

# Child Care Centre



## Parent Handbook

### **Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place**

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

Bracebridge Children's Place  
2 tamarack Trail, Bracebridge  
Phone: 705-645-3362

Gravenhurst Children's Place  
101-2 Centennial Dr, Gravenhurst  
Phone: 705-687-6664

BPS Children's Place  
90 McMurray St, Bracebridge  
Phone: 705-645-2229

Huntsville Children's Place  
16 Caroline St West, Huntsville  
Phone: 705-783-0255

Fairvern Children's Place  
11 Paisley Avenue, Huntsville  
Phone: 705-

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## WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome you to our Early Learning and Child Care Centers (ELCC) . We trust that your child will enjoy their experience at our centre.

Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place is a not-for-profit and registered charitable organization incorporated through the Ministry of the Attorney General. Our ELCC's are licensed under the Child Care Early Years Act of the Ministry of Education. Qualified Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE), teaching assistants and cooks play an important role in maintaining program quality. Our staff strive to promote a healthy caring inclusive learning environment.

As a not-for-profit and registered charitable organization, governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, Muskoka Family Focus & Children's Place strives to support the needs of all families with young children in Muskoka. Your input is both valued and welcomed. If you would like to forward us your feedback, this can be done by contacting Sarah MacKay, Managing Director at 645-3027.

In this parent handbook you will find all the information about our programs and the policies we follow. We request that you read through the parent handbook and ask any questions during your visit to the centre. We encourage open, kind, respectful and confidential communication and look forward to getting to know your family and their needs. Our team is made up of caring professionals, including Early Childhood Educators, Assistants, and other child development specialists, dedicated to supporting your child's growth and learning.

At **Fairvern Children's Place** we offer care to children infant to 4 years of age on a full or part time basis. Our hours of operation are Monday to Friday 6:30a.m. to 7:00p.m. and Saturday's 8:00 a.m. to 4:30p.m. Fairvern Children's Place is located 11 Paisley Ave, Huntsville attached to Fairvern Longterm Care Facility.

At **Bracebridge Children's Place**, we offer care to all children from 15 months to 4 years on a full or part time basis. We also provide a program for all children aged 3.8 to 11 years before and after school (provided there is sufficient enrollment). Bracebridge Children's Place is located at Monsignor Michael O'Leary Catholic School. Our hours of operation are Monday to Friday 7:30a.m -5:30p.m.

At **Bracebridge Public School**, we offer care to all children from 2.5 to 4 years on a full or part time basis. We also provide a program for all children aged 3.8 to 12 years before and after school (provided there is sufficient enrollment). This centre is located in the Bracebridge Public School. Our hours of operation are Monday to Friday 7:30a.m -5:30p.m.

Our **Gravenhurst Children's Place** offers care to all children from 0 to 4 years on a full or part time basis. We are located behind the Gravenhurst YMCA. Our hours of operation are Monday to Friday 7:30a.m -5:30p.m.

**Huntsville Children's Place Early Learning and Enhancement Child Care Centre** offers care to the families of Sabrina Park for children aged 18 months to 4 years on a full or part time basis. Our hours of operation are Monday to Friday 8:45a.m -2:30p.m.

Other services offered by Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place, Before and After School Programs and (if possible) Summer School Age Programs in Huntsville, Gravenhurst and Bracebridge as well as workshops for parents and caregivers.

### **Centre Supervisors and Contact Information:**

**Fairvern Children's Place- Supervisor Angela Feltis- 705-644-1858**

**Bracebridge Children's Place- Supervisor Jennifer Brush, RECE- 705-645-3362 or cell 705-644-1520**

**BPS Children's Place- Supervisor Jennifer Brush, RECE- 705-645-2229 or cell 705-644-1520**

**Gravenhurst Children's Place- Supervisor Natasha Jacobs- 705-687-6664 or 705-644-2454**

**Huntsville Children's Place- Supervisor Sarah Shields- 705-783-0255 or 705-644-1858**

## PROGRAM STATEMENT

Our (Early Learning and) Child Centres and School Age Programs strive to provide a positive learning environment for your child to enhance his or her level of development through play experiences and the guidance of professionally trained Registered Early Childhood Educators (and assistants) who are members of and in good standing with the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators. Employees, students and volunteers will review this program statement prior to interacting with the children and at least once annually and when this statement is modified.

We believe children are "competent, capable, curious and rich in potential".

Our Early Learning Centres use the *How Does Learning Happen, (HDLH) Ontario's Pedagogy for The Early Years - 2014*<sup>1</sup> as the document to guide programming and pedagogy<sup>2</sup>

For the children, their families and our staff, our program strategies are designed to foster physical, social, emotional, intellectual, creative and spiritual development by offering experiences that promote:

- a. Health, safety, nutrition and well-being;
- b. Curiosity, creativity, initiative and independence;
- c. Self-esteem, confidence and decision making capabilities;
- d. Respect for themselves, others and their environment;
- e. Encourage responsive feelings of friendship and consideration;
- f. Communication and interaction to foster positive responsive relationships;
- g. Self-regulation and co-operation;
- h. Inquiry based play through child initiated exploration and adult-support experiences;
- i. A well-balanced daily schedule that includes active indoor and outdoor play as well as rest/quiet time that provides consideration to individual needs;
- j. Integration of children with challenging needs. Along with the assistance of various resource services in the community, we strive to meet the needs of all children.

Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in (a) to (j) on the children and their families.

As stated in the *How Does Learning Happen?* document, "Learning and development happens within the context of relationships among children, families, educators and the environment." Our qualified staff, students and volunteers guide the early learning environment to promote the Four Foundations of *How Does Learning Happen?* These four foundations include: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression. Our employees, students and volunteers use these foundations to provide a nurturing environment that creates a vision for all children's future potential. Our employees, students and volunteers are supported to participate in continuous professional learning. They are required to document and review the impact of the strategies as stated above on the children and their families. Our employees, students and volunteers are also monitored throughout the year to ensure that all components of this program statement are implemented in the operation of each program.

Our goal is to provide a secure and safe learning environment through enjoyable experiences for all children attending our program. We involve local community partners and allow those partners to support children, their families and our employees, students and volunteers.

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<sup>1</sup>The HDLH document can be found on the Min. of Ed. website: [www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Pedagogy - The method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept.

