedures for when Biting Occurs" (posted in each classroom. Staff will use the following strategies.

**Respond calmly:** Take a deep breath and approach the situation calmly, firmly, and kindly. If necessary, remove the child from the conflict zone, but do it in a way that doesn't create additional distress.

**Address separation anxiety:** Separation anxiety can trigger biting; for example, a child might bite when feeling overwhelmed by parents' departure after being dropped off at the centre. In these circumstances, caregivers can help by creating reassuring routines, offering comfort items, or even providing a special goodbye ritual.

**Avoid labelling:** When a child is labeled as "the biter" of a group, it can cause more problems. This label may draw attention to the behavior and make the child think it's part of who they are, increasing the frequency or severity of biting.

**Provide Consistent Consequences:** If a child understands that a particular behavior will consistently result in a particular consequence, they will eventually make the connection between cause and effect and adjust their behavior accordingly. This doesn't mean punishment but rather a logical response to the behavior. For example, if a child bites because they want a toy, then they don't get the toy.

**Model Behavior:** Children learn by observing adults. Show them through your behavior how to handle frustration, how to be gentle, and how to communicate effectively. Don't use biting to teach a lesson of pain and how it feels on others, and refrain from using it during play. Some children who bite do it by copying behavior.

**Have Patience:** These skills take time to develop. Just as you wouldn't expect a toddler to run before, they can walk, don't expect them to have perfect control over their emotions and impulses.

**Collaborative Approach:** The consistency between home and the CDC ELP provides a seamless experience for the child. When everyone reacts the same way to the behavior and encourages the same alternatives, it reinforces learning.

**Teaching Alternatives to Biting:** Help them communicate: Teach them words or signs to express their feelings or needs. Encourage them to use these tools when they feel the urge to bite. Be consistent: In the education of young children, repetition is key. Revisit the same stories, games, or real-life situations that teach about empathy and the natural consequences of biting or being bitten, until behavior stops occurring.

**Consistency and Positive Reinforcement.** Research indicates that using positive reinforcement can be a great solution when struggling with how to stop a child from biting. Instead of focusing on the negative aspects or waiting anxiously for the behavior to repeat, when biting becomes a problem, parents and caregivers can embrace positive reinforcement as a powerful tool. This means actively looking for and celebrating positive behavior, small victories and progress.

**When biting continues: A designated Staff will “shadow” the biter for (approx. 2 weeks) and the following will happen:**

- The incident will be documented and both parents will be informed of the situation. Staff will let parents know what triggered the incident and how they handled it.
- The bite will be assessed, and it will be determined if there was blood exposed. Further steps will be followed.
- Staff will check files to ensure the children have had the necessary immunizations.
- If medical treatment is required, a copy of the incident report will be forwarded to Licensing with a reportable incident form within 24 hours.
- An inclusive care plan will be put into place.
- Referrals to other professional support might be required to support the biter.

### **Administering Medication/ Alert Forms**

If you would like Early Learning Program Staff to administer prescription or non-prescription medication to your child, the Child Care licensing regulations require that we have written consent.

All prescription medications must be labeled with the child’s name, other medications must be clearly labeled and in their original container, all medication will go home daily.

When children have severe allergic reactions and require an Epi Pen, or they have Asthma and require puffers; Alert Pages with step-by-step instructions of signs /symptoms to observe for and an emergency care plan will be completed. The Alert pages, medical consent and medications are always kept on the staff’s body.

### **Immunization Records**

As part of our licensing regulations families must provide their child’s “immunization status” on the admission & consent forms. We ask families to provide a copy of their child’s immunization record prior to the start date.

If there is a reportable Infectious / Communicable Disease outbreak within the Centre, we will be sharing information with Northern Health as per consent signed on your child/ren’s admission form. Northern Health staff will contact families individually to obtain / share information and make recommendations to the Centre.

