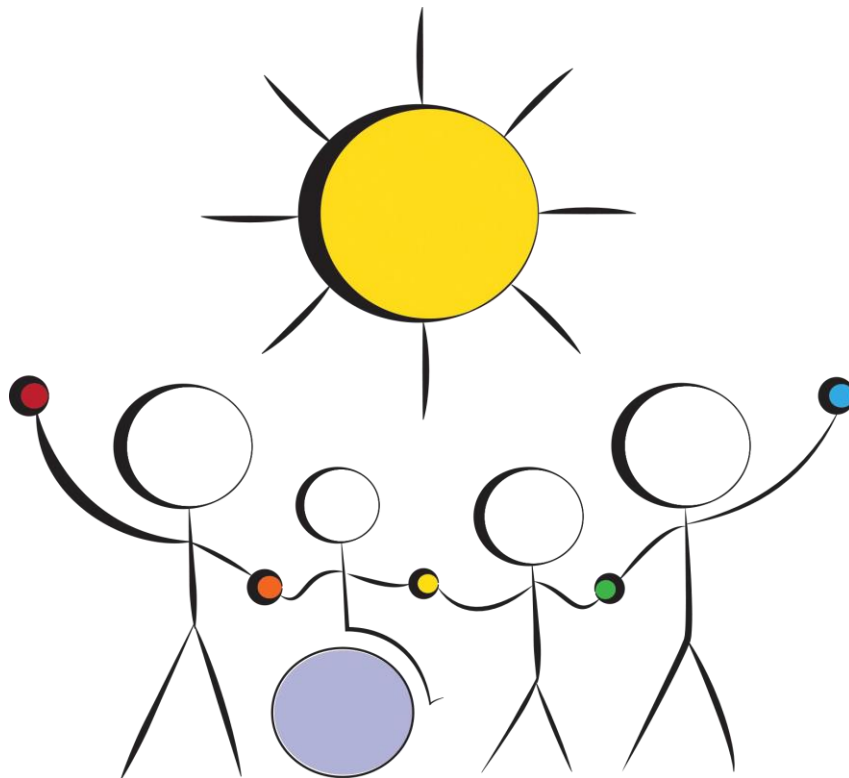


First Stage Child Care Centres: Parent Handbook



Updated: January 2024



Dear Families,

Welcome to First Stage Child Care Centres! Since 1986 our not-for-profit child care centres have been operating in Toronto District School Board locations: West Humber Collegiate Institute, Burnhamthorpe Collegiate Adult Learning Centre, North Albion Collegiate Institute and Highfield Junior School.

We look forward to working together and developing a trusting relationship with you and your child.

This handbook will provide you with general information regarding the Centre. Please take your time to read through the information. If you should have any questions, please feel free to ask the Centre Supervisor at any time.

Mission Statement

First Stage Child Care Centres is committed to providing the highest quality early learning and care environment that meets the needs of the children and families enrolled in our centres.

Our programs are designed to offer educational opportunities for the holistic development (social, emotional, communication, language and literacy, cognitive and physical) of the child. Learning experiences are planned by qualified registered early childhood educators to meet the development needs and skill levels of both the individual child and the group as a whole.

First Stage works together with families and community partners to provide an enhanced and inclusionary learning environment which enables children to develop to their full potential in all areas of developmental growth.



Program Statement

First Stage Child Care Centre is committed to providing an environment that supports, nurtures and encourages the development of the whole child while learning through play.

First Stage recognizes all children, families and educators as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

Through a team approach, we support the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of all children in our programs. Sanitary practices and infection prevention protocols are in place to maintain healthy environments. Policies for playground safety, weather (sun, cold, or smog alerts) and safe sleep practices are implemented to ensure the children's safety throughout the day.

Our menus are carefully planned to meet the recommendations of Canada's food guide, the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) and the City of Toronto's Assessment for Quality Improvement (AQI). Menus are reviewed annually by a Registered Dietitian. Nutritional experiences for children and workshops for parents are planned around healthy eating habits and resource material on health and nutrition is available for parents.

In considering the individual needs of the children in the program, a mix of play experiences are planned. A balance of outdoor and indoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time is incorporated throughout the day. Children's desire to learn through play is fostered by encouraging exploration and inquiry in an environment rich in materials and resources. Activities are planned to include a mix of child initiated and adult-supported experiences.

The Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) and Assistants will observe, record and document the children's play experiences and interests in the children's individual portfolios. These observations combined with the RECE's knowledge and understanding of child development help support the planning and adapting of play experiences to enhance and/or build upon skills the children have acquired or are emerging.

First Stage values the contributions parents bring to our programs. Families are viewed as valuable resources and experts on their children, bringing diverse cultural, linguistic and developmental perspectives to the program. Ongoing, open communication between staff and families is seen as an important way to make sure parents feel comfortable and engaged in the Centre. Parents are encouraged to participate within their comfort level. They are welcome to share ideas, talents and skills. Some Parents chose to perform for the children, share/read stories, participate in family events and/or parent-child activities or participate as a Parent Representative on the Board of Directors.

First Stage also understands that our children and their families live within a community, to further encourage a sense of belonging we engage with community members to provide support to the Centre and our families. Visits from the local librarian, fire fighters, police officers, and dental hygienists help to bridge relationships with children and community members and keep families informed of the services provided in the neighbourhood. Partnerships with



community organizations such as Toronto District School Board, Albion Neighbourhood Services, Etobicoke Brighter Futures Coalition, The Toronto Coalition for Better Child Care, Toronto Children’s Services, and Ernestine’s Women Shelter and others help to ensure we have valuable resources readily available should families, children or staff need support.

To support the children’s ability to express themselves staff will encourage them to interact with others using positive age appropriate means of communication. Using positive and age appropriate behaviour guidance techniques, staff will guide children to help them identify their feelings and to acquire self-regulation skills.

First Stage is committed to providing inclusive child care programs that support the health and well-being of every child and family in our care by focusing not only on the individual child needs but on family needs as well. First Stage works in partnership with Resource Consultants through contracts with Toronto Children’s Services to provide support for classrooms and individual children and their families in the best manner possible. Individual and/or classroom support plans are developed and implemented to meet the social/emotional and developmental needs of the children.

First Stage believes their staff to be knowledgeable, caring, reflective individuals that are life-long learners. They are collaborative and engage with other staff and families to create engaging environments. The Staff take responsibility to continue their own professional development by attending workshops, seminars, and staying current with new trends and changes in the sector. First Stage has a professional development budget for staff to attend the workshops/seminars and classroom coverage is also provided.

As a part of the annual review process, staff and supervisors will establish professional development objectives for the coming year. The set objectives support staff growth as well as compliment/support the individual’s Continuous Learning Program portfolio with the College of Early Childhood Educators.

When used in conjunction with the Provincial documents “How Does Learning Happen”, the “Early Learning Framework” and “Think, Act, Feel”, our program statement provides a resource for staff to use as they develop and plan programming to meet the needs of the individual child, the group and the families within the Centres. The Program Statement is viewed as a living document and as such will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and updated and/or changed as necessary. Input into the review of the Program Statement’s goals and approaches will be gathered from families, staff, community and Board members.

Teaching Staff

First Stage Staff Team

Each Centre has a site Supervisor who is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the Centre and leading the early learning and child care staff team. Our supervisors are Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) and approved by the Ministry of Education.



Each of our classrooms has 2 Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs). RECEs are responsible for developing, implementing and adapting the planned children's programs, supporting the children's learning and development through positive interactions and strategies in line with First Stage's Program Statement and for ensuring the safety and well-being for the children in their care in partnership with parents.

For more information regarding the College of Early Childhood Educators and registered Early Childhood Educators you can go to www.college-ece.ca

Our teams also include Child Care Assistants who work with the Registered Early Childhood Educators to support all aspects of the program throughout the day.

Our Kitchen staff are responsible for the planning, preparation, and serving of meals and snacks in the Centres. Lunch is provided by catering company Food for Tots at our Highfield and North Albion locations; each site employs a Dietary Aide with a valid Food Handler's certificate. The West Humber and Burnhamthorpe locations both employ a Cook with a valid Food Handler certificate. All menus are reviewed by a Registered Dietician annually. The Cooks and Dietary Aides are responsible for ensuring that all safe food handling practices and procedures are followed and that all records are maintained as directed by the Toronto Public Health Department. The Kitchens are routinely inspected by Toronto Public Health and inspection reports are available to the public. In addition, The Toronto Assessment for Quality Improvement (AQI) includes in their assessment criteria a section on meals, snacks and food safety.