## **Program Statement Goals Approaches**

### **Health, Safety, Nutrition and Well Being (a) (g)**

- Employees, students and volunteers create positive eating environments
- Employees, students and volunteers are responsive to children's cues
- Stimulating, safe environment available for intentional active play that supports individual children's abilities
- Challenging experiences in available that support varied abilities in order for children to practice self-regulation skills and work towards mastering a skill
- All meals, snacks and beverages must meet the recommendations in the Canada's Food Guide
- Child health check completed daily (on attendance)
- Safe, calming and nurturing environment
- Self-regulation and co-operative skills encouraged
- Children are dressed appropriately for the weather

### **Inquiry Play Based Programming (b) (h) (i) (k)**

- Well balanced daily schedule
- Outdoor time (2 hrs) with activities offered OR indoor physical activity during inclement weather
- Indoor physical activity
- Creative opportunities available
- Diverse age appropriate books available
- Science/nature exploration available
- Music/language opportunities available
- Block play available
- Sensory experiences offered
- Dramatic play opportunities available
- Co-operative opportunities offered to children
- Area available for spiritual reflection ie: cozy tent
- Quiet/rest period offered with appropriate activities
- Program plans current and posted based on the interests of the children
- Various documentation is visible to support the pedagogical learning of all children

### **Interactions with Children (c) (e) (f) (j)**

- Tone of voice is calm and nurturing to the children
- Genuine interest shown to each child
- Children are listened to and respected to help foster positive reciprocal relationships
- Children are supported with positive reinforcement to build self-esteem, self-confidence and to nurture decision making skills
- Children's emotions are recognized and responded to with empathy through responsive communication between Educators and children
- Educators, students and volunteers at child's level role modelling and encouraging independence, curiosity, initiative and self-help skills through reciprocal age appropriate conversation
- Educators, students and volunteers communicate with children to identify feelings/emotions encouraging friendship and consideration of others ie: 'bucket filling' and inclusion of all
- Educators, students and volunteers encourage children to be respectful of others and themselves
- Frequent age appropriate verbal interaction with children to foster a sense of security
- Frequent appropriate physical contact with children
- Appropriate use of body and verbal language to foster positive communication and relationships
- Each child greeted (by name) and acknowledged
- Children encouraged to meet individual developmental goals
- Children with special needs are integrated including the development and implementation of Individual Program Plans (IPP)
- Focus is on children as opposed to the adults in the room

### **Interactions with Families and Our Community (f) (j) (k)**

- Families are greeted daily by name in a friendly welcoming manner (eye contact)
- Family inquiries answered or redirected/referred
- Communication between educators, students, volunteers and families is respectful to foster positive relationships between the children, parents and educators

- Families are encouraged to participate in the program ie: scheduled visit, drop in, call, etc. and engage in the documentation displayed/demonstrated to ensure our strategies are effective
- Respect for individual differences, sensitivity to differing parenting styles, culture, etc...

#### **Sanitary Practices (a)**

- Staff, students and volunteers follow all recommendations by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
- Children helped to wash before eating, after toileting, outdoor play, and as needed
- Surfaces cleaned and disinfected as appropriate
- Equipment/toys cleaned and disinfected per policy
- Cots cleaned and disinfected, linens laundered at least weekly
- Children assisted/encouraged to use sanitary practices when using the toilet

#### **Safety Practices (a)**

- Children supervised AT ALL TIMES
- Cleaning supplies inaccessible to children
- Children sitting while eating or drinking

#### **Environment (d) (g)**

- Educators, students and volunteers use the environment as a 'third teacher' ie: children are involved in room set up
- Respect for the environment is woven into all activities throughout the day
- The environment is designed to accommodate varied children's sensitivities and arousal states and to allow for a calm, focused, alert state as well
- Toys/equipment to promote all areas of development – inquiry play based learning
- Toys/equipment suitable to developmental levels

#### **Food Handling (a)**

- Allergies listed – employees, students and volunteers aware of allergies, list up to date
- Employees, students and volunteers sit with children during meal times and it is a friendly social time
- Good eating habits and manners encouraged
- Children are assisted when needed
- Children are encouraged to serve themselves
- Proper food eating techniques modelled (use of utensils, dishes, cups)
- Proper use of dishes ie: wet food must be on a plate or in bowl

#### **Kitchen Maintenance and Duties (a)**

- All meals, snacks and beverages must meet the recommendations in the Canada's Food Guide
- Culturally diverse options offered
- Individual food preparation opportunities offered to children ie: fruit sticks
- Healthy meals and snacks are being prepared with as much 'homemade' food as possible ie: homemade granola bars
- Low fat, aspartame, trans fat and high sodium food are not included in our menus
- Homogenized milk is being served to children under 2 years of age
- Water is offered and available throughout the day
- Kitchen floor swept daily
- Cleaning and disinfecting happens regularly throughout the day
- Cleaning checklist is completed daily, weekly, etc.

## **VISION, MISSION STATEMENT AND VALUES**

### **VISION**

To nurture Muskoka children and families to be strong, healthy, resilient and reach their full potential.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place is dedicated to providing high quality evidence-based child and family supports and education in an affordable, accessible, flexible and safe learning environment.

### **VALUES**

We value children and families.

We value learning, loving and laughter.

We value that all children are competent, capable and rich in potential.

We value innovative approaches to education

We value open communication.

We value teamwork, recognizing the unique contributions of all individuals.

We value educators who are qualified and highly skilled.

We value collaboration throughout the community.

We value early intervention and inclusion for all children.

We value learning through play in a variety of environments.

Parents are welcome to volunteer at the centre. It helps to build a sense of community instead of just a place for parents to leave their children for the day. The Program Supervisor will be happy to guide you through the process of volunteering at one of our Early Learning and Childcare Centres.

We accept student educators from the Early Childhood Education college and/or university programs and co-op students from the high schools.

Students and volunteers are supervised at all times by the staff.

*"It takes a whole village to raise a child"*

## **Employees, Students and Volunteers**

All staff members are certified in Standard First Aid/Infant and Child CPR, and are immunized as recommended by the local medical officer of health. They have a current satisfactory Vulnerable Sector Screen and complete an annual offence declaration form.

|                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Centre Supervisor                    | who is responsible for meeting your family's needs by ensuring a high quality child care setting. They/them is also responsible for the employees and overall program. They/them interacts with the children on a regular basis.                                |
| Registered Early Childhood Educators | who plan and implement a fun filled inquiry based program, for children to learn through play, in a safe environment for the children enrolled in the program.                                                                                                  |
| Assistants                           | who work cooperatively to assist the Early Childhood Educator to plan and implement the program as well as assist with the child care responsibilities in the assigned setting.                                                                                 |
| Cook                                 | who is responsible for menu planning, preparing the snacks and lunch, shopping, as well as maintaining a healthy and sanitary environment.                                                                                                                      |
| Relief Staff                         | who are under the supervision of a qualified educator, who cover for our employees when they are sick, or on vacation.                                                                                                                                          |
| Resource Teachers                    | who assist the Educators and Assistants with children with special needs or children who require a little extra help to learn at their highest potential. The Resource Teachers are employed by Community Living South Muskoka and Community Living Huntsville. |
| Students/Volunteers                  | who are under the supervision of a qualified Educator, may assist in the classrooms with child care tasks.                                                                                                                                                      |



## **FEE STRUCTURE**

### **Admission**

There is an annual administration fee of \$60.00 per family, which will be added to your first invoice in October.

Accounts are paid by-weekly on a predetermined schedule by preauthorized debit, online payments or interact payments only. Invoices will be emailed to your email address. In the event a payment is returned due to NSF, a \$25.00 fee will be charged to your account. On inclement weather days, the program is open, therefore you will be billed.