### **Health & Nutrition - Snacks/ Lunches**

Healthy & Nutritious food and drink is an important part of our day. We ask that families join the Centre in following the Canada Food Guides Requirements when preparing food for the Early Learning Program. Food should be cut up into appropriate sizes for your child for easy consumption and reduce the risk of choking. Popcorn is not allowed for children under three years

of age. Please cut grapes and hot dogs lengthways. Even if your child does not eat these foods cut up at home, these rules exist for the safety of all children enrolled at the Centre.

### **Meals - The CDC is a NUT FREE facility**



When a child has severe/life threatening allergies, the CDC will ask families to refrain from sending certain foods.

Playcare will provide a morning and afternoon snack. Families will provide lunch for their child/ren.

Preschool Provides a snack. CDC generally budgets/provides for 2 servings of a snack item.

**Please speak directly to the staff if your child/ren has a special diet due to allergies, medical needs, or family belief. Families may provide food from home for snacks dependent upon your child/ren's special diet. We encourage families to provide a snack that is similar to what the program is serving.**

Children are not forced to eat foods provided by ELP. We do encourage them to touch it, smell it, lick it and try a small bite. Playcare children will be offered a snack from their lunch if they choose not to try at least one of the food options served. Preschool families may choose to supply their child's snack; we encourage families to provide a snack that is similar to what the program is serving. Children will be provided with sufficient time to eat.

**The menu plan will be posted on "Lillio" for Playcare and Preschool.**

### **Eating Guidelines**

- Tables are sanitized before and after use.
- Hands will be washed before and after mealtimes.
- Children are encouraged to use good manners and to clean up after themselves.
- We implement a "Family" eating style, this means that all adults in the room will sit at the table with children.
- Adults will facilitate conversations with the children at the table throughout their meals.
- Children will serve themselves with assistance from the Early Learning Program staff.

Water is the main beverage – it will be unlimited. Each child /adult will have their own "water bottle" supplied by families. Water bottles will go home each night with children – we ask that families wash and return them.

1 or 2 % milk may be served and occasionally Chocolate milk – which will be mixed with white, children will receive two servings and then offered water.

If families provide juice boxes, we ask you to do your best to make sure they are 100% juice.

### **To Prevent Choking accidents:**

- Children are closely supervised

- Everyone sits down while eating and drinking

### **Preparing snacks with the children.**

We will be making/baking snacks. Periodically children may be asked to bring an item from home, e.g. an apple to make apple sauce, a fruit or vegetable to make salads/soups.

### **Playcare Lunches**

Families will provide a nutritious lunch for their child, there will be a designated area in the fridge to store lunch bags. Playcare staff will reheat home cooked food in the microwave, please remember to label all your food containers. Commercially prepared solid foods / small packages of crackers, fruit to go etc., may be brought in their original packages.

Please speak to the staff directly or place a note in your child's lunch if you have a preference of what is eaten first otherwise, we will allow them to "choose from their lunch options".

On occasion families may choose/wish to send healthy food (muffins vs. cupcakes) with their child that can be shared with others. Please make prior arrangements with the staff as some children have allergies.

### **Playcare Quiet / Nap time**

We recognize that napping /resting is an important part of your child/ren's day as they are busy with numerous activities, and they need time to rest. Children in need of rest are more likely to get cranky, irritable, have meltdowns, get aggressive with others, and have trouble calming themselves. We will work with each family individually to set up a nap / quiet time routine for your child. All children will toilet prior to nap / quiet times. Playcare guidelines are:

- Nap time will be a maximum of 2 hours or longer as directed by parents.
- Quiet time will be a minimum of 15 min on a cot/cushion, after 15 minutes children will engage in quiet activities for a maximum of 45 min and then they will do more Centre activities.
- Staff will allow a child to nap/rest in the morning if they have indicated they are tired and need to rest.
- Children who drink milk before Nap/Quiet time will be supervised by staff. They will either sit up to drink or sit with the adult.

## **Volunteers / Students in Playcare & Early Learning Program**

The Centre's protocol for "volunteers and students" will be followed. All volunteers will be required to complete a request to volunteer form, Criminal Record Check, code of Ethics & Confidentiality forms as well as have an orientation to the room.

