



City Hall Child Care Society

A NON-PROFIT CENTRE FOR EARLY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

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Parent Handbook

City Hall Child Care Society
PARENT HANDBOOK
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**WELCOME
TO
City Hall Child Care Society**

Dear Parents

On behalf of the children, parents, staff and Board Members of City Hall Child Care Society, we would like to extend a warm welcome to you and your child. We hope that your family's association with CHCCS will be a rewarding one.

When you enroll your child, you become a member of the City Hall Child Care Society and enter into a special "care partnership" with staff members. In order to ensure we are providing optimum care for your child please take the time during Gradual Entry to share all vital information regarding your child (i.e. Food restrictions/allergies, medical concerns, custody issues, behaviour characteristics etc.)

City Hall Child Care Society has a unique feature, in that we offer a comprehensive childcare program serving children from 3 months to Kindergarten entry. We also provide an inclusive Special Needs Program in our Under 3 and Over 3 Program,

This manual provides an overview of the Society's history, policies and programs and outlines some of the key information common to its three programs. Each program also has specific program information which is included in the last section of the manual. It is our hope that you will find the information useful. Once again, welcome to City Hall Child Care Society and thank you for giving us the opportunity to share in the care of your child.

Sincerely,
Tina Wight
Executive Director

GRADUAL ENTRY

The first days at Day Care are critical to your child's well being and can affect the weeks and months to come. A gradual entry into the Program will be structured to suit your child's needs. Every child responds differently to new situations. Some find separating from parents and meeting new people frightening, while other children adapt readily to new people and experiences. It is not unusual for a child to experience some behaviour changes during the adjustment period. They may become tense and irritable, have toileting accidents (older children), or experience a disruption in their sleep patterns. Please discuss with staff any concerns you may have regarding your child's behaviour. Gradual Entry may be lengthened if your child is having difficulty settling in.

SAMPLE GRADUAL ENTRY:

Day 1: Child comes for one hour visit in the morning, parent stays
Day 2: Child comes in for morning visit, parent leaves for short period
Day 3: Child comes for morning, parent leaves, picks up child after lunch
Day 4: Child comes for morning, parent leaves, picks up child after nap
Day 5: Child comes for full day!!

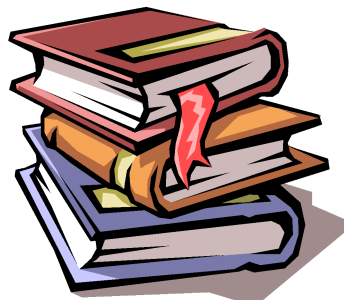
When a Space is Offered

1. Parents will be notified by phone or if no answer a voicemail will be left.
2. Parent will have 24hrs to respond to the call and confirm if they would like the space.
3. Priority will be given to the family with the most seniority.
4. Those parents who do not call back or whose numbers have not been updated will be removed from the waitlist.
5. Once the space is accepted families must provide within 48hrs a cheque for $\frac{1}{2}$ months fees for deposit to secure the space. Preauthorization Forms must be filled out at this time as well.
6. Once deposit has been paid you will be given a Registration Package and Gradual Entry Schedule.
7. Fees for the space are due the first of each month with no exceptions.

REGISTRATION

Please complete the following forms prior to starting your child's Gradual Entry.

- Child Care Facilities Registration Form
- Consent Form
- Emergency Consent Form
- Vancouver Health Department Immunization Information (All children attending CHCCS must be vaccinated)
- Child Allergy/Asthma Information (if applicable)
- Parent Agreement
(1 additional copy for your records)
- Automatic Debit Info
- Parent Participation Info



INTRODUCTION TO CHCCS

OUR HISTORY

City Hall Child Care Society grew out of an initiative in 1974 by Alderwoman Darlene Marzari and the Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees Union. With the assistance of Vancouver's Civic Planning Department, the Daycare was established in 1975 and the Centre officially opened in June of 1975.

Since its inception, the Centre has occupied the 12th and Cambie site. Ownership transferred from the Vancouver School Board to the City of Vancouver and in 1988/89 the site was redeveloped into its present location.

Discussions during redevelopment between the City of Vancouver and City Hall Child Care Society led to the present purpose built facility. The Infant Care Program opened in 1991 to the already existing Under 3 Program and Over 3 Program. The Additional Support Program started in 1992 providing support to those children requiring extra support. The addition of those two new programs created Vancouver's first comprehensive Child Care Program serving children from 3 months to Kindergarten Entry, thus paving the way for the beginning of many more programs of the same format.

OUR MISSION

- To operate a non profit, inclusive childcare facility as permitted by Provincial Law and regulations and to manage the affairs of the Society by a Board of Directors
- To provide an optimum level of child care delivery, staffing and facilities which meet the individual needs of children and families
- To work closely with Parents and Early Childhood Educators to further the overall development of young children.
- To encourage and promote the education and training of Early Childhood Educators
- To seek and strengthen the affairs of the Society by encouraging cooperation and support of other Child Care Agencies.

ADMINISTRATION

City Hall Child Care Society is a legally incorporated, independent, non profit society with registered charity Status.

City Hall Child Care has an Executive Director in charge of operations as well as a Volunteer Parent Board Of Directors.

The Board of City Hall Child Care Society is legally responsible for City Hall Child Care Society.

Board meetings are held once per month. All Society members are welcome to attend regular Board Meetings.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Our Goal is to provide children with a stimulating, nurturing, healthy and safe environment necessary for their physical, social, intellectual and emotional well being.

We value each child as a unique individual with his or her own background and personality; we encourage and support them in developing positive relationships.

Our aim is to cultivate the child's self esteem as well as to instill respect for others

While we encourage independence, we also recognize a child's need for comfort and loving care.

We recognize the importance of play in the learning process, and offer both planned and spontaneous activities.

We also encourage parents to play an active role in their child's Day Care experience.

MEMBERS

All families of City Hall Child Care Society are members of the Society.

All members are encouraged to attend monthly Board Meetings. Members are expected to attend the Annual General Meeting which occurs each Spring. At the AGM the finances and achievements of the previous year are reviewed, the coming year's budget is presented and the new Board of Directors are elected.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT & RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the strengths of City Hall Child Care Society is the active involvement of parents. Your interest in and support of CHCCS adds to the "home away from home" feeling we enjoy.

Families are required to volunteer 12hrs/year for each fulltime enrolled child or 6hrs/year for each part time enrolled child.

Parents will be asked to:

- Commit to a task from the Parent Participation list on the Parent Info Board
- Participate in Committees,
- Help with Fundraising Events, work parties, or Special Activities of the Society

Volunteer Hours are kept track of by the Executive Director.