### ***WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO DISCONTINUE CARE IF PAYMENT IS NOT RECEIVED.***

Rates are subject to change. Notification of change of rates will be forwarded to all parents prior to implementation. Ontario signed an agreement – Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC) in March 2022 that will lower licensed child care fees to an average of \$10 per day by December 2026. Muskoka Family Focus has made the decision under the guidance of our Board of Directors to opt into this agreement. Families who have children enrolled in licensed child care where the agency has opted into the agreement with the Province will see a 25% reduction in fees retroactive to April 1, 2022, with an additional 25% reduction for 2023. The current fee reduction from the province is a total of 52.75 % with a cap of not more than \$22.00 per day for 2025. \*This fee reduction applies only to children who are under 6 years of age by June 2026 and/or who will still be 5 years of age at the end of 2026.

### **Attendance & Fees**

- Children must be enrolled for a minimum of two days per week.
- Parents must select the specific days their child will attend and pay for those day.
- Fees apply to the chosen days regardless of absences due to illness, personal reasons, or holidays.
- No refunds are provided for services that have already been used. Refunds and/or credits may be offered on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Management team

### **Daily Base Fee Structure (up to 9 hrs/day) effective October 1, 2018- rate includes the CWELCC discount effective January 1, 2026**

| ELC | Toddler    | Junior Preschool | Senior Preschool | Infant     |
|-----|------------|------------------|------------------|------------|
|     | Daily Rate | Daily Rate       | Daily Rate       | Daily Rate |
| BCP | \$19.37    | \$ 18.90         | \$18.90          | N/A        |
| BPS | N/A        | \$ 18.90         | \$18.90          | N/A        |
| GCP | \$19.37    | \$ 18.90         | \$18.90          | \$21.50    |
| FCP | \$19.37    | \$18.90          | \$18.90          | \$21.50    |

### **Non-Base Fees**

\$3.00 extended day fee will apply to any child using the daycare for more than 9 hours per day.

\$25.00 NSF charge., \$1.00 per minute late fee., \$60.00 annual admin fee.

### **Hours of operation:**

| Child Care Name              | Monday to Friday     | Saturday      | Sunday |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|--------|
| Gravenhurst Children's Place | 7:30 a.m to 5:30 p.m | Closed        | Closed |
| Bracebridge Children's Place | 7:30 a.m to 5:30 p.m | Closed        | Closed |
| BPS Children's Place         | 7:30a.m to 5:30 p.m  | Closed        | Closed |
| Farivern Children's Place    | 6:30a.m to 7:00 p.m  | 6:30am-4:30pm | Closed |
| Huntsville Children's Place  | 8:45 a.m to 2:30 p.m | Closed        | Closed |

All Programs at closed on the following Holidays:

|                      |                      |                     |                      |                                       |
|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>New Years Day</b> | <b>Good Friday</b>   | <b>Victoria Day</b> | <b>Civic Holiday</b> | <b>Thanksgiving Day</b>               |
| <b>Family Day</b>    | <b>Easter Monday</b> | <b>Canada Day</b>   | <b>Labour Day</b>    | <b>Christmas Day &amp; Boxing Day</b> |

Although childcare is not provided on these days, parents are still required to pay for the stat days listed above.

#### **Other Closure Dates:**

The centres will close at 3:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. The centres will be closed between Christmas and New Year's (Dec 25 – Jan 1). Centre will reopen regularly on Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **Professional Learning Day Closure:**

The centre may close two additional days throughout the year for our Educators to participate in professional learning opportunities. Parents will not be billed for this day. Parents will be notified minimally 1 month in advance of these dates. This year's date for Professional learning is Friday October 23, 2026.

#### **Discharge**

A **TWO WEEK WRITTEN NOTICE** is required for termination of care. If no notice is given, a two-week payment will be required. If termination of care is required from Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place, parents will NOT receive a refund for services already received. The two weeks notice in writing will be waived.

#### **Subsidies**

The District of Muskoka may provide full or partial financial assistance for those families who are eligible. Please feel free to call the District office at (705)645-2412 and ask to speak to an intake worker to arrange for an appointment.

### **Our Programs**

- **Structured Daily Routine:** Children follow a regular schedule, helping them feel secure and know what to expect. Our Educators use the *How Does Learning Happen?* framework to guide programming, providing inquiry-based learning opportunities through play.
- **Learning Through Play:** Our program is varied and stimulating, including gross motor activities, sensory experiences, dramatic play, creative arts, puzzles, games, literacy and numeracy activities, music, nature walks, supervised field trips, and outdoor play. Activities are implemented around children's interests and curiosity, encouraging exploration, problem-solving, creativity, and confidence—laying the foundation for future learning.
- **Outdoor Time:** Children spend at least 2 hours outdoors daily, weather permitting.
- **Meals and Snacks:** Children receive a full lunch prepared according to the revised Canada Food Guide and in consultation with the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. Milk is served at lunch, and water is available throughout the day. Morning and afternoon snacks include items like vegetables, fruit, crackers, and cheese. Menus are posted at each centre. Fairvern Children's Place provides a dinner for children who are in care after 5:30 p.m as per their scheduled time.
- **Rest Time:** Children nap or rest for at least one hour in the afternoon, up to a maximum of 2 hours, in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act.
- **Developmental Monitoring:** Educators use the Look See (formerly Nipissing Developmental Screening Tool) to monitor each child's growth in cognitive, vision, hearing, speech, language, communication, motor, social-emotional, and self-help skills. Screening occurs in or around your child's birthday or milestone, and parents are informed if extra support may be needed. The tool can also be completed at home, and parents may meet with educators anytime to discuss their child's development.
- **Inquiry Based Programming:** Daily activities may change based on the group's needs and interests. Program plans are posted in each room, and parents are encouraged to review them.
- **Parent Communication:** Educators use the Lillio app (formerly HiMama) to share daily updates, photos, messages about events, supplies, meals, toileting, and developmental progress. Parents will receive the necessary information to set up a Lillio account. Photos shared through Lillio should not be posted on social media due to the presence of other children. Our educators focus is on your children through out the day and will upload pictures and information at times in the day when it is less busy. Eg rest time.

## **Important Information when enrolling your child**

### **Be sure to:**

1. Apply for subsidy, if applicable (District of Muskoka 705-645-2412).
2. Fill out the online registration forms and enrollment agreement with as much detail as possible.
3. Bring in record of immunization and submit the form to the Health Unit online.
4. Complete the PAD agreement, void cheque, parent agreement through Digi-signer link.
5. Sign and submit the last page of the parent handbook to the supervisor.
6. Set up a few visits prior to your start date.

### **What to bring:**

1. Bring in a complete change of labelled clothing in a knapsack to be left at the centre.
2. Make sure your child has a complete set of appropriate seasonal outdoor clothing.
3. Supplies for diapering and toileting eg package diapers, wipes, cream, cloth diapers, extra clothes etc.
4. Blanket for rest time or something that makes them feel like home
5. Family photos of important people/things in your child's life. Eg Mom, dad, grandparent, pet, sibling
6. Water bottle labelled with child's name

## **Clothing**

Your child should wear play clothes, which are comfortable and easy for him/her to manage. They should be easily laundered as he/she may get paint, mud, glue, etc. on them. They should be free of complicated fastenings, buckles, etc. as fostering independence is an important element of our program. Running shoes or hard soled shoes are a necessity especially for indoor footwear during winter months.