Parent / Guardians are welcome to volunteer. Criminal Record Checks are valid for 5 consecutive years unless you have left the Centre for more than a year. Upon returning you will need to complete a new volunteer package.

Licensing regulations state that only children registered in the Early Learning Program may attend scheduled classes. Please make arrangements for siblings when you are volunteering.

## **Community Outings.** Field trips/Short Excursions (walks around the CDC vicinity) and visitors to the Centre

Throughout the year staff will plan field trips and visitors. We are always open to suggestions for destinations and visitors that are age appropriate and safe environments for the children. Staff will periodically take the children out for walks around the CDC vicinity.

Each ELP class will have a minimum of 2 field trips per year. The first field trip occurs in March to the North Peace Culture Centre to practice our talent show performances. The second field trip will occur in May when we visit some community business for tours.

Transportation for community outings is usually provided in 1 of 3 ways.

- 1) Children and staff walk.
- 2) A school bus from School District #60 is rented.
- 3) Children and staff will use a city bus

Early Learning Program Staff and Children (Preschool or Playcare) may periodically take impromptu walks around the CDC vicinity to explore the neighborhood. Staff plan their routes in advance, inform the ELP supervisor or designate of their route, time of departure and expected time of return. A staff member will carry a cell phone for emergency purposes, client information is taken on all outings.

ALL CHILDREN are expected to accompany their class on community outings. Volunteers with Criminal Record Checks completed are welcome to join us.

Parents and children registered in ELP may attend community outings on their non – scheduled day, children are then the responsibility of the parent, and we ask that you follow the expectations / limits set by CDC staff as well as the staff person providing the tour.

The ELP staff will provide notice of outings by:

- 1) Posters at school classroom/entrance



- 2) Email Notices from staff via Lillio
- 3) Verbally during drop off and pick up of child

### **Family Crisis / Changes**

If there are any changes in the family such as separation, death, divorce, illness, extended absences, or any change in routine that may affect your child, please advise the staff so we can be prepared and be supportive to your child.

### **Emergency Drills/ Evacuation Procedures**

Fire drills will be carried out by The Early Learning Program monthly. Practice drills are carried out by the Fire Department / CDC Occupational Health & Safety Committee for the entire Centre two times per year. OH&S booklets are available upon request.

All visitors are asked to wear indoor shoes. The Fire Drill procedures are posted in each classroom. Evacuation procedures are posted in every room within the Centre.

***If we for any reason need to evacuate the building for more than an hour, Families or Emergency contacts from registration forms will be contacted. We will take our admission binders with children's information and their Back Packs with us; you may wish to put a family photo and a note for your child in their backpack.***

***The Muster Area is in front of the CDC garage.***

**During inclement weather, staff, children, and families will evacuate to the Royal Canadian Legion (10103-105 Ave)**

**If the North-West Quadrant of town is evacuated, staff, children and families will evacuate (by any means necessary) to the Fort St. John Curling Club.**

**If Fort St. John is being evacuated, staff, children and families will follow the direction of city personnel and will evacuate to the next nearest CDC or School.**

### **Confidentiality**

Information concerning individuals receiving services, or affairs of the Child Development Centre is privileged and confidential and will not be released without authorization. We ask that parents and/or guardians maintain confidentiality of all information that comes to their attention regarding the children, their families, and the staff at the Child Development Centre, respecting their privacy. Early Learning Program Staff will be happy to share information with you regarding your child/ren. Please do not ask questions about other children.

## **Smoking**

The Early Learning Program and its fenced grounds are non-smoking areas as required by the Community Care and Assisted Living Act / Child Care Regulations. Anyone wishing to smoke must do so outside of these areas. Please do not smoke near any of the CDC entrances.

