

# **YORK ENRICHMENT CHILDCARE CENTRE**

## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

### ***MISSION STATEMENT***

***Our mission is to inspire children to become lifelong learners, as well as confident, vibrant and successful members of society.***

## **SERVICES**

**AGES:** *York Enrichment Childcare Centre* offers licensed childcare for children who are between the ages of 16 months–5 years. The children are grouped according to age, and each classroom has an individualized, age-appropriate program. The centre consists of three classrooms: Toddler, Preschool, and Kindergarten.

**SCHEDULE:** The centre is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. We are closed on the following Statutory Holidays: *New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.*

**THE PROGRAM:** The program we offer is Enriched in the Arts and Academics. Our centre has many resources that children can use in order to expand their imagination and learn new skills. The staff incorporates into the curriculum a variety of learning experiences from such areas as music, creative movement, visual arts, literacy, math and science.

**SPECIALTY WORKSHOPS:** We are pleased to offer the following weekly workshops: Drama, Creative Movement, Cooking and French. All these additional programs are included in the childcare fees.

**TRIPS:** As part of our curriculum, learning will sometimes take place away from the centre's premises. The children will participate in such local outings as neighbourhood walks and visits to local places of special interest, such as the library, various stores, the Fire Department, and the Post Office. Occasionally, the centre will plan trips requiring the use of a school bus. Parents will have the opportunity to join the children as they visit such places as the farm, the zoo, or the museum.

**\*SUBSIDIZED SPACES ARE AVAILABLE**

## **PHILOSOPHY OF THE CENTRE**

**York Enrichment Childcare Centre recognizes that children have certain inherent needs that must be competently met in order to provide them with long lasting benefits. According to Abraham Maslow\*, some of the most fundamental needs of human beings are those involving safety, security, and love. Only once these needs have been adequately provided for, people are able to proceed toward fulfilling their personal potential. *York Enrichment Childcare Centre strongly believes that in order for children to experience optimal learning, they must first feel safe, accepted and loved.* Our philosophy emphasizes that a strong foundation in both the emotional and physical well-being of the child is a prerequisite for lifelong learning and personal growth. Hence, our staff makes every effort to create meaningful bonds with the children, as well as consistently maintain a warm, supportive and safe environment. Once these basic needs are addressed, children’s ability to benefit from our centre’s enriched and versatile curriculum is maximized.**

**In order to provide children with a meaningful educational experience, our program uses a Wholistic Approach, whereby all major developmental areas of the child are equally stimulated. Our centre provides daily learning opportunities in the areas of gross-motor, fine-motor, social/emotional, language, math, science, and creative arts. Moreover, our program provides a balance between quiet and active experiences, as well as group versus individual activities. York Enrichment Childcare Centre recognizes that a well rounded education during the early years, leads to competent, confident and well-rounded adults.**

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**\*Abraham Maslow was a renowned psychologist who specialized in the study of human motivation and personal development. He developed “The Hierarchy of Needs”, which is a tool widely used in the fields of Psychology and Education.**

## **CURRICULUM**

**York Enrichment Childcare Centre's approach to education is founded on The Emergent Curriculum. Our program consists of various learning units that reflect the children's interests, needs, and range of abilities. By capitalizing on the children's interests, the teachers ensure that learning becomes a personally meaningful experience for every child in our care.**

**The Emergent Curriculum Plan provides children with a wide array of learning opportunities that are both stimulating, and fun. The program plan incorporates activities from all major areas of development, such as language, gross-motor, fine-motor, social skills, math, science and the arts. The program strives to maintain a consistent balance between active versus quiet activities, group focused versus individual, and child-oriented versus teacher-led activities. There is also a balance between academic/structured learning experiences and free play. The program at York Enrichment Childcare Centre provides children with a solid foundation during the early years of development, as well as a lifelong love for learning and discovery.**

**Our approach is child-centred, which means that learning is accomplished through "hands-on" activities, where the child has the opportunity to practice already mastered skills, while acquiring new ones. Our centre provides children with a dynamic and age-appropriate program that reflects the unique composition of our classroom.**

**One of the critical roles of the Early Childhood Educators is to conduct ongoing and in-depth observations of the children, and to continually modify the program plan in response to individual and group needs. At York Enrichment Childcare Centre the teacher's role is that of a facilitator, as well as a guide. Based upon careful and ongoing observations, the staff designs a program that encourages critical thinking, exploration, independence and a sense of self-esteem. In addition to planning and implementing a stimulating program, the teacher acts as a role-model, who demonstrates positive communication and social skills. The children are encouraged to interact in a cooperative and harmonious manner, as well as to problem solve**

whenever conflict arises. Staff takes great care to positively guide behaviour and to help the children achieve a sense of mastery in all the areas of development.