Please label your child's clothing, particularly items such as underpants, mitts, and boots, it will help prevent them from getting mixed up with other children's belongings. We are not responsible for lost clothing.

Any clothing borrowed from the centre must be laundered and returned promptly. We have a very small supply.

## **THE FIRST DAY AND VISIT**

At our Early Learning Centres we appreciate that as a parent of a young child recently registered at our centre, you are probably asking yourself many questions. Will my child be happy at the centre? What if he/she cries? What do I do if he/she does not want me to leave? How long should I stay when dropping him/her off? At your visit the program supervisor will answer any questions you may have. Also please feel free to ask the educators. Please visit the programs a few times with your child to help you and your child feel comfortable in their new surroundings. This is a great time to ask the educator questions rather than on your first day drop off. During the visit the educator will show you where their cubby is and where to put their knapsack/bag of extra clothes.

On the first day, How long should you stay? That depends on you and your child. Some children feel comfortable enough from their visits, while others need a little more reassuring. When you are ready to leave, an Educator will be available to help if necessary. When you give your child to the Educator, you are telling the child that this is a person you can trust. It is a good idea to put that message into words also: "You can go with Karen now. She will take good care of you". If you sneak out after your child is interested in an activity, your child will lose trust in you. They need to know that you are going and that you will be back. As soon as you say you are going, **go!!!** Otherwise, they will sense your hesitation and will hang on for dear life. If you feel insecure when you leave, you are giving your child the message that you are uncomfortable with this environment. Your child needs the reassurance that this is a safe place, and that he/she will have a good day. A good way to do this is to say, "See you later, I will be back to pick you up", then leave with a smile.

Throughout the day, call your child's centre as often as you need to check in on them. Educators will often send more pictures on Lillio on the first couple days to let you know how your child is doing throughout the day.

**Bracebridge Children's Place – 705-645-3362**

**Bracebridge Public School Children's Place – 705-645-2229**

**Gravenhurst Children's Place – 705-687-6664**

**Huntsville Children's Place - 705-783-0255**

**Fairvern Children's Place- 705-644-1858**

## **Field Trips**

The children are occasionally taken on special outings. Your child's Educator will announce the trip in advance. Parents are welcome to participate in the field trips as an Educator-helper. You will be advised of any outing other than neighbourhood walks, and you will be requested to sign a permission form. Parents may be asked to contribute to the cost of the trip.

### **Closing Time, Pick Up and Late Policy**

The centre closes promptly at the above listed time and a \$1.00 per minute fee will be charged to parents who are late. MFF&CP has the right to discontinue care after 3 late charges/pick-ups.

- If you foresee being late, please call and let us know; perhaps some arrangements can be made.
- Try to be punctual; Educators have families to get home to.
- If by closing time a parent has not called and can't be contacted by our staff, the emergency person named on your registration form will be called. If this person cannot be contacted or make arrangements to pick up the child at once, the C.A.S. will be called to pick up the child by 30 minutes after closing. The Educators cannot be made responsible.

Our Educators will take the necessary action to protect the children in our care if there is suspicion the parent or person picking up the child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs including recreational marijuana. An alternate person will be contacted to pick up the child. CAS and or the OPP may also be contacted if co-operation is challenging, or our Educator(s) feel the child is in need of protection.

In the case of a separation between parents, both parents will need to agree to the authorized people on the pickup list. If legal court documents specify otherwise, then that is what will be followed. Any changes to the authorized pick up list must be in writing.

\*Parents/guardians must provide us with any legal court documents and/or child protection order in place involving the children as well as any updates.

### **Inclement Weather:**

Our child care programs are open on bus cancellation days. If the Schools Close in the child care area our child care programs will close also.

In case of winter storms, the centre will close at the discretion of the Management Team. Announcements will be made on The Moose and Country 102. Notifications will also be listed on the Muskoka Family Focus Facebook page. We will do our best to send an email or message on Lillio prior to opening. An Educator will be on site, if possible, to turn families and children around. Consideration for safety is our first concern.

If the centre opens in the morning and the weather deteriorates through out the day, MFF&CP will decide 2:00 pm and notify parents of an early pick up between 4 - 4:30 pm.

## **HEALTH POLICY**

We do our best to ensure that your child is not in contact with children who have a contagious disease.

Therefore, it is the centre's policy to exclude ill children from regular day care activities. The following factors are taken into consideration in the formation of our health policy:

- The inability of a child who is ill to participate in a full day of programming
- The need by parents for a guideline to assist them in deciding whether to bring a child who is "not quite well" to the centre.
- The need for Educators to have a guideline for assessing the child's condition, before the Supervisor makes the decision to call a parent away from work or school.

### **Guidelines for Illness**

Generally, a child should not attend the centre if he/she has any of the following:

- A temperature of 100.4°F or 38°C or higher. Temperature should be normal for 24 hours before returning to the centre.(no fever reducing medication)
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting (2 episodes within 48 hours), Must be 48 hr symptom free before returning
- Red puffy eyes (pink eye or suspicion of pink eye).Once seen by doctor or pharmacist or medication
- Extensive or unexplained rash (within 24 hours) should be seen by a doctor.
- A communicable disease.

If your child becomes ill during the day, we will telephone you to arrange for him/her to be taken home.

Unfortunately, there are times when it is difficult for a parent to determine if the child should be at the centre. A slight cold or the end of an illness, are two examples. In such instances a general rule for determining whether the child is well enough to be at the centre is this; They do not require fever reducing medication. If the child is at

the centre he/she must feel well enough to cope and participate with the regular daily schedule, including participation in the outdoor program (approximately one hour during the morning and one hour in the afternoon). There symptoms must not be worsening Eg runny nose is getting better, has energy, etc

***\*Our programs follow all requirements for illness and reporting from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. Information is continuously being updated; we will do our best to share all information we have.***

### **Communicable Diseases**

If a child is suspected of having any contagious disease (for example: measles, mumps, gastroenteritis, impetigo, conjunctivitis, roseola, etc.) the child must **NOT** be at the centre. The child will be able to return to the centre with a consent form from the physician stating that the child is no longer contagious, or at the centre Supervisor's discretion. A child with the chicken pox, or hand, foot and mouth disease, however, may attend, if he/she is feeling well enough to participate in the program and do not have symptoms of fever for 24hr, vomiting, or diarrhea in 48 hrs.

When a child has been exposed to or is suffering from a communicable disease the parents of all children participating in the centre will be advised. The Supervisor will post a notice for parents indicating the name of the disease, general symptoms, length of communicability and incubation period.

Educators will be instructed to monitor all children at the centre during the incubation period for any signs of the disease. Should the Educators suspect that your child may have a contagious condition, he/she will be isolated, and you will be contacted for pick up. If we cannot reach a parent, we will call your designated emergency person. If a child is very ill or in case of an emergency situation, we will call an ambulance. The illness will be noted in the child's file, and forms entitled "Report of Communicable Disease" will be submitted to Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

### **Immunization**

It is a requirement that your child is immunized as recommended by the local medical officer of health. Health immunization is to be up to date prior to the child attending the program and be kept current while your child is in care. Up to date immunization cards should be forwarded to the Supervisor when completed. Children who wish to be exempted for either religious or conscience grounds or for medical reasons, need to have the appropriate Ministry of Education form completed. Please contact the program Supervisor for the correct form. In some cases if your child is not immunized the SMDHU will advise that your child not attend until the risk of infection is over.