## **Complaint / Conflict Resolution (as per our CDC family handbook page 8.)**

Families are encouraged to discuss questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the Early Learning Program with the staff or Early Learning Program Supervisor. If an issue arises, the goal is to resolve differences of opinion and conflict in a peaceful way and find solutions that everyone can accept. The steps outlined will be as follows:

Step 1 – The enrolling parent/guardian and Centre staff will meet to define the issues and state their point of view.

Step 2 – Solutions and/or appropriate resources will be identified, whenever appropriate.

Step 3 – A plan will be agreed upon by the enrolling parent/guardian and the Early Learning Program Supervisor and Executive Director.

Step 4 – Write a confidential letter to the President of the Society Board stating your grievance.

### **Other services Offered by the Early Learning Program**

Class Photos: Early Learning Program will plan for class photos in the New Year. Staff and Children will have class photos taken. Families may purchase 5 x 7 photos for \$5.00 per copy.

Early Learning Program will host a Purdy's Chocolate fundraising campaigns "Christmas" & "Easter". Fundraised dollars will go towards program supplies, equipment & bus rentals for fieldtrips.

**Early Learning Programs foster a fully integrated and inclusive environment where everyone plays, learns, and grows together.**

### **Other Services Offered by the Centre**

The Child Development Centre (CDC) and their families has been serving Fort St. John and area since 1973. It is dedicated to helping children who have a broad range of diverse abilities.

- Infant Development Program (Provides service for children birth to 3 years of age)
- Indigenous Infant Development Program (Provides service for children birth to 6 years of age)
- Supported Child Development Program (Currently we provide services Birth to 5 years of age)
- Speech Therapy (Provides service for children birth to school entry age)
- Physiotherapy (Provides service for children birth to school entry age)
- Occupational Therapy (Provides service for children birth to school entry age)
- Family Services (Provides service for children from 3 years of age to school entry)
- Respite/Special Services (Provides service for children from birth to the age of 19 years)
- GROW Program provides Centre based early behavioral intervention for children up to the age of six that have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- Family Play & Learn Centre provides a warm and welcoming atmosphere where families can drop in to play and interact with their child/ren. The Centre's environment promotes the development of the whole child and provides parent/caregivers with opportunities to share and learn new ways to support their child's learning through play both at the program and at home. Based on the Strong Start model, this free program is open to children birth to six years along with their parent/caregivers, however, is unique from Strong Start Centers in that the space and programming have specific design elements especially for toddlers, eighteen to thirty-six months.

Parents and guardians who have concerns regarding their child's development may request a referral for a screening or assessment. Please speak to the Early Learning Program Staff for further information.



## Coming and Going in Childcare

It is easy to assume that, since children go to childcare every day, it is not a stressful transition. Do you remember what it felt like to enter the school cafeteria by yourself and the relief of seeing someone you know inviting you to sit with them? Suddenly you had a sense of belonging and connection. If you really think about it, you will see how hard we all work, every day, to establish and maintain that feeling.

When talking about children coming to day care, we make a distinction between dropping off your child and handing off your child. The focus of dropping off your child is getting your child to childcare and leaving the task of establishing a sense of belonging and connection to your child. When handing off your child, the focus is on the parent, teacher and child working together to create a smooth transition. To clarify this difference, we use a metaphor of a rowboat approaching a dock.

### The Rowboat Metaphor

Imagine a little rowboat that holds a parent and child coming toward a dock where the teacher and children are waiting. The problem with dropping off a child is that there is a moment, with one foot on the boat and one foot on the dock, that the child faces the horrible feeling of neither being fully in the boat nor on the dock. Handing off your child, means that both adults and the child make a coordinated effort to help the child maintain a sense of belonging and connection during the transition.