The Program Manager located at the North Albion site, oversees all locations and offers administrative and programming support to site supervisors, staff and families.

All staff, students and volunteers placed at our centres complete Vulnerable Sector Checks prior to their work/placement as required by the CCEYA.

All Centre staff have valid Standard First Aid and Infant/Child CPR Certification.

First Stage strongly believes that having qualified staff that are competent and current provides better outcomes for children's learning, and as such encourages staff participation in training and development opportunities. As stated in *How Does Learning Happen?* "When educators engage in continuous learning and questioning, exploring new ideas and adjusting practices, they achieve the best outcomes for children families and themselves" Training and development plans are a part of the annual performance appraisals for staff.

Registered Early Childhood Educators are required to meet the Continuous Learning requirements of the College of ECE.



Centre Composition

Burnhamthorpe, North Albion and West Humber:

- Infant room with 3 staff for 10 children (birth – 18 months)
Toddler room with 3 staff for 15 children (18 - 30 months)
- Preschool room with 2 staff for 16 children (2.5-5 years)
- A Supervisor and cook are on site

Highfield:

- Toddler room with 2 staff for 10 children (18 - 30 months)
- Preschool room with 3 staff for 24 children (2.5-5 years)
- A Supervisor and dietary aide are on site

Program Information

Wait-list and Admission Procedure

First Stage Child Care Centre strives to fill vacancies in a fair and equitable manner for families while maintaining the viability of the business.

A child will be added to the Centre waitlist when an intake form has been completed. This will happen when:

- A parent/guardian has made contact with the centre directly and provided all the necessary information.
- The Supervisor/Designate contacts families on the subsidy waitlist that have not contacted the centre directly. The waitlist date will be the date of when the centre's intake form was completed.

There is no fee to place a child's name on the Centre waitlist.

When a supervisor becomes aware of an upcoming vacancy the following will take place:

- 1) The supervisor will look for possible internal movement or priority admissions. (examples of priority admissions are siblings of children already enrolled, clients previously withdrawn due to a lack of space to move up, student families (Burnhamthorpe, North Albion and West Humber locations), prioritized admissions from Toronto Children's Services)
- 2) If there are no internal move ups or priority admissions, the supervisor will look to the waitlist. Offering of admission will be based on:
 - Location on the age group wait list
 - Required date of care
 - Availability of underage approval (if applicable)



Once offered a space, a parent/guardian will have 2 business days in which to decide whether they are able to take the space. If the parent chooses not to take the space, is unable to take the space, or does not respond within the allocated time frame, the supervisor/designate will move to the next name on the list.

Once a start date has been confirmed the family will come into the Centre for an orientation session. During the orientation, families will have an opportunity to view the program in action, ask any questions regarding Centre policies and procedures, complete the admission forms and meet the classroom Educators. One week prior to starting child care – all forms must be completed and submitted in their entirety including an up to date copy of the child's immunization record. The monthly or semi-monthly fee payment for the current month must be made by the first day of care. If your child is unable to attend on your agreed upon start date due to illness or family emergency, please notify the Centre Supervisor immediately to ensure your space is secured.

Safe Arrival and Departure

Upon arrival please bring your child directly to the teacher and take a few moments to help your child get settled. This is a good time to share information about your child's evening and morning with the teacher or any changes in who will be picking up your child at the end of the day.

We encourage parents / guardians to bring their child to daycare by 9:30 A.M. each day. This will allow for full participation in all learning experiences that the program offers. **Parents must inform the Centre if your child is arriving after 9:30 A.M. or will be absent for the day. If a child's absence or late arrival is not confirmed, staff will initiate the safe arrival protocol as listed below.**

Burnhamthorpe	416-394-7534
North Albion	416-394-4688
West Humber	416-394-7515
Highfield	416-746-6847

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message, email or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
 - inform the supervisor or designate and commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:00 a.m. Staff shall contact the family via phone call (leave a message if call not answered) or email.
 - If there is no response within 15 minutes of the initial contact a second attempt will be made. Staff will continue to call/email every 15 minutes until they reach the parent/guardian, or a call back/ email is received from the family.



2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.
3. If the absence cannot be confirmed, the supervisor or designate will contact the Program Manager to discuss the course of action to proceed with. This may include contacting CAS or the Toronto Police Services non-emergency line for advice or follow up.