Immunization is required for diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and haemophilus influenza type B. An immunization record will be kept in your child's file and a copy will be forwarded to the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit on an ongoing basis.

### **Medication**

Any drugs or medication to be given to your child must be supplied in the original container, and must be clearly labelled with the child's name, the name of the medication, expiry date, and instructions for storage and administration. Ventolin must be in exact dosage, clearly labelled, with one extra dose to allow for spillage.

Medication will be administered by the Educators only when it is not possible at home, and only when the parent(s) of the child have given written authorization.

Prescription and non-prescription medication will be administered by Educators with a signed consent from the parent(s) with dates, times and dosage clearly indicated and receipt. Further, recommended doses must not exceed those on the original container unless recommended by a physician in writing.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT NO MEDICATION OF ANY KIND WILL BE GIVEN WITHOUT THESE FORMS BEING COMPLETED AND SIGNED.**

Medication is placed in a locked box/cupboard. If it needs to be refrigerated, it is placed in a locked container in the refrigerator. You are asked to take home any medication each Friday and return it on the following Monday, if necessary. Medication is to be given directly to the Educator. Life saving medication (epi-pen, inhaler etc) will be kept with the educators in the black back pack at all times out of the reach of children.

**Head Lice: The Centre has a "nit free" policy.**

Head lice do not present a health hazard, but they are a nuisance and can spread quickly. In order to control and prevent this problem, regular screening checks are conducted, in particular if there is a confirmed case at the centre or in local area schools. Parents of a child found to have head lice infestation will be informed and asked to pick up their child immediately. Information will be supplied as to the treatment procedures to be followed prior to the child's return to the centre.

**Allergies, Anaphylaxis and Special Dietary Needs**

It is important to recognize that we are required to follow the Canada Food Guide when preparing food for the children. Details of any allergies or special dietary needs that you have provided on your registration form, ie: bee stings, peanuts, milk etc are to be communicated to the Supervisor in writing. Parents are required to review their child's needs (anaphylactic allergens, intolerances, etc.) with the Program Supervisor and notify the Supervisor of any changes as they occur. The foods that need to be omitted from your child's diet will be posted in the kitchen and classroom areas. If an "epi-pen" is required for an emergency, it will be carried with the educator at all times. Any food and drink including water bottles, sippy cups, etc. supplied by the parents **must be labelled with the child's name on it and date.**

The Nutritionist from the Muskoka Parry Sound Health Unit has advised us that your child may eat something and not react to it for a day or two, so narrowing down the specific cause may be difficult and requires a physician's assistance. An example of this is lactose intolerance.

**Our centre endeavors not to use peanut products, however, we cannot guarantee a peanut free environment. Parents are responsible for managing their children's peanut allergies. In order to provide a safe environment, please do not bring peanut products to the centre. Any other allergen that is life threatening will be given the same consideration and posted at the front door. It is imperative that you keep the centre informed of any changes in your child's health.**

**Individual Support Plans (ISP)** are required for children with exceptionalities and/or special needs due to a diagnosis or medical condition. These plans must be completed prior to the child starting care, in consultation with the parent or guardian, and must be signed and dated.

ISPs provide essential information outlining how educators and support staff will respond effectively and efficiently to medical or support needs. They are designed to help create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all children in our programs.

Parents/guardians are responsible for informing the child care provider of any updates or changes to the plan—such as a new diagnosis, triggers, required supports, or equipment.

Plans must be reviewed and updated every six months, and a new plan is required at the beginning of each school year. All ISPs will be shared with educators involved in the care and support of the child to ensure consistency and preparedness.

## **OTHER POLICIES**

**Safety**

Should your child suffer a minor injury ie: pinched finger, scraped knee, etc., the Educator will fill out an "Incident Report" or "ABC Report" - a description of the incident and the procedures administered. You will be asked to sign a copy of this report. A copy will be given to you (if you wish to take one) and a copy will be kept in your child's file. Should you wish for additional information regarding an incident, please contact the Educator or Centre Supervisor. If the injury is more serious and requires medical attention, an Accident Report will be completed and forwarded with a Serious Occurrence report to the Ministry of Education.

**Serious Occurrence Notifications**

The safety and well-being of our children in our licensed child care programs is our highest priority. Operators of licensed child care centres work diligently to provide a safe, creative and nurturing environment for each child. In spite of all the best precautions, serious occurrences can sometimes take place.

The Ontario government policy that requires licensed child care centres and to post information about serious occurrences that happen at a centre or home location. Effective November 1, 2011. To support increased transparency and access to information, a "Serious Occurrence Notification Form" must be posted at the centre or home location in a visible area for 10 days.

Serious occurrence categories include:

a) the death of a child who received child care at a home child care premises or child care centre, (b) abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a home child care premises or child care centre, (c) a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a home child care premises or child care centre, (d) an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a home child care premises or child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or (e) an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a home child care premises or child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the home child care premises or child care centre

Licensed child care centres are already required to report serious occurrences to the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for childcare licensing. This new policy requires child care operators to post information in their facilities so that parents also have access to it.

This posting will give parents information about the incident and outline follow-up actions taken and the outcomes, while respecting the privacy of the individuals involved. Longer-term actions taken by the operator will also be included to help prevent similar incidents in the future, where applicable.

Many factors may lead to a serious occurrence report. A serious occurrence does not necessarily mean that an operator is out of compliance with licensing requirements or that children are at risk in the child care centre.

This new policy supports the government's efforts to increase access to information about licensed childcare programs in Ontario. This includes the recent launch of child care licensing inspection findings on the Licensed Child Care Website which is available at:

<http://www.ontario.ca/ONT/portal61/licensedchildcare>.

### **Fire and Emergency Management Procedures**

Your child will participate in monthly fire and emergency drills. The purpose of these drills is to familiarize your child with evacuating the building in a prompt and orderly manner, without panic. The fire drill procedure is posted in each room. MFF&CP has emergency management procedures in place including; in the event that a centre must be evacuated, here are the designated alternate sites:

- For Bracebridge Children's Place – Food Basics Grocery Store
- For BPS Children's Place – St. Joseph's Catholic Church
- For Gravenhurst Children's Place – The Gravenhurst YMCA or Independent Grocers
- For Huntsville Children's Place – Slice of Muskoka Restaurant
- For Fairvern Children's Place- Freshco

All parents would be notified by phone, Lillio message and/or email as to a designated pick-up spot in the case of an emergency. This information will also be posted on our Facebook page and our website and announced on the local radio station.

***\*In the event of an emergency where our staff feel medical treatment is necessary or children are in danger, 911 will be called.***

### **Prohibited Practices**

**Muskoka Family Focus & Children's Place will not permit the following Prohibited Practices:**

- a. Corporal punishment or restraint of a child by an employee, a student, a volunteer or by another child or group of children.
- b. Deliberate harsh or degrading measures that would humiliate, shame or frighten a child or undermine a child's self-respect, example: name calling, yelling or singling a child out in a negative way.
- c. Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used on as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- d. Deprivation of a child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, clothing, bedding, sleep and toilet use.
- e. Locking or permitting to be locked without adult supervision for the purpose of confining a child, the exits of any building or structure where children are in attendance at any program operated by MFF&CP. \*The exception to this section of the procedure is during an emergency when children could be confined to a room temporarily until the emergency is resolved as it relates to MFF&CP Emergency Management

Plan. The use of a locked or lockable room or structure to confine or isolate a child, who has been separated from other children.