If you choose not to fulfill the Volunteer Requirement you can add the fee of \$20.00 for each hour owing, \$10.00 for each $\frac{1}{2}$ hour owing to your monthly auto debit.

Personnel of City Hall Child Care Society

STAFFING

All Caregivers of City Hall Child Care Society are Licensed Early Childhood Educators. Those caregivers working in specific programs or positions must also hold a License specific to their position.

All Caregivers must also have TB Screening a valid First Aid Certificate as well as a Criminal Record Check as specified by Community Care Facilities Licensing.

Executive Director

Tina Wight is available Monday thru Friday

Ph: (604) 876-8918; e mail: cityhallchildcare@telus.net

Her responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring a Quality Child Care Environment
- Carrying out Policy as set by the Board of Directors
- Financial Operations
- Human Resources
- Operational Mgmt
- Enrollment

SUPERVISORS

We have 3 Supervisors each responsible for the Programs in which they work. They are responsible for overseeing the day to day operations of the Programs and Staffing throughout the building.

The Supervisors report to the Executive Director.

CHILD CARE STAFF TEAM

The Daycare Staff is directly responsible for the Programs in which they work. The staff in each Program work rotating shifts which ensures proper staff/child ratios are maintained at all times. We believe it is important for staff to work rotating shifts as it contributes to effective team work and they get to know families in their programs.

All staff are involved with your child and family.

They report to the Supervisor.

The Staff schedule is posted on the Office Window.

Staff can also provide information to families about child development and community resources. Please feel free to consult with staff regarding your child.

Families can expect staff to:

- Model appropriate, respectful behaviour
- Acknowledge children's individual personalities and feelings
- Demonstrate respectful affection and caring for each child
- Promote the development of positive social skills including self esteem and self control
- Establish clear, consistent and simple expectations for children
- Give verbal direction and redirection as the main way of guiding children
- Encourage children to understand and follow rules and expectations
- Offer choices that are developmentally appropriate.
- Supervise the children at all times.

OTHERS IN THE PROGRAM

Substitute Staff

Qualified Early Childhood Educators will be called in on an as need basis when regular Staff are away. Every effort is made to have familiar caregivers with your child as much as possible.

Their responsibilities include:

- Assisting the regular Staff Team
- Supervising and caring for the children

Please feel free to introduce yourselves to substitutes, however, please direct any questions, comments or concerns to the regular staff on duty.

Students

City Hall Child Care Society provides an observation and practicum setting for Early Childhood Education students. ECE students enhance our Program by bringing new ideas and information as well as challenging staff to be informative and practice leadership.

ECE students practice and assist in:

- Supervision
- Activities and Programming

Volunteers

City Hall Child Care Society believes Volunteers can play an integral role in day to day operations. Volunteers work on various areas within the Centre. They may prepare snacks or assist with cleaning or preparation work, or spend time reading or enjoying Supervised Play with the children. Volunteers are not responsible for Primary Caregiving and are never unsupervised.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

City Hall Child Care Society is run by a volunteer Parent Board who is legally responsible for the administration of the Society. Meetings are held each month. All Society members are welcome to attend Board Meetings.

The Board of Directors is composed of a minimum of 8 members:

- 2 Co Chairpersons
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Human Resource
- Infant/Under 3 Parent Liaison
- Over 3 Parent Liaison
- Member-At Large

The Board of Directors is voted in at the Annual General Meeting, usually held in March/April. If you would like to be considered for such a position, please speak to the Executive Director.

COMMUNICATION at City Hall Child Care Society

COMMUNICATION

We consider open and effective communication to be a vital part of the successful operation of City Hall Child Care Society.

We use the following methods:

- Parent Notice Boards in each Program
- Parent Info Board in the Hallway
- Parent Notices
- Newsletters
- Communication Books at the Sign In Counter

We encourage you to communicate with staff through:

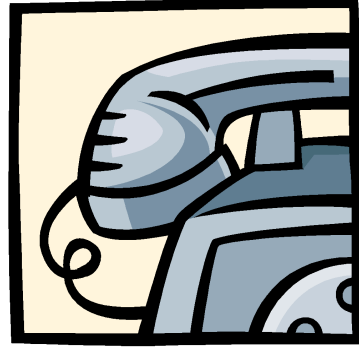
- Open discussion with staff during drop off and pick up time
- Telephone
- E Mail
- Written notice in Communication Book at Sign In Counter

Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with staff. If you require a longer time then we would suggest that an appointment be made. Please be aware of time restraints as staff is directly involved in caring for the children. Please check with staff for a mutually available time.

Please keep in mind that questions regarding the children's programs should be directed to caregivers, while issues regarding the operation of the centre are best directed to the Executive Director or your Parent Liaison.

City Hall Child Care prides itself on having a wonderful reputation as a Quality Childcare Program. You can expect the following from your child care experience.

The staff at City Hall Child Care Society is directly responsible for the direct care as well as all areas of Program and Program Development. We are fully prepared at Early Childhood Educators



CONCERNS

We are committed to working cooperatively with families. Should a concern arise, the following information may be helpful in finding a resolution.

- a.) If a concern arises between you and an individual staff member, please discuss the issue openly and attempt to reach a mutually acceptable resolution with the staff member. If mutual resolution is not achieved, the Executive Director should be involved and with consultation possible the Parent Liaison.
- b.) If you are concerned about the Program, please consult with Program Supervisor or the Executive Director.
- c.) If a concern from a Board policy or decision, please contact the Executive Director to discuss the issue. If a mutually agreed upon resolution is not possible, the Board of Directors will be contacted.

If your family's concern is not resolved and you choose to withdraw your child from the facility please note, the withdrawal policy is applicable.



ENROLLMENT

ADMITTANCE & ADVANCEMENT POLICY

The Executive Director of City Hall Child Care Society manages the waiting list, admittance, and advancement of children into program spaces. In order to remain financially viable, enrollment must be at full capacity at all times.

Once enrolled into the Centre your child is automatically waitlisted for the next age group. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that your child will move to the next age group. We encourage you to go on Under 3 waitlists of daycares that do not have Infant Programs. It is the parent's responsibility to be informed about their child's possibility of movement to the next program. Please speak to the Executive Director 3-4 months in advance regarding this.

As there is a tremendous need for childcare we encourage you to go on as many child care waitlists as possible in case we do not have a space for your child when they need to move to the next age group.

CHANGE OF STATUS (Part Time)

City Hall Child Care Society offers 25% of their enrollment to Part Time. Our part time days are offered at the beginning or end of the week.