We are committed to creating a childcare centre where all children feel safe, happy and loved. Only under such circumstances children will develop optimally, and by extension, families will benefit from the impact of high quality Early Education.

## **ADMISSION PROCEDURE**

York Enrichment Childcare Centre will admit a child into the program only upon meeting the following criteria:

- The Director has given an orientation to the parent/s, and explained the program and philosophy.
- A one time, non-refundable registration fee of \$50 has been paid in order to reserve the child's space.
- The parent has read all the centre's policies and has signed the agreement form.
- The parent has completed the registration forms and has submitted all relevant documentation, such as the child's immunization record, doctor's note, custody agreement (if applicable), etc.
- The Director has set-up an account for the parent, and all post-dated cheques have been received.
- The parent has set-up with the teacher a visitation / transition schedule, in order to minimize the child's anxiety at the start of the new program. We recommend that a new child visits the centre at least two times prior to commencing our program.
- The parent has provided the teacher all required supplies, such as diapers, bedding, and additional clothing.
- The parent has met with the child's new teacher in order to discuss specific needs and concerns.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

We value our parents and strongly believe that in order for quality education to occur, parents and teachers must work as a team. We recognize that choosing the most appropriate educational setting for your child is a complex, and often anxiety-provoking decision. We will make every effort to foster a sense of trust between parents and staff at our centre.

The following are some initiatives that parents can expect from York Enrichment Childcare Centre:

1. **OPEN DOOR POLICY** – Parents can drop-in and check on their child at any point during the day, without having to call ahead of time. Parents are always welcome! Should we be outside, or on a walk, there will be a note stating exactly the location where we can be found and the time of our return.
2. **TELEPHONE CALLS** – Parents can call the centre during the day and speak directly to the teacher in order to find out how their child is doing.
3. **VOLUNTEERING** –During special outings, or events, we highly appreciate parent helpers. These are excellent opportunities to watch the children and teachers in action!
4. **PARENT/TEACHER INTERVIEWS** – Parents will have the opportunity to discuss their child’s progress with the teachers during a formal interview, which will be held twice per year.
5. **ONGOING COMMUNICATION** - We encourage parents to take the time to get to know the teachers and to maintain open communication. If time allows, please spend a few minutes either at drop-off or pick-up time to inform the teacher of any concerns or special circumstances that need to be addressed. In addition, teachers will be happy to provide parents with ongoing feedback in regards to the child’s adjustment to the program.

## **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT**

At York Enrichment Childcare Centre children are disciplined through positive means, and in a manner that is appropriate to their developmental level. We believe that it is important to look at the root cause of “acting out”, and to immediately address the reason. Negative behaviours can often be averted by being proactive and by anticipating the times of day, such as transitions, when children feel a heightened sense of stress.

When children do exhibit challenging behaviours, staff will use some of the following techniques: redirection, reminding of rules, problem solving with the child, comforting, natural and logical consequences, and/or adjusting the environment in order to eliminate possible triggers of frustration. In order to encourage cooperation and harmony, staff will positively reinforce acceptable behaviours on a consistent basis, always taking care to maintain the integrity and self-esteem of each child.

Our staff understands that certain “unacceptable” behaviours are common as children develop social and communication skills. Therefore, as part of our curriculum, there is a strong emphasis on helping children acquire the skills necessary for expressing their emotions and dealing with various situations that arise within a group setting. Activities such as reading stories, dramatic play and group games, in addition to daily routines, provide excellent opportunities for practicing valuable life skills.

### **NOTE:**

1. Parents are strongly encouraged to periodically discuss with our staff any disciplinary issues and approaches concerning their child.
2. Only as a last resort, and when all other disciplinary techniques have failed, the staff will use time-out. In such a case, there will be written documentation and the staff will discuss the situation with the parent. For further information regarding this issue, please refer to *York Enrichment Childcare Centre’s Behaviour Management Policy*.