- f. Inflicting any bodily harm on children including but not limited to making children eat or drink against their will.
- g. Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or engaging in a prescribed sexual act, as those terms are defined in the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*.

Our program philosophy is to use positive verbal reinforcement, modeling approaches, and redirection to encourage respectful behaviour.

Muskoka Family Focus & Children's Place (MFF&CP) is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all children, including those who may have behavioral challenges related to a disability. We strive to accommodate children with special needs to the extent possible while maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all children and staff.

We understand that all children will, from time to time, display inappropriate behaviour in our programs. When dealing with such behaviour, the developmental capabilities of each child as well as any relevant stressors will be considered when determining both expectations for behaviour and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. Educators agree that ensuring a safe, supportive, and respectful environment for all children is essential. The behavior of children should be guided by appropriate expectations, helping them develop social skills, emotional regulation, and positive interactions. Examples of inappropriate and unacceptable behavior in a child care setting may include but are not limited to: Physical and verbal aggression, disrespectful or defiant behaviour, intimidation or bullying, destructive or self harming behaviour, exit seeking behaviour. Educators encourage age-appropriate positive problem solving when helping the children to work through conflict and upset.

Educators will inform the parent of incidents using an ABC Incident report. Parents are asked to sign the report and may keep a copy.

In the case of persistent inappropriate or unacceptable behavior, where the child's behavior continues to pose a challenge, we will work closely with the child's parents to ensure the appropriate level of support. If the situation escalates and proper support cannot be provided by our team, parents/guardians will be notified in writing. This communication will request a meeting to discuss the child's continued participation in the program and whether alternative arrangements need to be made. As a last resort, and if after careful consideration we cannot meet the child's needs, a written notice may be issued asking the child to leave the program temporarily or permanently, depending on the severity and frequency of the incidents. This action would only be taken after exhausting all possible accommodations and strategies.

### **Conflict Resolution for Parents**

**Policy:** It is the policy of Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place to support open discussions between our staff and families through a clear and transparent conflict resolution process.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns as quickly as possible to the satisfaction of all parties.

### **Communication:**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centres and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our programs. As outlined in our program statement, MFF&CP supports positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and fosters the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. MFF&CP maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children.

Staff are available during regular business hours to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction. All parties are expected to communicate calmly and respectfully.

### **Concerns/Complaints:**

- Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing.
- Parents who have concerns or complaints regarding daily programming, room/child schedules or routines should speak with the educator directly. If successful resolution is not reached with the educator, parents *are encouraged* to discuss their concern/complaint with the Program Supervisor.
- Concerns or complaints by the parent, staff, volunteer regarding an educator or general centre operations should be brought forward to the Program Supervisor directly.
- Concerns and complaints received by employees, students or volunteers should be brought to the Program Supervisor's attention.



### Conflict Resolution Process:

- It is anticipated that many concerns will be resolved through discussion and no further action will be required.
- When the concern/complaint has not been resolved through discussion, staff and/or Program Supervisor will document the concern with date, time, complaint and suggested resolution.
- The Supervisor will respond in writing or via e-mail to the initial concern and/or complaint within 2 business days of it being received.
- 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 all parties involved.
- The Supervisor will discuss with the Management Team the concern and/or complaint. An appropriate resolution will be determined, in accordance with MFF&CP policies.
- The suggested resolution and outcomes will be communicated back to the complainant in writing or via e-mail.
- The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the privacy and confidentiality of all parties involved, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons.
- If the matter is not resolved, a written submission from the complainant may be made to the Management Team and a further investigation and discussion will take place.
- The Management Team will respond to the concern and/or complaint within one week of it being received.
- If deemed necessary by the Management Team, the concern and/or complaint will be forwarded to the Board of Directors where a resolution will be decided upon. The Management Team will then respond to the concern and/or complaint in writing or via e-mail with the final resolution.
- 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 by the program Supervisor.

### Communication

MFF&CP require parents and family members to communicate in a non-threatening, respectful and peaceful manner when speaking with our Educators and Supervisors 'face to face' as well as any communication relating to our organization through social media. Our Educators and Supervisors are expected to do the same with parents and family members. Any inappropriate disrespectful, threatening and/or intimidating harassing behaviours from parents could also result in the child being asked to leave the program.

Confidentiality is a top priority at our centre. We encourage families to discuss questions or concerns when their child is not nearby or when other families are present. Parents are also welcome to call our educators/supervisor during the day to have these conversations privately or set up a time.

### Wait List Policy:

#### Policy Statement

Muskoka Family Focus is committed to accommodating all registration requests for child care. When programs reach maximum capacity, children will be placed on a waitlist, maintained by the program Supervisor. **No fees** are charged to be added to the waitlist.

#### Waitlist Procedure

##### 1. Requesting Waitlist Placement

- Parents/guardians must submit a Waitlist Request Form via email.
- The entry is dated and must include:
  - Child's name and birth date
  - Days of care required
  - Requested start date
  - Parent/guardian names and contact info
  - Any other relevant information the family wishes to include
- The Supervisor will confirm via email that the child has been added to the list and provide their position on the waitlist.

##### 2. Placement Priority When a space becomes available

- Families are contacted in order of waitlist entry (date and time), based on the age group of the available space.
- Priority is given to:
  - Children of Muskoka Family Focus employees

- Siblings of enrolled children
  - Fairvern Children's Place (FCP):
    - 25% of spaces are allocated to Fairvern Long-Term Care Facility (FLTCF) employees.
    - If FLTCF employees occupy fewer than 25% of spaces, eligible FLTCF applicants will be prioritized until the 25% threshold is met.
    - Once 25% is filled, the general waitlist is followed based on standard order of application.
3. Waitlist Maintenance and Parent Communication
- The Supervisor:
    - Maintains the waitlist
    - Contacts families via phone/email when a space becomes available
    - Records date, time, and method of each contact attempt
    - Will make three attempts to reach a family; if unsuccessful, the family is removed from the list and the next eligible family is contacted
  - Parents may confirm their waitlist status in person with the Supervisor; only their child's information will be visible to maintain confidentiality.
  - Supervisors are responsible for keeping accurate records and communicating with family inquiries.
  - Families are encouraged to notify the program if child care is no longer needed.