2 Days: Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday

3 Days: Monday - Wednesday or Wednesday - Friday

If you wish to increase or decrease the days of your child's enrollment, please contact the Executive Director to inquire if such a change is possible. **Please note this change may not always be possible. The Executive Director reserves the right to Enrollment changes or decisions.**

We understand that Enrollment is a concern for families. I have attached that Policy to help answer questions you may have,

FORMS & RECORDS

Community Care Facilities Licensing requires that your entire child's information is kept up-to-date. Please notify staff immediately regarding any changes in information (i.e. Telephone numbers, Emergency Contact, Custody Information, Allergies etc.)

Care will be taken to ensure confidentiality of all records. Please be aware that the Ministry of Children and Family Development will be provided access to records as required by legislation.

CUSTODY ISSUES

If there is legal documentation specifying custody or guardianship, please provide the Centre with a copy of the documentation (current custody agreement and related court orders). Staff will follow the written custody agreement and court orders at all times.

Staff is not permitted to become involved in custody disputes. They can provide no documentation for either party.

Staff will appear at custody proceedings only when subpoenaed.

WITHDRAWAL

When it comes time to leave City Hall Child Care Society, a minimum of one full month written notice effective the first of the month is required. Your deposit will be returned to you within six weeks, provided that all financial commitments have been met.

ENROLLMENT & ADVANCEMENT POLICY

The goal of the City Hall Child Care Society ("CHCCS") is to provide a space in the next Program level for all children who are enrolled at CHCCS. Unfortunately, advancement to the next Program level cannot be guaranteed. The following policies outline the procedures through which child care spaces at CHCCS will be offered to enrolled, returning and new families.

1. GENERAL

- (a) CHCCS is licensed by Community Care Facilities Licensing, and spaces will be offered to families enrolled at CHCCS and on the wait list based on CHCCS program policies, licensing requirements (i.e. age requirements, staff/child ratio, etc.), space availability, and the policies outlined below.
- (b) The offer and acceptance of a space is not confirmed until it is received and accepted in writing and the required deposit is made.
- (c) Parents who have been offered a space may pay to hold the space until they are ready utilize it, only if it does not affect another child's movement from one Program to another during the time that the space is being held.
- (d) One month written notice, provided no later than the last day of the previous month, must be given to the Executive Director for all requests to changes in enrollment, including withdrawal from a Program.
- (e) CHCCS has an Inclusion Contract with the BC Centre for Ability to provide spaces for up to three special needs children in both the Under 3 and 3 to 5 Programs. All advancement and enrollment decisions will take into consideration current enrollment in these programs and the requirements of the Inclusion Contract, as well as the procedures described in Section 3 below.
- (f) The Executive Director may make exception to this Enrollment & Advancement Policy for families with designated special needs children enrolled at CHCCS.
- (g) The Executive Director makes all final enrollment and advancement decisions, and such decisions will be based on the parameters described in Section 1 (a) above.

2. PROGRAMS & PROGRAM AGE

CHCCS offers care for children in three separate Programs, as outlined below.

| Program | Program Age | When a Child Must Leave the Program |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Infant Program | 3 months to 18 months | A child must leave at the end of their 18 th month. However, at the discretion of the Infant Program staff and Executive Director an extension of up to 4 months can be given so that a child may remain until the end of his or her 22 nd month. When contemplating an extension request, staff will take into consideration a child's level of development (i.e. mobility, socialization, sleep schedule, etc.) and Infant Program cohort needs. |
| Under 3 Program | 18 months to 3 years <i>Early advancement to this Program may be considered based on developmental readiness (i.e. mobility, socialization, sleep schedule, etc.) and Under 3 Program cohort needs.</i> | A child must leave the Under 3 Program by the end of his or her 36 th month. |
| 3 to 5 Program | 3 years to 5 years <i>Early advancement to this Program may be considered for a maximum of two children, who must be at least 2.5 yrs of age.</i> | A child must leave the Over 3 Program when they are eligible to attend Kindergarten. |

3. PROCEDURES FOR FILLING CHILDCARE SPACES AT CHCCS

When a space becomes available in a Program it will be filled using the following procedure:

(a) Changes to Enrollment

The space will first be offered to children wishing to change existing enrollment as follows:

- i. The space will be offered first to children already enrolled in the Program who have requested additional days or changes to their existing enrollment (i.e. requests to move from full time to part time or vice versa)
- ii. If there are two or more children who wish to change their enrollment when a space becomes available, priority will be given in the following order:
 - a. The child who has a sibling currently enrolled at CHCCS.
 - b. If both children have a sibling currently enrolled at CHCCS, priority will go to the child whose sibling has been enrolled for the longest period of time.
 - c. If neither child has a sibling, priority will go to the child who has been enrolled for the longest period of time.

(b) Advancement

If the space is not filled through the "Changes to Enrollment" provision of this policy, the space will be filled through the advancement of children from lower Programs, if applicable, as follows:

- i. The oldest child within a lower Program will advance to the Program where the space is available if they are of the Program Age and developmentally ready (i.e. socialization, mobility, sleep schedule).
- ii. If there are two or more children ready to advance who are the same age (meaning they are both born on the same day, in the same calendar month and year), priority will be given based on the order of priority outlined in Section 3 (a) ii above.
- iii. If there are no children who are of the Program Age in the month that a space becomes available in the next Program, early entry to the next Program may be considered if a mutual agreement is reached between staff of both affected Programs that the child is developmentally ready (i.e. socialization, mobility, sleep schedule) to progress to the next Program and that doing so would meet that Program's cohort needs.
 - a. If there is more than one child who is developmentally ready, priority will be given to the oldest child.
 - b. CHCCS staff of the relevant Programs and the Executive Director maintains the right to make the final determination as to whether a child is developmentally ready to advance to the next Program and whether doing so would meet that Program's cohort needs.

(c) Enrollment from the Wait List

If the space is not filled through the "Changes to Enrollment" or "Advancement" provisions of this policy, then the space will be offered to families on the wait list according to the following order of priority:

- 1st Siblings of children currently enrolled at CHCCS (the sibling order of priority outlined in Section 3 (a) ii (b) will apply, if applicable).
- 2nd Children of staff members currently employed at CHCCS.
- 3rd Children of persons employed by the City of Vancouver.
- 4th Children of families previously enrolled at CHCCS.
- 5th Other children on the wait list.

Note: The Inclusion Contract between CHCCS and the BC Centre for Ability may require that priority be given to special needs children on the wait list when filling spaces in certain Programs. See Section 1 (e).