- 3. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE STAFF EVER ALLOWED TO ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS: physically hurting a child, yelling or degrading a child, threatening, depriving a child of basic needs (i.e. food, bedding, clothing), physically restraining, confining, putting a child on time-out for a longer period than indicated in the Behaviour Management Policy and without taking the proper preliminary steps. SUCH ACTIONS WILL LEAD TO IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL OF THE STAFF MEMBER, IN ADDITION TO POSSIBLE LEGAL ACTION.**

## **SAFETY**

**The main priority when caring for young children is ensuring their safety. Please be aware of the following safety measures that we have undertaken:**

- 1. All our staff have completed a specialized Police Reference Check (for working with vulnerable populations), in addition to professional references.**
- 2. Our staff has been trained in various emergency procedures, such as First Aid and CPR, Evacuation, Fire Procedures, and Child Abuse Reporting.**
- 3. The centre exceeds the licensing criteria set out by The Ministry of Community and Children's Services, as well as The Health Department, and The Fire Department.**
- 4. Our centre is equipped with an alarm, as well as a security system that is in effect at all times.**
- 5. Our centre has detailed policies in regards to the prevention of accidents, as well as infection control. The centre (inside and outside) is subject to daily, weekly and annual inspections by our staff, as well as independent experts.**
- 6. The staff is trained in planning and implementing a program that consists of age-appropriate activities, which promote the health and safety of the child.**

## **HEALTH**

**ILLNESS:** In order to maintain the health of the children and the staff, as well as to prevent the spread of infection, children who are ill with such symptoms as vomiting, diarrhea, contagious skin rash, severe coughing and respiratory difficulty are required to remain at home. Ill children can only return to the program after they being symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours, and/or have a physician's note stating that return to the childcare setting is permitted.

When a child becomes ill during the program, the parents, or the emergency contact will be asked to come and pick-up the child within an hour of being notified.

A child who is ill will be isolated from the rest of the children. The child will be accompanied by a staff member at all times and will be asked to rest until the pick-up person arrives.

**NOTE:** We will only release a child to parents, and authorized people who can show proper photo identification. **THERE WILL NOT BE EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.**

**MEDICATION:** The staff will administer medications only when a the parent has completed a signed consent form, which details the name of the child, the medication's name, the dosage, the times and date of administration, and what the treatment is for. All medications must be in the original labeled container, labeled with the child's name, the date of purchase, and the physician's name and telephone number.

**HEALTHY HABITS:** The staff at our centre will teach and promote healthy habits and proper hygiene on a continuous basis. Children will be taught the importance of taking good care of their bodies through cleanliness, proper nutrition and physical activity. Emotional well-being will be promoted as an integral component of one's overall health. The curriculum at our centre will further reinforce concepts of health through special units that focus on such themes as the human body, the life-cycle, healthy eating, and personal hygiene.

**NOTE:** For additional information regarding health practices at our centre, please refer to the *York Enrichment Childcare Centre's Health Policies and Procedures.*

## **NUTRITION**

**At York Enrichment Childcare Centre we believe that nutrition is paramount to the child's overall well-being. The meals that we provide are in accordance with The Canada Food Guide, and include age-appropriate servings from all food groups. The children are provided with a daily breakfast, hot lunch and an afternoon snack. Please note the following:**

- **We will post children's allergies and food restrictions, and adjust our menus accordingly.**
- **Every effort will be made to accommodate special food restrictions and/or allergies.**
- **All staff at the centre are trained in the safe handling of food, and every precaution is taken in regards to the cleanliness and safety of meals.**
- **Menus are based on a 3 week rotation, and are posted on the parent board well in advance.**
- **We do not serve pork and peanut products.**
- **Should there be any last minute changes to the menu, the substitutions will be noted on the board.**
- **The hot lunches are cooked on the premises by a trained cook, who is approved by the Ministry of Health.**
- **As part of healthy nutrition, children will learn about healthy eating, cooking, and appreciating multicultural foods.**
- **The Staff will teach table manners and healthy practices associated with eating.**

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

Parents are required to give York Enrichment Childcare Centre a minimum of *two weeks written notice* prior to withdrawing their child/ren from the program. In the event that proper notice is not received, the centre reserves the right to keep the two week deposit which was issued upon registration.

York Enrichment Childcare Centre will return post-dated cheques that have not yet been used in lieu for services rendered, should a parent decide to withdraw their child earlier than anticipated. Proper notice is required regardless of the reason for withdrawal.

York Enrichment Childcare Centre reserves the right to terminate services of a client for the following reasons:

- Child exhibits special needs which cannot be accommodated by the centre
- Child's behaviour is severely disruptive and/or detrimental to the well-being of other children at the centre
- Parent's conduct is unacceptable and detrimental to the well-being of the children and/or staff at the centre

Every effort will be made to accommodate special situations and work with parents and children. Should the Director, in conjunction with Staff, decide to terminate services, the client will be given a week's notice.