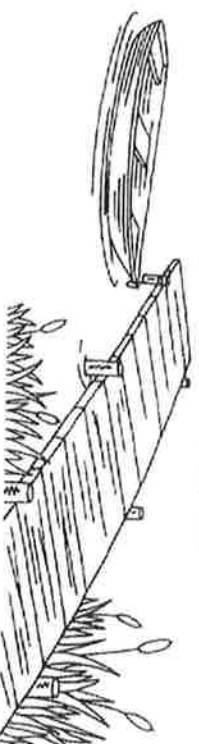
When handing off a child, the teacher reaches out one hand to hold the parent steady in the rowboat, while the other hand reaches out to steady the child. The parent's job is to steady the boat by holding onto the dock with one hand and, with the other hand, supporting the child. The child's job is to step from the boat to the dock, in a sense to step from the parent's Hands on the Circle to the teacher's Hands. When they all work together, this happens without incident.

Parents can struggle to find a balance between clinging to their child in a drawn out goodbye and dismissing the importance of scaffolding the handoff. Teachers can also make it difficult if they are preoccupied or unavailable for the critical transition. Providing consistent structure for both the child and the parent at the beginning and ending of each day helps the child feel connected and safe.

### Hands to Hands

The structure is created by the teacher being in the same place and available every day and the parent coming all the way into the room to greet and check in with the teacher. It can be helpful to have the sign-in sheet near the teacher rather than next to the door. The teacher's welcoming and confident presence helps parents act with confidence. When it is time to leave, they use a loosely scripted transition, which contains the following elements:

- The teacher says to the child, "Your job is to say goodbye to your parent and start your day at school, your parent's job is to say good bye and start their day while holding you in their mind, and my job is to take over from your parent to be the one in charge so I can keep you safe".
  - The parent and child say goodbye and the teacher and child watch the parent leave. When the parent reaches the door, they turn and wave to show they are still holding the child in mind.
  - The teacher then helps the child engage in the activity at hand. A corresponding script is used at the end of the day.
- When both the parent and teacher have a confident presence, children do not need to act like they are OK when they are not, or act needier than they feel. They can simply focus on needing what they need and feeling what they feel without having to worry about the adults.







Fort St John Child Development Centre  
10417-106<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Fort St. John, B.C  
V1J 2M8  
Phone: (250) 785-3200  
Fax: (250) 785-3202

### Early Learning Program Playcare Gradual Entry plans / options

Playcare and Preschool are licensed by the Ministry of Education and Childcare as Group Settings for 3–5-year-olds, only children registered in the program may attend a full day/ session. We recognize that sometimes it is difficult to say goodbye when dropping off your child/ren at the Centre. Parents/guardians are welcome to accompany their child into the classroom and get them settled. We have found it best to say good-bye before leaving. Parents are welcome to phone the Centre and ask staff to check on their child, ELP staff will use “Lillio” to send you a quick photo / note update as soon as your child is settled. ELP staff implement the “Rowboat Metaphor Model” by Glenn Cooper.

We recognize that this plan may not work for all children and families, please feel free to discuss one of the Gradual Entry plans with ELP staff. We are open to other gradual entry plans that will best meet your child's needs with the intent that you will be comfortable and confident in leaving your child with the ELP staff. We ask that you plan for childcare for siblings during the Gradual Entry. ELP have planned events that families (siblings and other family members are invited to attend) During the gradual entry we ask that the Parent attending spend time interacting with their child in the classroom and encourage communication / interaction with their peers and the ELP staff.

#### **Gradual Entry Plan one**

visit 1. Child & parent attend 9 - 11  
visit 2. Child & parent visit 11:00 -1 or 1:30 (bring blanket and stuffy (if needed) so staff can set up their cot for Nap / Quiet time  
visit 3. Child attends on their own 9-11 (parent will stay in the building)  
visit 4. Child attends on their own 9-12  
visit 5. Child attends on their own 10:00 -2:30  
Then child starts their regular hours on their own.

#### **Gradual Entry Plan two**

visit 1. Child & parent attend 9 - 11  
visit 2. Child & parent visit 11:00 -1 or 1:30 (bring blanket and stuffy (if needed) so staff can set up their cot for Nap / Quiet time  
visit 3. Child attends on their own for either a half or full day  
Then child starts their regular hours on their own.