General Information at City Hall Child Care Society

Please bring the following necessary items to the Centre on your child's first day. It is the Parent's responsibility to ensure these items are always at DAYCARE

- Inside shoes or non slip slippers
- 2 changes of clothing
(pants, shirt, underwear & socks)
- Diapers & Diapering Supplies
(Please DO Not supply Pull Ups, diapers only)
- Bottles & Formula
(including milk, soy milk, breast milk)
- Nutritious Lunch
(include a healthy food item from each food group)
- Waterproof Rain Pants
(i.e. "Muddy Buddies,)
- Waterproof Rain Jacket with a Hood
- Warm Hat & Mittens
(please do not send gloves as children cannot put them on by themselves)
- Waterproof Boots
- SUN HAT
- Crib Sheet & Blanket and/or Soft rest Toy
- Photos of your child and their family

Please take time to clearly mark your child's name on all items brought into the Program. If you are interested in purchasing labels, please visit the Fundraising tab on our website and follow the links to Mabel's Label's.

Fieldtrips

Spontaneous, escorted and supervised walks in and around the neighbourhood occur for all age groups.

Long distant excursions will only occur in the programs with children over 3 years. We limit fieldtrips to one per year depending on the dynamics of the group. You will be informed in advance of these excursions and a "Parent Permission for Fieldtrip Form" will be available for your signature, acknowledging your consent for your child to participate.

Clothing & Possessions

Please ensure your child's clothing and possessions are clearly labeled with your child's name. The centre is not responsible for lost clothing and possessions.

Children should wear washable, comfortable clothing appropriate for extreme play and fun!! Part of every day is spent experiencing a variety of art and play activities, both indoors and out (rain or shine). The centre is not responsible should your child's clothing become soiled or stained. Please dress your child in "PLAY CLOTHES." We will be sending all soiled or wet clothing home daily; please ensure you check your child's cubby daily, and take home all bagged items.

The centre has a supply of "DAYCARE CLOTHES." If your child wears this home, please launder and return them to the Centre ASAP.

Special Items from Home

While we encourage children to bring a soft, cuddly sleep toy from home we do ask that all other toys, jewelry, and other possessions be kept at home. These items may get lost, broken or be difficult to share. Please keep these items at home. If your child does bring a toy from home we will ask them to give it to their parents to keep in the car until it is home time.

Outside Clothing

We take the children outside for at least two hours each day, rain or shine. Please ensure your child is equipped to play in all weather conditions. In warm weather, please ensure your child has been sun screened before they come to daycare. We will reapply sunscreen after nap. Water shoes are not essential but are useful on summer days as water play is very popular. Sandals and party shoes are not appropriate or safe for the outside play surfaces.

In rainy weather your child requires, rain boots & waterproof Jacket & Pants.

In Colder weather please provide a warm coat, hat, mittens and warm boots. All children must go outside during outside play time. If your child is not well enough to play outside, he/she is not well enough to be at Daycare.

Nap Time

Children are welcome to bring a soft, cuddly toy and blanket for use during nap time. Once a week the sheets are washed and mattresses are disinfected; we ask that parents remember to take their child's blanket and sleep toy home on a regular basis (at least once a month) to be washed. Please note we will not keep children awake. If you want your child to be woken early the Under 3 Program will wake children no earlier than 2:30 and the Over 3 Program will wake children no earlier than 2:00.

Birthdays

Each child's birthday will be acknowledged in a special way. The staff will make a Birthday Crown or Card for them to take home.

Parents are welcome to bring individual, healthy Treat for snack. Please do not bring party bags, party favors, hats etc.

Some ideas are: Popsicles, Watermelon, Timbits, Freezies and Muffins,

We will not serve cake or items needing to be cut up or divided amongst children etc. or items containing chocolate or sugary icing. Please do not leave Bday invitations in cubbies. A staff will be happy to discreetly distribute.

General Information at Cty Hall Child Care Society

UNSCHEDULED CLOSURE

The Centre will be closed in the event that

- The Centre is deemed unsafe (i.e. loss of electricity or water)

If the Centre is declared closed, staff will

- Contact Parents by telephone if possible
- Record a message on the Centre's answering machine announcing that the Centre is closed.

If a midday closure is necessary staff will

- call parents to pick up their child immediately
- In the event that the parent is unable to be contacted the Emergency contact person will be requested to pick up your child.

City Hall Child Care Society may also close due to other unforeseen circumstances such as natural disasters, health epidemics, fires, other emergency situations or labour disputes. During unforeseen closures, all financial and contractual commitments will remain in effect.

SNOWY DAYS

City Hall Child Care Society will close in the event of a Snowfall which has forced closure on services in our area. Ultimately it is the Executive Director's decision as we need to ensure appropriate staffing. A message will be left on the Daycare answering machine indicating closures, Parents may call the daycare after 7:00 to check for closure. Notice will also be posted on our website www.cityhallchildcare.org

In the event of a heavy snowfall which the daycare is deemed open, childcare will be available as per child/teacher ratio only. Please call the daycare first to see if we can accommodate your child.

Should a closure be anticipated eg. Heavy snowing in the morning or predicted through the day, parents need to be aware of such a closure. Additionally if the Daycare does close during the day parent(s) will be contacted to pick up their child. In the event that the parent is unable to be contacted the Emergency contact person will be requested to pick up your child.

WINTER DRIVING CONDITIONS

We ask that when it is snowing in the morning or starts snowing during the day that you keep aware of driving conditions and try to pick up your child early.

Late fines remain effect on such days

PARKING

There are three designated parking spaces available for picking up and dropping off your child (ren). These are located immediately below the Daycare in the City of Vancouver lot. Please respect the 10 minute drop off time limit, as many parents need to use these three spots. Additional Parking is available in the City Square Parkade.

A map of allowable parking spaces is posted on the Parent Info Board

Bicycles & Strollers

We are unable to accommodate strollers or bicycles in and around our playground. Fortunately we have access to bike locker storage in our parkade. A key is available for your use while attending City Hall Child Care Society.

Security

Key packages are required for families to exit and enter the building without staff assistance. There is a \$30.00 charge for fobs & bike locker access.. For those of you employed by the COV I am able to use your key tags as fobs, please forward the numbers listed on your key tag to the ED.

DAYS & HOURS OF OPERATION

Our Child Care Programs operate from 8:00 - 5:45
5 days per week, with the exception of the following

HOLIDAY CLOSURES:

| | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| New Year's Day | Family Day |
| Good Friday | Remembrance Day |
| Easter Monday | Christmas Eve |
| Victoria Day | Christmas Day |
| B.C. Day | Boxing Day |
| Labour Day | New Year's Eve Day |
| Thanksgiving | (1:00pm. Closure) |

When a Holiday falls on the weekend, closure will be the following Monday.

Part Time children's days of care do not change because of their illnesses, statutory holidays etc.