### **Sleep Supervision Policy**

It is the policy of Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place to reduce the risk of harm and injury, including death for children who sleep at our childcare programs. MFF&CP will take every measure possible to ensure our employees, volunteers and students follow this policy for children who sleep at our programs in accordance with the ["Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada"](#)

1. All children will be provided with the opportunity to sleep or engage in quiet activities based on their needs.
2. Children under 12 months of age will be provided time to sleep based on their individual schedules and will be assigned a crib. Children between 12-18 months of age will be assigned to a crib or cot to sleep for a period of no longer than 2 hours.
3. Only age/size appropriate sleep sacks will be used for children under 12 months of age.
4. Children 30 months or older but younger than 6 years old, will be provided with a cot unless otherwise approved by the Program Supervisor in consultation with the Ministry of Education Program Advisor.
5. All cots and cribs will be labelled with the child's name on them.
6. Where children are sleeping in a separate room or area, their names will be listed on the window, door or wall beside the door so employees can immediately identify which children are present in the sleep room.

#### **Procedure:**

1. Children under 12 months of age will be placed on their backs to sleep, unless written instructions are received by the child's physician. Parents will be advised of our obligation to place infants on their backs for sleeping.
2. An Educator in the classroom performs a direct visual check and documentation of sleeping children under 12 months at 15-20 minute intervals throughout the sleep period. This will be communicated with parents and adjusted at the written request/approval of the parent. Children who are older than 12 months, direct visual checks will be performed at 30 minute intervals throughout the sleep period, by being physically present beside the child while the child is sleeping and looking for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours (such as change in skin colour, change in breathing or signs of overheating) and reacts as required; any changes will be documented in the daily written record and/or on Lillio. Direct visual checks during sleep times will be documented on the sleep check form (included in the list of forms under these policies and procedures on the intranet page) and/or on Lillio.
3. Any changes in sleep behaviours will be communicated to the child's parent by the Educator in the classroom or by the Program Supervisor in writing or via e-mail; adjustments may be made to the child's supervision during sleep time, where appropriate, based on consultation with the child's parent.
4. These changes will be documented in writing in the child's file and/or in the child's daily report on Lillio.
5. Sufficient light will be provided in the sleeping area or room to conduct direct visual checks.
6. Parents will be consulted regarding a child's sleeping arrangements at the time of registration (noted on the registration form) and at other appropriate times such as transitions between programs, rooms or at a parent's request. All communication will be in writing, via e-mail with a confirmation response, or with direct conversation with the Program Supervisor or Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) in the

classroom. Sleeping arrangements will be documented in the child's file. The Supervisor or RECE in the classroom will share these files with employees, volunteers and students working with the child.

7. As this policy is revised or updated, parents will receive notification of the revised policy. This policy is also included in the Parents Handbook which the parent receives at registration.

Procedures for Completing Direct Visual Checks:

Educators must:

- be physically present beside the child;
- check each child's general well-being by looking for signs of distress or discomfort including, at a minimum:
  - laboured breathing;
  - changes in skin temperature;
  - changes in lip and/or skin colour;
  - whimpering or crying; and
  - lack of response to touch or voice.

Where signs of distress or discomfort are observed, the educator who conducted the direct visual check must attempt to wake the child up. Where no signs of distress or discomfort are observed, proceed to step 3.

Where the child wakes up, Educators must:

- attend to the child's needs;
- separate the child from other children if the child appears to be ill;
- document the incident in the daily communication log and in the child's daily report on Lillio.

Where the child does not wake up, Educators must immediately:

perform appropriate first aid and CPR, if required

- inform other employees, students and volunteers in the room of the situation
- contact emergency services or, where possible, direct another individual to contact emergency services
- separate the child from other children or vice versa if the child appears to be ill
- inform the Program Supervisor/Designate of the situation; and
- contact the child's parent

Where the child must be taken home or to the hospital, the Program Supervisor or Designate must immediately:

- contact the child's parent to inform them of the situation and next steps.

Where the child's condition has stabilized, and/or after the child has been taken home and/or to the hospital, the Educator who conducted the direct visual check and any employees who assisted with responding to the incident must:

- follow the serious occurrence policies and procedures, where applicable
- document the incident in the daily written record; and
- document the child's symptoms of illness in the child's daily report on HiMama.

Educators must:

- adjust blankets as needed
- ensure the child's head is not covered
- ensure there are no other risks of suffocation present
- document the date, time and initial each direct visual check on the classroom's sleep check form and/or in the child's daily report on Lillio; and
- verbally inform other Educators in the room that the check has been completed, where applicable and possible.

Use of Electronic Devices:

Where electronic devices are used to monitor children's sleep, Educators will:

- not use electronic sleep monitoring devices to replace direct visual checks
- check the monitor daily to verify that it is functioning properly (ie: it is able to detect and monitor the sounds and, if applicable, video images of every sleeping child); and
- actively monitor each electronic device at all times.

### **Extended Closure Policy (serious illness and/or pandemic)**

Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place strives to provide a safe, healthy environment for your child(ren). However, despite our best efforts there may be times when the centre may have to be closed for an extended period. Decisions to close for an extended period are made based on recommendations by one or more of the following ministries: the provincial and federal ministries of health, education, labour as well municipal

departments of health and childcare licensing bodies. The reasons for an extended closure may include but are not limited to, faulty construction, mold, flooding, serious illness outbreak, pandemic, etc. In the event of a serious illness outbreak or pandemic and our centres remain open, you may be required to sign a declaration confirming that you and your child have not been exposed to the identified contagion. Based on recommendations by the federal, provincial or municipal departments of health you may be asked to remove your child from the program for a specified period of time, if they or any family member residing in the home, have been exposed to an identified contagion. If your child has been removed from the centre for any of the above health reasons, you may be required to provide a doctor's letter confirming that your child is fit to return to the centre. As per the Fee Structure section in our Parent Handbook, you will be billed for any sick days when your child is absent due to illness.

In the event of absences due to the above reasons but our centres are closed, you will not be billed for any days.

We will make every effort to reopen the as quickly as possible when it is deemed safe for us to do so. Your child's spot in the program will not be affected by the closure.

Should you inform MFF&CP in writing that you wish to relinquish your child's spot in the centre while the centre is closed, please do so by advising the Program Supervisor. Upon re-opening, if you wish to relinquish your child's spot, you are required to provide 2 week's notice to withdraw your child.

#### **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) – Customer Service Standard Policy**

Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place is in compliance with the AODA. We are committed to developing policies, practices and procedures that provide accessible quality services to its clients and their children. Services will be provided to clients with disabilities in a manner that promotes and respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. MFF&CP is dedicated to ensuring all programs and services are accessible to clients and their children in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429.07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

#### **Supervision of Volunteers and Students Policy**

Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place supports the safety and well-being of children in licensed child care centres by ensuring that no child is supervised by a person under 18 years of age. Only employees will have direct unsupervised access to children. This will be followed as a best practice for all unlicensed programs. Direct unsupervised access (ie: when an adult is alone with a child) is not permitted for persons who are not employees of our licensed child care programs. Placement students and/or volunteers will be supervised by a MFF&CP employee at all times. Placement students and/or volunteers may not be counted in the staffing ratios in childcare centres.

**Safe Arrival Policy:** Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place will ensure that any child receiving child care at licensed programs operated by MFF&CP is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the child care centre may release the child to.