**NOTE:** Should there be an imminent threat to the well-being of staff and/or children, a client will be *terminated without notice*. This can include, but is not restricted to, incidents of physical violence against anyone on the premises, verbal threats of any type, abusive behaviour toward staff, and being on the centre's property while intoxicated. In addition to termination of services, legal action will be taken, such as contacting the Police Department, if necessary.

## **PROGRAM FEES:**

### **REGISTRATION FEE:**

There is a one time non-refundable fee of **\$50 per child** upon registration, as well as a **2 week deposit**, which will be refunded upon written notification of withdrawal from the program.

### **MONTHLY FEES:**

Monthly fees are determined according to the child's age, as well as whether the child is attending on a full-time versus a part-time basis.

### **TODDLER CLASS:**

(ages 15 months – 2.5 years)

Full-Time - \$875 / month set fee

Part-Time - \$46/ day

### **PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN CLASSES:**

(ages 2.5 – 5 years)

Full-Time: \$795 / month set fee

Part-Time: \$42 / day

After School JK/SK: \$17.50 / day

Before & After School \$20 / day

### **NOTE:**

- There will **not** be a fee adjustment when the centre is closed for statutory holidays.
- Parents will be required to pay the set fee when their children miss program days, regardless of the reason (i.e. sick days or vacation).
- Payment will be accepted in the form of **post dated cheques**, which will be withdrawn from the client's account on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month.
- Should a cheque be returned as NSF, York Enrichment Childcare Centre will charge a penalty of \$35 in addition to the penalty incurred by the client's financial institution.
- Should a client submit a payment late, there will be a \$25 fee per week, in addition to the regular service fees.
- In the event that a client fails to pay owed fees to York Enrichment Childcare Centre, a written notice will be issued with a deadline by which payment must be received. Should the client fail to comply with this deadline, services will be terminated, and the client's child/ren will be withdrawn from the program.
- Income tax receipts will be issued during the month of February.

## **DROP-OFF AND PICK UP OF CHILD**

- Parents are required to allot 5-10 minutes in the mornings, during drop-off time, in order to help settle them into the program, change them into indoor shoes, and communicated with the teacher any important information.
- Please ensure that your child's bin is stocked with adequate supplies of extra clothes and diapering supplies.
- Please dress your child in **PLAY CLOTHES**. Our program includes some messy activities, such as cooking and painting. We will not be held responsible for damaged clothes.
- Children are **NOT ALLOWED** to bring toys from home. We will not be held responsible for lost or damaged toys that do not belong to the centre. The only exception to this rule is on special occasions (i.e Teddy bear picnic day), or soft/cuddly toys for nap time.
- We strongly suggest that children arrive to the program by 9:00 a.m., as this ensures that they are able to get the maximum benefit from the program.
- Parents will be charged a fee when picking up their child after 6:00 p.m. The penalty is \$1 per minute after closing time. The parent will be required to pay this fee in cash directly to the teacher on duty. Repeated lateness may result in termination of services.
- At the end of each day parents need to take home any soiled clothes, artwork, and any other items that are not essential to the program.

**SHOULD YOUR CHILD BE ABSENT FROM THE CENTRE FOR ANY REASON, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO CALL AND NOTIFY THE STAFF.**

## **LIST OF THINGS TO BRING TO THE CENTRE:**

**Dear Parents,**

**On behalf of York Enrichment Childcare Centre, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all new parents and children. We look forward to being a positive and influential part of your child's education.**

**Please bring the following items to the centre prior to, or on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of your child's attendance:**

- **a blanket**
- **a small pillow**
- **indoor shoes, or slippers**
- **extra clothes**
- **a sippy cup (labeled)**
- **comfort items, such as, a stuffed toy, a pacifier, a bottle, etc.**
- **seasonal items (i.e. snow suit, boots, hat and mittens for winter, and sunscreen and a hat for summer)**
- **Immunization record**
- **medications for chronic conditions, such as asthma**
- **all telephone numbers and emergency information required for registration**
- **a \$50 cheque for registration, and post dated cheques for upcoming months**
- **for younger children: diapers, or pull-ups, wipes, lotion and spare clothes**

**Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask for clarification from any of the staff.**

**Sincerely,  
Nelli Hooper  
Director Y.E.C.C.**