INTOXICATED PICK UP PERSON

If staff suspect the authorized pick up person to be intoxicated (drugs or alcohol) when arriving to pick up the child, they will:

1. Offer to call the alternate parent/guardian, then
2. Offer to call a friend or relative to pick up the parent and child, then
3. Offer to call a cab, then
4. If these offers are refused, the staff will inform the parent that if they choose to get into the car with the child and drive, the staff will notify the police. Staff are required to support the law.

If the staff feels that a child is in need of protection at any time, they will call the Ministry for Child and Family Development.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

If staff have reason to suspect abuse or neglect of a child, this concern will be reported to the Ministry of Child & Family Development as required by law. Information regarding this issue and current provincial legislation is available upon request from the staff.

BUILDING SECURITY

All Program doors will be locked. Families are required to purchase a key package to obtain entry into the daycare.

For safety reasons children are not permitted to open doors.

When entering and exiting the centre, please wait and make sure the doors and gates are closed completely after yourself, and that

- No child has exited the building without their parent or a staff member
- No strangers are allowed in

Please notify staff if you see any suspicious or strange person in or around the building.

CONTACT NUMBER(S)

It is essential that Daycare Staff be able to contact you at any time of the day. If you are not going to be available at your regular contact numbers always leave an alternate contact number.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

ARRIVAL

City Hall Child Care Society opens at 8:00am, the doors open at 7:55, but please stay with your child until 8:00

Please sign your child in upon arrival at the Centre and take the opportunity to speak with the staff to give any special instructions for the day/week.

If you are aware of upcoming days your child will be away, please let us know in advance.

As per the Parent Agreement, children are to be dropped off by 9:30am each day. Please call the centre by 9:30am if for any reason your child will not be attending the Program that day.

DEPARTURE

Please sign your child **OUT** when departing.

The Centre closes at 5:45. Please arrive to pick up your child at least 5-10 minutes prior to closing time. This allows children to depart in a relaxed unhurried manner.

This also gives parents and staff an opportunity to share information about your child's day. **If you would like to discuss specifics about your child's day please ensure you arrive 15 min prior to closing.**

If you, or an authorized person (as listed in the admission form), cannot pick up your child, contact the Centre to authorize the specific person who will be picking up your child. Staff will be checking the identification of persons picking up your child.

If there is legal documentation specifying custody/guardianship or limited access for your child, please provide copies of the documentation to staff.

ALL CHILDREN MUST BE SIGNED IN AND OUT EACH DAY AS WE USE THIS ATTENDANCE RECORD IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY.

PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

Please do not register your child in programs or activities which prevent you from dropping off by 9:30. Late drop offs cause too much disruption and is often difficult for the child. If you would like to register your child in such activities please choose a time later in the day and have an early pick up.

VISITORS

Parents/guardians are welcome to drop-in and observe the program at any time. If consultation with an educator is desired, please let us know ahead of time so we can arrange a time for you to meet with an educator. All other visitors must obtain prior approval from the Supervisor (or designate) for visits. If you wish for other family members (Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles etc) to visit your child in the program, please speak with a staff member to arrange for the visit. Please keep visits to a short amount of time as having extra adults in the room can be disruptive. Unfortunately we are not equipped to accommodate longer visits or observations.

LATE PICK UP

If you are detained and will therefore be late picking up your child, phone the program and advise the staff when to expect you. **Parents will be billed a late fine of \$20.00 as well as \$1.00 per minute after 5:45pm, no first time exceptions.** The Executive Director will bill parents based on information about the pick up time provided by caregivers.

If you have not picked up your child or have not called to make alternate arrangements by 6:00 pm, it is the responsibility of the staff to attempt to:

Phone your home and place of employment and to leave messages at all locations.

If your child has not been picked up by 6:00 and staff has been unsuccessful at locating parents, the staff is to phone the Emergency Contact Person(s) immediately and leave messages if possible.

If the Emergency Contact Person cannot be reached, and there has been no correspondence with parents/caregivers the staff will wait at the Daycare with your child until 6:45.

If the Parents or Emergency Contact Person has not arrived by 6:45, and ensuring messages have been left, the staff must phone the Ministry of Children and Family Development to pick up your child.

You will need to call them to learn the whereabouts of your child. You can reach the Ministry for Children and Families by dialing the operator and ask for Zenith 1234.

PICKING UP & DROPPING OFF CHILDREN DURING THE DAY (Special Appointments ONLY)

ARRIVAL TIME

As noted in the Parent Agreement - Drop off time for children is no later than 9:30. This allows the children to have time to settle in and participate in free play.

It is expected that children arrive prepared for the day and are settled into their daycare routine by 9:30.

EARLY PICK UP

If you are picking up your child for an appointment during the day please make prior arrangements with staff in your child's program and keep in mind that children must be picked up before naptime begins at 12:30.

LATE DROP OFF

If your child has a morning appointment, please make prior arrangements with staff in your child's program regarding the late drop off.

Your child must arrive before 12:00

Children may not be dropped off after 12:00

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

CITY HALL CHILD CARE SOCIETY is a Non-Profit Charitable Organization

FEES

Fees are due on the first day of each month. City Hall Child Care Society has automatic debit for families.

Automatic Debit Forms will be given at time of enrollment.

All NSF cheques must be repaid within 5 working days, including the \$25.00 surcharge.

Fees are required regardless of a child's possible illness, vacation, etc. as your child's space is reserved for him/her.

WITHDRAWAL

A minimum of one month's written notice, due the first day of the month is required when withdrawing your child from the Program. Payment of one month's notice may be paid in lieu of notice. The deposit will be returned provided all fees and fines have been paid to the Society. Your deposit will be forfeited should you fail to give notice of one month as outlined above of your withdrawal.

COULD I SELL MY Child's SPACE?

Only your child may use the assigned space, therefore you cannot sell your space to another family.

As the Parent Agreement indicates, your childcare space is assigned to your child. CHCCS retains the ownership of that space.

Given that our programs operate at a loss, City Hall Child Care Society may sell vacant days to another family in your program. These additional revenues help offset our deficit. If your child is going to be absent for a period of time, please inform the Program Supervisor. This will greatly assist our operation.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT & RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the strengths of City Hall Child Care Society is the active involvement of parents. . It is through your help, work and support that City Hall Child Care functions as a clean, safe and nurturing environment where children thrive!

Families are required to volunteer 12hrs/year for each fulltime enrolled child or 6hrs/year for each part time enrolled child.

To ensure we are keeping on top of the tasks needed in and around the daycare we a list of tasks posted on the Parent Info Board in the hallway near the office.

- Parents sign up for 1 of 2 options,
Option #1: Commit to a task for an ongoing period, each task is required to be completed monthly.
Option #2: Parent may choose to have the monthly fee deducted along with their child care fees each month.
- Please sign your Name beside either option.