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff 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 staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),
 - confirm with another staff member 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 against 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 before Centre closes

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up 30 minutes after the time or by closing whichever comes first, the supervisor or designate staff shall contact the parent/guardian and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
 - Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff must call again and leave a message for the parent/guardian. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
 - Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall refer to the procedures under "Where a child has not been picked up as expected."

Where a child has not been picked up and the Centre is closed

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 5 minutes prior to closing time staff shall inform the closing staff that the child has not been picked up.
2. One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire about their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual; the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick up.



3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall contact the emergency contact, and/or the alternate authorized individuals listed on the child's file.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) within a half hour of closing, the staff shall proceed with contacting the Toronto Children's Aid Society (CAS) at 416-924-4646. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

Late Pick Up Fees

Centre Hours of Operation:

Burnhamthorpe: 7:30 A.M. – 5:30 P.M.

North Albion: 7:30 A.M. – 5:30 P.M.

West Humber: 7:30 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Highfield: 7:30 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

A late fee is charged when a child is picked up late. The person picking up the child will need to sign the late book to confirm time of pick-up. The parent/guardian is responsible for paying the late charge. A charge of \$1.00 per minute is applied when a child is picked up late.

If lateness continues to be an issue, a family may be requested to transfer their child (ren) to a child care Centre that can accommodate the needs of their family.

Children will never be dismissed without supervision.

Fees

Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Program

First Stage has enrolled in the Canada wide early learning and child care program. This allows families to receive a discount on the program's base fees which were frozen as of March 27, 2022. Families receiving fee subsidies through Toronto Children's Services may also be eligible for a reduction in their assessed fees under the CWELCC.

A Base fee includes:

- parent fees for anything a licensee is required to provide under the regulation (for example, supervision, play materials, bedding, and food where it is mandatory for parents and required by regulation for children under 44 months)
- mandatory fees a parent must pay in order to receive care (for example, a registration fee or deposits)

Non-base fees not covered under the CWELCC discount include:

- late pick-up fees,
- NSF (non-sufficient funds) fees, and/or



- field trips

During the orientation, the Centre Supervisor will review the fee policy with the parents and a fee payment schedule will be set up. Fees may be paid by cheque, money order or cash. Should a cheque be returned for any reason there will be an additional charge to cover administration fees. If cheques are returned NSF twice, all subsequent fee payments must be made in cash or by certified cheque/money order.

(A current fee schedule is available as an addendum to handbook)

Fees are payable in the event of:

- Emergency closures
- Emergency relocation
- Statutory holidays
- Vacation and sick days
- Closed days where payment is received from the City of Toronto

Families receiving subsidized care are allocated a maximum number of absent days per calendar year. Should a child exhaust the available absent days, the parent/guardian is responsible for full-fee payment for all subsequent days absent. Families will be informed of the Centre's attendance policy and the Toronto Children's Services appeal processes when absent days are exhausted.

Recognized Statutory Holidays are: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

The Centres close at noon on Christmas Eve

Additional closure dates where fees are not charged*- Easter Monday, Winter Break (days the Centre is closed between Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

*-exceptions may occur for subsidized families with siblings enrolled in other Child Care Centres.

Withdrawal Notification

Parents are required to provide two-weeks written notice or payment in lieu of notice when withdrawing their child from the Centre. In various circumstances, it may be necessary for First Stage CCC provide a family with a notice of withdrawal of services. For specific information on the reasons for withdrawal and the withdrawal procedures please refer to the withdrawal policy included in the parent policy package.

Supplies

To ensure your child is comfortable and can participate fully in our program throughout the day, please be sure your child has the following items at the Centre:

- Food for infants under 1 year of age



- Prepared bottles (with lids) of formula or milk for infants.
- Extra change of clothes (a couple of sets if toilet training)
- Diapers, pull-ups
- Appropriate seasonal clothing for outdoor time

Outdoor Play

The children participate in outdoor play activities on a daily basis. Our licensing body, the Child Care and Early Years Act, requires 2 hours of outdoor time as part of your child's daily program. This scheduled outdoor time is critical to providing a balanced and well-rounded program. Activities are planned to enhance gross motor development, social skills, hand-eye co-ordination as well as cognitive skills.

At times, the children may participate in planned off-site/community walks or activities within the school. These activities provide wonderful learning opportunities for the children to explore nature, the community and the environment around them.

Please be sure that your child has the necessary clothing to enjoy their time outside.