#### **Gradual Entry Plan three**

visit 1. Child & parent attend 9 - 11 to meet staff and children  
Then child starts their regular hours on their own.







Fort St John Child Development Centre  
10417-106<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Fort St. John, B.C  
V1J 2M8  
Phone: (250) 785-3200  
Fax: (250) 785-3202

### Early Learning Program Preschool Gradual Entry plans

Playcare and Preschool are licensed by the Ministry of Education and Childcare as Group Settings for 3–5-year-olds, only children registered in the program may attend a full day/ session. We recognize that sometimes it is difficult to say goodbye when dropping off your child/ren at the Centre. Parents/guardians are welcome to accompany their child into the classroom and get them settled. We have found it best to say good-bye before leaving. Parents are welcome to phone the Centre and ask staff to check on their child, ELP staff will use “Lillio” to send you a quick photo / note update as soon as your child is settled. ELP staff implement the “Rowboat Metaphor Model” by Glenn Cooper.

We recognize that this plan may not work for all children and families, please feel free to discuss one of the Gradual Entry plans with ELP staff. We are open to other gradual entry plans that will best meet your child's needs with the intent that you will be comfortable and confident in leaving your child with the ELP staff. We ask that you plan for childcare for siblings during the Gradual Entry. ELP have planned events that families (siblings and other family members are invited to attend)

During the gradual entry we ask that the Parent attending spend time interacting with their child in the classroom and encourage communication / interaction with their peers and the ELP staff.

#### **Preschool Gradual Entries**

##### **Gradual Entry Plan one**

Session 1. Child & Parent arrive ½ hour after the session starts and stay for 2 hours.

Session 2. & 3. Child & Parent arrive ½ hour after the session starts and stay for 2. 5 hours.

Session 4. & 5. Child & Parent arrive at the start of the session and stay until the end. The Parent will step out of the room for short intervals. ELP staff and Parents will assure the child that \*\*\*\*\* is coming back.

Session 6. Child Attends session on their own, ELP staff will contact the Parent if they are unable to coregulate and calm the child. The Parent will come back 15 – 20 minutes before the end of the session to participate in the end of the day daily activities.

##### **Gradual Entry Plan two**

Session 1 & 2. Child & Parent arrive at the beginning of the session and stay for 2 hours or longer if the child seems to be adjusting. The Parent will step out of the room for short intervals. ELP staff and Parents will assure the child that \*\*\*\*\* is coming back.

Session 3. & 4. Child & Parent arrive at the beginning of the session and stays for ½ the session. Parents spend 15-20 Minutes getting the child settled (ELP staff will set a timer) and then they leave. Parents may choose to stay in the Centre or are able to return if called. ELP staff will contact the Parent if they are unable to coregulate and calm the child.

**Gradual Entry Plan three**

visit 1. Child & Parent attends the Preschool orientation to meet staff and other children.  
Then child starts Preschool on their own.  
ELP staff will contact the Parent if they are unable to coregulate and calm the child.



Fort St John Child Development Centre  
 10417-106<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
 Fort St. John, B.C  
 V1J 2M8  
 Phone: (250) 785-3200  
 Fax: (250) 785-3202

Early Learning Program Closure Days  
 September 2025 to August 2026

Tuesday September 30	STAT - National Truth and Reconciliation Day
Monday October 13	STAT – Thanksgiving Day
Friday October 24	Early Learning Program Closure
Tuesday November 11	STAT- Remembrance Day
Tuesday December 2	Early Learning Program Closure
December 22 – January 2	CDC / Early Learning Program Closure Winter Vacation
Monday February 16	STAT- Family Day
Friday February 27	Early Learning Program Closure
March 23 to 27	Early Learning Program <b>Preschool</b> Closure Playcare remains open
Thursday April 2	Early Learning Program Closure
Friday April 3	STAT - Good Friday
Monday April 6	STAT - Easter Monday
Monday May 18	STAT – Victoria Day
Wednesday July 1	STAT – Canada Day
Monday August 3	STAT – BC Day