SUBSIDY

The provincial government has a Child Care Subsidy Program available for families to help cover monthly child care fees for lower income families. If you are wondering if you qualify or if you have any questions, please contact your local Ministry of Human Resources Office. (Refer to the Blue Pages in the phone book, or call Enquiry B.C. @ 660-2421)

FUNDRAISING REQUEST

Did you know that we fundraise as our only means to Purchase Toys, Play Equipment & Art Supplies. We depend on Parents to help make ALL Fundraising Campaigns a SUCCESS.

- We are a registered charity and will provide income tax receipts for any cash donations made to our DAYCARE. (Please share this information with family & friends)
- Parent Fees account for 80% of our revenue, the balance in made up of Government Grants and Fundraising Campaigns
 - 93% of our costs are staff wages and benefits.
- If you would like to make a cash donation, cheques can be made payable to City Hall Child Care Society. They can be dropped off at the Daycare or they can be mailed to:

2685 Cambie Street
Vancouver, B.C.
V5Z 4K2

If you know of a Company that may be interested in Donating to our Facility please see the Executive Director for more information.

THANK YOU

Charitable Tax Receipts will be mailed within one week of your contribution.



GRADUAL ENTRY DETAILS

What is Gradual Entry?

Starting your child in a Daycare can be an emotional experience for both children and parents. Often children appear anxious and may have tears, which is a common reaction.

In order to assist families with the transition to Daycare, childcare staff will schedule a gradual introduction to the program. Gradual Entry gives your child time to

- Become familiar with staff
- Become familiar with routines and environment
- Develop trust and security

This adjustment is easier when a parent or close adult family member is able to spend the first few days with the child in the Program.

Please remember every child is different and the duration of Gradual Entry may exceed 5 days. Staff will adjust this time based on your child's needs.

TIPS FOR PARENT... Those first Days

When visiting during Gradual Entry we invite you to:

- Ask lots of questions
- Join in the activities at the children's level
- Show your child where he/she will be sleeping/eating and areas to play
- Introduce yourself and your child to children and others in the room

We encourage you to:

- Have a calm, positive attitude. Babies and toddlers are especially sensitive to your moods and are quick to pick up any tension in your voice. Sing a favorite song.
- Talk about what you and your child will be doing today.
(We will be playing with trains at daycare today.)
- Explain when and where you will be picking him/her up.
(After lunch and sleep I will come, I will know where to find you).

For those children advancing internally to the next Program gradual entry will be arranged amongst staff. Visits will be arranged and staff will oversee the child's transition. A meeting will be arranged with you and a Staff from the next Program.

Coping with Separation Anxiety

Tips for Parents

- Share information about your child's unique likes, dislikes, fears, eating/sleeping habits and anything else that would help staff understand your child and provide care that is reasonably consistent with yours.
- Model for your child, if he/she sees you building a relationship with a caregiver, your child will realize this is OK.
- A pleasant, calm start to the day is crucial to successful separations. If your child is old enough, have him/her help you prepare the night before. (lunch, things to bring)
- Bring something personal from home to help comfort your child (favorite teddy, blanket or photo)
- Develop a "good-bye" ritual with your child. Let them know you will be back.

Never sneak out while your child is distracted. This will destroy trust and encourage your child to cling more in the future

- Avoid repeated good-byes. Stalling can make children more fearful and clingy.

There will be a temporary period of adjustment. Your feelings of worry and parental guilt are normal.

Please feel free to contact us during the day to find out how your child is doing.



HEALTH and SAFETY

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

The staff at City Hall Child Care Society does our best to encourage excellent Health & Safety Practice for the children.

A balanced program which offers a clean well maintained, safe environment, with nutritious snacks, and opportunities for rest, play and exercise is provided.

Children and Staff practice regular hand washing to limit the spread of germs. Children and staff are expected to thoroughly wash hands before and after eating or handling food as well as after toileting.

Staff is required to follow Universal Precautions as well as all Licensing & Health Regulations when dealing with diapers, toileting and bodily fluids. These precautions include using gloves, washing hands between each diaper change and using a bleach solution to disinfect change table between each change, as well as when cleaning up bodily fluids.

IMMUNIZATIONS

All children attending City Hall Child Care Society are to be fully immunized based on the schedule developed by the Provincial Ministry of Health. <http://healthlinkbc.ca/immunization.stm>

A copy of each child's immunization schedule is to be provided to the Daycare Coordinator and is to be kept up to date.

Parents choosing to not vaccinate their child must notify the daycare Executive Director immediately and one month's notice will be given for the family to withdraw their child from City Hall Child Care Society

MEDICATIONS

In order for staff to administer medications as outlined in our Health Policy we require the following:

- All medication including over the counter medication must be prescribed by the child's physician.
- A consent form for Administering Medication must be filled out authorizing staff to administer medication.
- 2 staff are responsible for administering and signing off once the medication has been administered.
- All Medication must be in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's name, name of medication, dosage, date of purchase, and instruction for storage and administration.
- Staff will not administer medication with a date unrelated to the date of illness.
- Staff will not administer medication mixed with milk, juice or food.

HEALTH SERVICES

The Vancouver/Richmond Health Board Community Health Nurse and other Health Board staff regularly visit our Centre. If it appears advisable for your child to receive specific treatment or testing, this issue will be discussed with you and your permission will be requested. If you have any health questions or concerns, please call **THREE BRIDGES HEALTH CENTRE**

Vancouver/Richmond Health Board
604-736-9844

WE WILL CALL YOU WHEN?

- your child is sick or injured and requires to be picked up
- To give you information about an injury that requires an internal incident report to be filled out.
- Your child is showing symptoms of an illness...to give you a heads up that he/she may need to be picked up.

TOILETING

Please refer to CHCCS Toilet Learning Handout, if you have not receive a copy please ask a staff to provide you with it.

Consultation with staff is required before we move from diapers while your child is in attendance at daycare.

REST TIME

Rest time is a healthy part of a child's development and a routine part of our day.

Infants have individualized rest schedules.

Toddlers and children in the 3 to 5 Program have a designated rest time each day after lunch. Children who do not wish to sleep will rest on their cots or mats for a short period of time, followed by a quiet activity.

We believe if children fall asleep they need the rest. We will not keep children awake.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

All staff maintains first Aid Certification. Fire Drills and Earthquake Drills are held once a month at the Centre. Children meet at a prearranged spot and are counted using the Sign In Sheet. Staff checks the Centre to ensure all children have left the building. In case of fire or an evacuation due to the safety of the facility (i.e. an earthquake), We will meet in a designated space in the courtyard.