Winter Time:

Warm hat, boots, snow pants, winter jacket and mittens (2 pair if possible)

Spring/Fall Time:

Jacket, hat, splash pants, rubber boots

Summer Time:

Hat that covers the ears, running shoes, extra clothes for water play on hot days and a sweater for cool days

The Centre provides sunscreen for children with signed consent.

We ask that children wear closed toe shoes while on the playgrounds for safety reasons. We also recommend that children do not wear jewelry (earring studs & small hoops are okay) to prevent loss or injury.

Illness and Communicable Disease

Should your child become ill and, in the Supervisor/Designee's opinion, is unable to participate in the program, you will be contacted to pick up your child.

Children with fevers or who have had two or more bouts of diarrhea and/or vomiting or a combination of both within a **24-hour period** will need to remain home until they are symptom free for 24 hours.



If your child has a communicable disease the Centre must be informed immediately. Action will be taken following the Centre's illness manual and/or the direction of the Public Health Department.

Prescription medication can only be given at the Centre on the following conditions:

- The medication is in its original container with the prescription label clearly listing the child's name, the physician's name, date prescribed, name of medication and amounts to be given; and
- A signed Medication form giving written permission for the staff to administer the medication has been completed.

Non-prescription medication such as pain relief/fever reducing medication (i.e.: Tempra, Tylenol, Advil), Orajel, allergy or nasal sprays can only be administered with a note from a physician stating the child's name, date, times and dosages to be given.

Non-prescription diaper cream and/or sunscreen will be applied with signed consent from the parents.

It is important that staff be informed of all allergies, medical conditions, and food restrictions.

EPIPENS that are prescribed by a Doctor for a child's allergies must be on site in order for the child to attend. Parents/guardians must ensure that Epipens have not exceeded the expiry date. Parents will train staff to use the EPIPEN prior to the child's admission to Centre.

INHALERS/PUFFERS that are prescribed by a Doctor for a child's asthma must be on site in order for the child to attend. Parents/guardians must ensure that the inhaler/puffers have not exceeded the expiry date. Parents will train staff to use the puffers prior to the child's admission to Centre.

Rules for bringing food into the Centre

With the exception of children under one- year of age, First Stage CCC prohibits parents from providing food for intake at the childcare centre. First Stage Child Care will provide beverages, snacks, and lunches for all children over the age of one throughout the day.

- For infants under one year of age, food/beverages brought to the child care centre must be labelled with the ingredients as well as the child's full name and the date the food arrived at the child care centre. Children will be fed individually under close supervision.
- A list of current allergens will be posted, Parents who serve foods containing allergens at home must ensure their child has been rid of the allergens prior to attending the child care centre (e.g. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)
- For special occasions and or celebrations, First Stage will provide all food items for consumption.
Please check with your child's teacher for specific details on how birthdays are celebrated within the classroom.

Nutrition



The Centre provides snacks and lunch for all children over one year of age. Lunches are catered by Wholesome kids Catering.

Seasonal Menus are planned in accordance with the recommendations of Health Canada (Canada's Food Guide) and are reviewed by a Certified Dietician. Menus are posted where they can be seen by parents.

The Centre can accommodate most food allergies and restrictions. Allergy and restrictions are posted to ensure the health and safety of children, teachers and volunteers. The Centre will strive to provide alternate foods that are of equal nutritional value and similar in appearance.

Snack and lunch time are viewed as integral parts of the program, interactions/conversations at this time will continue to offer learning opportunities and experiences.

Both the Centre and Wholesome Kids menus are pork and nut free.

The Centre cannot guarantee a nut free environment due to the possibility of secondary nut contamination from people and items brought into the Centre.

Parents/Guardians of children under the age of twelve months are required to supply all food/beverages and contents for bottles for their child's daily intake. A refrigerator is located in each infant room to maintain food safety and nutritional value. Please see the section above titled Rules for bringing food into the Centre for details.

Accidents/Emergencies/Evacuations

Should superficial accidents occur (scraped knees, small bumps, bruises) staff will complete an accident report. Parents will be asked to read over the report and sign off that they have been informed of the incident, a copy will be provided for the parent.

If an accident should occur where your child requires medical attention, he/she will be transported by ambulance accompanied by a staff of First Stage Child Care Centre. Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be contacted. Parents sign consent for medical procedures on the emergency card for their child.