- MFF&CP will release children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual who must be 13 years of age or older.
- A parent/guardian may request that a child who is 9 years old or older be released from child care without supervision. Parents/guardians must provide written and signed authorization and instructions for the release of the child including the time of dismissal.
- Where a parent/guardian provides written instructions for the release of their child from care without supervision, the parent/guardian is aware that the child care centre/program is no longer responsible for that child upon their dismissal.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, employees must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

**Purpose:** It is the policy of Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place to help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care in all programs. This policy will provide employees, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care. This includes what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

#### **Procedure:**

**Accepting a child into care- Full day programs** When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program employee in the room must:

- greet the parent/guardian and child.
- ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the employee must confirm that the person is listed in the child's file and/or Lillio or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (i.e., note, email or message on Lillio).
- document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record and initial.
- sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

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

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (i.e., left a voice/written message, or advised the closing employee at pick-up), the employee in the classroom must:

##### **Full Day Programs:**

- inform the program supervisor, RECE or co-worker and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:00am. Employee will call parent/guardian, and/or send a message on the Lillio app at least once and leave a message. Employee will note time of call in the communication.
- If the parent does not reply by 10:30am the employee will inform the program supervisor. The Supervisor will make one more attempt contact with the parent/ guardian. If unsuccessful the supervisor will contact the child's emergency contact, who will take over the communication with the parent.

##### **Before & After School Programs:**

- Upon completion of attendance at school bell/dismissal, program RECE or co-worker must commence contacting parent/guardian no later than 3:30pm. Employee will communicate with the school Principal/Teacher/Secretary the child did not arrive at after school program as expected. Principal/teacher/secretary will confirm whether or not the child was present at school. If the child was not present at school, there would be no follow up to the parent/guardian.
- Should a child not arrive at Before School Program the school will complete their own safe arrival protocol.

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

#### **Where a child was present at school and has not arrived in care as expected- After School Programs**

Where a child was present at school, does not arrive at the after school program and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in schedule (i.e., left a voice message or advised employee at pick-up), the employee must:

- notify the school Principal/Teacher/Secretary the child did not arrive at the program as expected. Principal/Teacher/Secretary will commence looking for child to verify the whereabouts of child, information is then communicated to child care program.
- the employee will call parent to verify child's absence. If the employee does not speak with a parent/guardian or receive a message back, keep calling parent/guardian. If unsuccessful the employee will contact the child's emergency contact, who will take over the communication with the parent.
- call or designate someone to call the bus company to verify if the child is on the bus. If on the bus ask bus company to return child to school and do not drop off unsupervised.
- if a child has not been located by 4:15 pm call 911.

#### **Releasing a Child from Care - All Programs**

The employee who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the employee does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual):

- confirm with another employee that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
- where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information with the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

#### **Where a child has not been picked up as expected and/or the centre/school age program is closing:**

Where a parent or guardian has not picked up the child 10 minutes prior to regular program closure time the employee will:

- contact the parent/guardian via phone call message and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.

- where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by regular program closure time, employee should call again. If parent is on route educators will ensure, the child is comfortable while they await their pick-up.
- if you are unable to reach the parent, call the emergency contact for pick-up
- If the parent and emergency contact cannot be reached and/or make arrangements to pick up the child, the C.A.S.(Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions 705-645-4426) will be called 30 minutes after closing time. The employee will follow the direction of the C.A.S. with respect to next steps. The employee will notify their supervisor.

#### **Dismissing a child from care without supervision:**

Where a parent/guardian has provided written authorization for their child to be released from care without supervision:

- one employee in the program must be responsible for dismissing the child from care.
- Prior to dismissing the child from care, the employee will review the written instructions for release provided by the parent/guardian and release the child at the time set out in the instructions.

The employee will document the time of departure from care and as well as their initials on the attendance record.

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

1. Please tell your child's Educator anything you think she/he should know (i.e. your child slept poorly, you have given him/her medication etc.).
2. Bring your child directly to the Educator; they cannot be responsible for a child they do not know has arrived.
3. When you pick up your child, be sure they say good-bye to the Educator so that they know the child is being picked up.
4. Before departing with your child, please allow them a few minutes to tidy up whatever toy they were using.
5. If you cannot come for your child, please notify us as early as possible who will be picking up your child. We will not release your child to an unauthorized person or to a child less than 13 years of age. Identification will be requested and confirmed before we release your child.
6. We recommend that you bring in and pick up your child at a regular time, as children generally feel more secure when their daily timetable is predictable.
7. If your child is going to be absent, be it for a day or an extended period; please notify us by 9:00 am via phone call, Lillio message.
8. If you are discarding any children's clothing, please consider giving it to the centre. We always need extras for emergencies, including indoor and outdoor clothing, and especially underwear and socks.
9. Children are encouraged to leave all their own toys at home, with the exception of a soft toy and blanket for sleep time, if needed. Any items that are brought from home should be labelled with the child's name.
10. Children are not allowed to chew gum at the centre, as they may choke on it during their more active play.
11. The children may occasionally be filmed or photographed as a group during their regular playtime activities. These films will be used for educational or promotional purposes only. This is noted in your registration package. Photos sent on Lillio are not to be shared on social media unless all parents in the photo have been notified and agree.
12. Newsletters are sent home on occasion with Lillio being our main avenue for communication and parent engagement.

***Thank you for choosing Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place  
for your child care needs.***

### Parent Handbook Parent Agreement: Please Read Carefully

1. All information provided by a parent is strictly confidential. If there is any information, of which we should be aware, to help us in the care of your child, please include it in the form.
2. Your child will not be permitted to leave the program with anyone other than those documented on the release consent form UNLESS written permission is received or in an emergency, a telephone call may be acceptable. Anyone picking up your child must be 13 years or older. **Employees will ask for identification from the person who is picking up the child if they do not know them.**
3. Bi-weekly payment MUST be made and/or will be withdrawn on the date specified.
4. Fees will apply for days your child is enrolled and expected in care but is not. Refunds will not be given for the days your child attended.
5. Parents receiving child care fee subsidy are responsible for paying their portion of the fees to Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place, if any, as determined by the District of Muskoka.
6. Two weeks' notice is required when taking your child out of the program in order to notify another parent of the vacancy. If no notice is given, you will be charged for 2 weeks of care.
7. Overdue accounts over 30 days, 2.5 % interest will be charged. Any account not paid within 60 days will be sent to the Credit Bureau for collection.
8. A \$25.00 carrying charge will be made on all Non-Sufficient Funds. (N.S.F. cheques).
9. As a last resort, if inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour continues from a child, the child may be asked to leave the program. (as noted in the handbook)
10. Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place reserve the right to make alternate pick up arrangements for children as they deem necessary, for the safety of the children, if they feel the person who is picking up the child is incapacitated in any way, ie: under the influence of drugs or alcohol. This includes the use of recreational marijuana.
11. Regarding late charges/pick-ups - after 3 times, Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place have the right to discontinue care.
12. Any slandering or inappropriate/negativity on social media involving Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place (and/or our employees) by parents and/or family members will not be tolerated. Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place reserve the right to discontinue care should any of this type of behaviour be brought to our attention.
13. Disrespectful treatment, threatening and/or intimidating harassing behaviour from parents or family members towards Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place employees will not be tolerated. Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place reserve the right to discontinue care should any of this type of behaviour be brought to our attention.

I have read and understand the Child Care Centre Parent Handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures as outlined.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SUPERVISOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this form with the registration*