ILLNESS or INJURY

If your child requires immediate medical attention he/she will be transported by ambulance, accompanied by a staff to

B.C.'s Children's Hospital 4480 Oak St

You will be notified immediately, if necessary the emergency contact will be notified. Parents will be responsible for the cost of the ambulance.

NUTRITION

ALLERGIES

ALL PROGRAMS ARE PEANUT, PEANUT PRODUCT, free zones!!
These above mentioned foods may cause an anaphylaxis reaction in children we currently have enrolled at City hall Child Care Society.
Please DO NOT send to daycare foods containing these items or foods processed in a facility that processes peanuts.

It is necessary for staff to be aware of Allergies and Food Intolerances so please ensure we have been informed. Allergy Lists are posted in each Program.

We will inform all families of the allergen if your child has a life-threatening reaction to an allergen.

For your child's Health & Safety Please

- Do not give your child any peanuts, peanut products, cashews, pistachios.
- We will not serve any food which are deemed choking hazards for specific age groups.
- Label all food items in your child's lunch containers & lids must be labeled individually this includes heat ups, bottles (Infants), and any other items which will be put in a public space.
- If you would like a warm lunch for your child please send a Thermos. We do not heat up your child's lunch.
- Please send your child's lunch as you would like it to be served...peeling, slicing and cutting to be done at home (with the exception of bananas)
- **PLEASE DO NOT SEND GLASS CONTAINERS!!!**
- Infants will only be served their milk or formula from Plastic Bottles. **NO GLASS BOTTLES!!!**

Some food items which are deemed chokable are:

Dried fruit, Popcorn, (Younger than 3)

Marshmallows or Large dollops of nut butters

Rounds of hotdogs, sausages or whole grapes, please cut length ways

Nuts or Seeds (children younger than 3)

Do provide your child with

- Foods low in sugars and salt
- Vegetables which are steam cooked for Infants & Toddlers, 3 to 5 year olds can manage raw vegetables
- Cut wieners/sausages/grapes lengthwise and in small pieces to prevent choking
- Please do not provide food in non reusable containers, such as Instant Pastas
- At least One item from each food group

A Nutritious lunch includes at least one food item from each food group. The daycare is requesting that parents not send fruit bars/veggie bars, fruit roll ups, fruit gummies, Fast Food, Candy, Chips, Chocolate & Pop. The children begin their nap right after lunch so having an extra jolt with sugar and/or food dye is not a great way for little bodied to prepare to settle down for a rest! **Please refer to the link.** http://www.healthcastle.com/fruit_snacks.shtml.

SNACK

We provide a well balanced, nutritious snack both in the morning and afternoon. Snack Menus are posted in each program room, ask a staff to point them out to you.

- Our snack menu has been created in consultation with the Community Nutritionist
- We provide a variety of snack items, fruit & vegetables each day.
- We serve milk or water with snack & lunch. Please do not send juice boxes.
- If your child has food restrictions, food preferences or other dietary needs. Please provide snack for your child.

LUNCH

- Parents are responsible to provide a lunch; should you forget we will charge \$5.00 for a Daycare Lunch.
- Food items will be served as they are sent to daycare. We are unable to cut foods or heat food.
- If you would like your child to have a warm lunch please send it in a Thermos.
- Please keep in mind that your Toddler and Over 3 child will have a choice of any item in their lunch container... nutritious choices only please.
- We will encourage children to eat their main course first but ultimately the choice is theirs.
- Staff will not force a child to eat, but will provide encouragement and sufficient time.

Snack & Lunch in the Infant Program

- * Please provide formula/milk in clearly labeled bottles ready to serve.
- * Please do not send yoghurt tubes as Infants are unable to manage these.
- * Infant foods such as pabulum or rice cereal provided by the parents will be prepared by the Staff; all other foods must be ready to serve.
- * All unfinished food will be sent home.
- * Unfinished bottles are thrown out after 2 hours
- * A.M. Snack will be served at 8:30am, if you are providing breakfast for your child, please label the container as such.
- * A Snack Food List is posted in the Infant Program
- * For children who are able to eat solid foods, the centre will provide A.M. & P.M. snack which is nutritious, wholesome and low in refined sugar and processing.
- * Water will be provided.

Snack & Lunch in the Under 3 & Over 3 Program

- * A.M. Snack in the Under 3 Program is an open snack which is served at 9:00.
- * A.M. Snack in the Over 3 Program is an open snack served at 9:30
- * P.M. Snack in the Under 3 Program is served at 3:35
- * P.M. Snack in the Over 3 Program is served at 3:00
- * Milk is served at lunch or snack as well as water. Children are encouraged to try a variety of foods
- * We encourage parents to send small portions of a variety of items for lunch. (At least one item from each food group)

INFANT PROGRAM INFORMATION

Creating an optimum Infant Center is actually a rather sequential process. At city hall child care, the infant team, first and foremost, strives to create a physically and emotionally safe environment. We achieve a physically safe environment by ensuring that the space the children use is clean and sanitary and that the materials that they play with are safe and age appropriate. We attain an emotionally safe environment by treating each child as an individual and honouring their unique emotional needs. Our day to day care giving routine plays a huge role in the child ability to trust us. Just spending time with us and going through their individual routines creates a sense of consistency and security.

We strive to foster a sense of security and trust so that children can act upon their natural need for discovery. It is the children's sense of wonder and curiosity that drives them touch, smell, see, hear and taste. The infant teachers work to provide activities and opportunities where children can use their senses to learn more about the world around them. When planning and implementing activities, we use the SPICE model of development. SPICE stands for Social, Physical, Intellectual, Cognitive, and Emotional. The activities that we present implement one or more aspects of the developmental model.

Children go through huge changes in the social region of their development in the first few years of life. They go from mostly playing on their own to, playing next to another child, to joining a few other children and playing with them. As teachers we provide opportunities for all three kinds of play. We provide a child with the opportunity to engage in solitary play by allowing them the space and time, parallel play by providing multiples of the same toy, and opportunity for group play by providing facilitation. Our day is usually bursting with social development. Lunch time for example is a lovely time when all the children slow right down and sit together to enjoy a meal. It's a time when children are able to have conversations with each other, notice what each of us has for lunch, and practice the occasional plate toss across the room to add a sprinkle of humour.

The infant program sees a large range of gross motor ability. We care for children who are just learning how to be mobile as well as children who operate on the speed of fast and faster. We provide children with a safe environment to test out the waters with their emerging physical ability. For children who are just learning to be mobile it can be as simple as a little bit of tummy time throughout the day. For children who are well on their way with mobility, we make sure they have ample opportunity to exercise that ability during outside play time by using the slide and ride on toys. Even going on neighbourhood walks is quite an accomplishment as the children have to work to keep themselves stable and upright on uneven terrain. We also have organized movement activities both indoors and outdoors that let children work on their gross motor skills such as dance and soccer. We exercise our fine motor skills during art activities as children try to figure out what works best for them to hold a paint brush. Additionally, they use and refine fine motor skills while helping to get themselves dressed, taking their slippers on or off, even simply picking up a favourite toy. As children grow more and more comfortable with their own physical capabilities they feel confident in choosing their own activity. They rely less on their teachers which does wonders for their self confidence.

The program's approach to learning is play based. We plan and implement activities to teach children their ABCs and 123s without whipping out worksheets. We work on the intellectual and cognitive part of development by strategically planning and implementing different play based activities that reflect the children's interests and abilities at the time. For example, at the art table we learn about colours as we decorate a cut out. At circle time while singing songs like 5 little monkeys, we learn about numbers. While reading quality books children notice illustrations and learn to identify things and make conversation at the same time. The list goes on and on.

We encourage pro social development in our program. Infants are egocentric so teaching them to think about what their friends might need is important as well. In no way do we want children to feel like it is not mostly about them, but at the same time we want to encourage empathy and a genuine care and concern for their friends. We encourage children to check on each other when they fall and hurt themselves. If the children have an altercation, we encourage the children to check back on their friend to see if they are doing alright after the altercation. A part of social development is also learning how to regulate their emotions. Learning that you can't always have what you want, when you want it, can be a hard concept to grasp even for an adult. In the infant program instead of just saying no to the child we try to explain why it is they sometimes can't have what they want or do what they want to do. It is a long, repetitive process but eventually it pays off and the children learn to control their emotions.

Alongside working with the developmental model, the infant team seeks to build healthy relationships with the families. We strive to have open lines of communication with the parents and talk about what strategies might work with their child. We also like to create cohesion of care between home and daycare. We work on honouring a family's heritage, tradition, and life choices. We strive to work with families to preserve a child's first language and when appropriate asking for a list of words that families use at home with their children. Example: nigh nigh for milk in Chinese and doo doo for milk in Hindi.

All the work put into teaching a child to be more independent and self reliant finally boils down to their ability to transition and adapt in the toddler program. That is what we work towards. A sign of a healthy, thriving infant program is when you walk through the door and you hear calm, teachers sitting on the floor, and the children using them as anchors to come back to every now and then rather than crutches. At the end of it all, we strive to provide the best space that we possibly can for your child to continue to grow, adapt, and thrive.

UNDER 3 PROGRAM INFORMATION

In the Under 3 program we aim to provide an environment for your toddler that is safe, clean and stimulating. This is an environment that encourages the child to gain the maximum cognitive, physical and social-emotional development based on trust and loving relationships.

We have a well - structured and predictable day. It allows the child to feel safe and be able to predict what is going to happen. This feeling of safety allows the child the freedom to grow without undue stress.

Through responsive and respectful care your child will grow physically, and learn about themselves, their peers, their caregivers and their environment. The caregivers model the behavior we want to nurture in the children, kindness, gentleness and cooperation. We recognize each child as an individual, who has feelings, interests and skills.

Our program supports language learning and communication by making the most of everyday interactions and conversations - eating, dressing, diapering, resting and transitions. We also enjoy many opportunities throughout the day to read stories, sing and play! The teachers encourage children to take an active part in these interactions with each other. Our role is as a facilitator of language. We provide interesting activities to talk about: new and familiar stories, art activities and sensory materials, walks, and observing what is happening.

Our environment is set up for exploration. This allows for the child to experience new and familiar materials. Children love to experiment but they also need to security of knowing that they are capable of successfully accomplishing a task. The environment is changed to meet the growing needs and interests of the children. Materials in the environment are developmentally appropriate to provide challenge but not frustration. The environment should support positive self- esteem, promoting engagement and autonomy. We want the children to be able to say, "I can do it!"

The daily schedule includes both indoor and outdoor play. We go for walks in the neighborhood, climb, jump, crawl, dig and use ride on toys.

The Under 3 program simulates as closely as possible the ambience of home. We understand that we are in a partnership with the family, so daily interaction and communication is important. Through observation of the child's temperament, interests, preferences and emerging abilities we are able to support the child and the family. We implement a philosophy of inclusion and the program is individualized and responsive to any child's needs and abilities. We look forward to meeting those needs.

OVER 3 PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Over Three Program is a busy place full of action, buzzing with both physical and mental energy. In fact, the energy has such an impact that parents always comment when the room is quiet. While this active space can at times look like an outing at Go Bananas, it stems from a place of happiness and excitement to play with their friends.

As parents of children heading to kindergarten, you may start to wonder if your child is ready for school and if they are developing the skills necessary for learning. At CHCCS, we believe in a play-based philosophy and feel that children acquire knowledge through play areas and materials presented in the room. The program is divided into different play areas. Through these areas the children are exposed to learning concepts such as math, science, language and literacy.

In the block area, the children are very busy building and being creative. They use the blocks to build towers, garages, and houses to name a few. Some of the concepts being development here are weight, balance, height, and spatial awareness; size, shape, and colour recognition are also being developed. Sensory play such as the water table, dry bin, play dough, and sand box are great places for the children to satisfy their need of repetition by pouring, filling and sifting. Like the block area, concepts are also being developed through this play. The children explore weight, volume and measurement as they are dumping, lifting, and pushing various toys. Sensory play is often a soothing and relaxing activity. It also allows for a positive release of tension by the act of squeezing and pounding play dough and sand.

Signs of early literacy and language happen on a daily basis in the over three program and through art materials the children begin to develop the skills necessary to read and write. Each time a child picks up a crayon, felt pen or piece of chalk, they are strengthening their fine motor development needed to grasp writing tools. They are also developing their small muscles and hand-eye coordination. Using scissors, folding and tearing also helps to strengthen these skills.

Through play, the children use language they have already acquired to problem solve, create games, empathize and express themselves. They are also continuously adding to their vocabulary.

Socializing or communicating with their peers in each of the play spaces available gives them the experience needed to become a successful learner. When they interact with each other and share ideas about their play, they are developing communication skills such as listening and turn taking. When they are listening to their peers and expressing themselves it is teaching them how to have an open mind and be accepting of people's individuality. Socializing gives the children an opportunity to learn something new and gives them a sense of self-worth when they share with their peers what they know. The staff is always working with the children, encouraging and facilitating these important pro-social behaviours. We model these behaviours amongst each other and use puppets, pictures, and stories to create scenarios to help reinforce the importance of pro-social behavior. Those teaching

strategies give the children an opportunity to ask questions and give suggestions from their own experiences regarding conflict resolutions. The staff feel rewarded when they see the children initiating and creating their own puppet shows.