Should an emergency occur (ex.: fire, lockdown, natural disaster or evacuation), the Centre will follow the "Emergency Management Policy". Parents will be notified of the event as soon as it is safe to do so. It is imperative that the Centre has up to date contact information for parents and emergency contacts at all times. A copy of the Emergency Management Policy is included with the registration package and will be reviewed with families upon orientation.



Program Enhancement

Throughout the year special events, parties and celebrations are planned for the children and their families. Entertainers, guests and workshops may be planned to enhance the programs at the Centres. Field trips within walking distance may be planned to enhance learning experiences.

Parent Involvement

Our Centre has an open-door policy and welcomes parent/guardian participation within the program. The following are some examples of opportunities available throughout the year:

- Fundraising
- Parent workshops
- Parent and child activities
- Special trips
- Family breakfasts and/or dinners
- Cultural celebrations
- Interpreter to support families who do not speak English

First Stage C.C.C. is operated by a Board of Directors. Each Centre has a Parent Representative. If you are interested in learning more about the details of this position, please speak with the Supervisor.

Community Partnerships

First Stage is involved in partnerships with several agencies within the community. Some of the agencies we are currently working with are: Toronto Children's Services, the Etobicoke Brighter Futures Coalition and the Toronto District School Board. Please take a moment to refer to our Parent Resource Information Board/Binder that speaks to our community involvement and the support services/programs that are available for families living in Toronto.

Inspections

The Centre is inspected routinely by the Ministry of Education (provincial), Toronto Children's Services (municipal) and the Toronto Public Health Department (kitchen and classrooms). All inspection reports are available for public viewing in the foyer of the Centres.



Prohibited Practices

All employees, students and volunteers are to use positive behaviour guidance strategies as outlined in our Behaviour Guidance documents as well as comply with First Stage Child Care Centre's Program Statement.

In keeping with The Child Care and Early Years Act, First Stage Child Care Centre prohibits the following practices:

- a) corporal punishment of the child;
- b) 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 only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- c) locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- d) use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

If a staff member, student or volunteer were to demonstrate any one of the prohibited practices at any time, the appropriate children's protection agency would be notified and disciplinary actions would be taken, including notification to the College of Early Childhood Educators as required. Incidents of this nature would be reported to the Ministry of Education as a Serious Occurrence.

Duty to Report

The employees of First Stage Child Care Centre are obligated by law to report all cases of suspected or observed abuse to the appropriate Children's Aid Society. Any staff engaging in abuse will be suspended until an investigation is completed. Abuse is determined by the Children's Aid Society and not by the person reporting. The Centre welcomes parent/guardian discussion regarding the Centre Abuse Policy. Questions and clarification requests may be directed to the Supervisor.



Access and Equity

Families receiving care from First Stage CCC will review the Centre “Access and Equity Policy” upon admission and annually thereafter. Access and Equity issues of any form will not be tolerated.

Serious Occurrence

First Stage Child Care Centre is responsible for delivering services that promote the health, safety and well-being of children. The Centre is accountable to the public and to the ministry to demonstrate that the services are consistent with relevant legislation, regulations and policies.

Serious occurrence reporting is one of many tools that provide the licensed child care programs with an effective means of monitoring the appropriateness and quality of service delivery. First Stage Child Care Centre’s monitoring includes an ongoing review of practices, procedures, and training needs. Under the Child Care and Early Years Act, the Centre ensures that there are written policies and procedures with respect to serious occurrences and notifies a Ministry of Education program adviser of any serious occurrence by the Centre within 24 hours of it being deemed a serious occurrence. A Serious Occurrence Notification Form is posted which provides greater transparency for parents about serious occurrences that have happened. Parents will benefit from information about the incidents and immediate and long-term actions the Centre has taken to minimize the recurrence of the incident.

Students and Volunteers

First Stage Child Care Centre is committed to providing a nurturing and safe environment of every child who is in attendance. In the child care centre, only employees, 18 years of age or older, will have direct unsupervised access to children. Care of children is further enriched through the Centre’s participation in co-operative education placements of Toronto Students in early childhood education and parenting credit courses and College and University Students in early childhood education post-secondary programs. Volunteer student placement is also welcomed as credit is given toward student community involvement requirements for secondary school graduation. Students and volunteers will not be permitted to have direct unsupervised access to children and will not be counted in staffing ratios. The Centre will ensure safe guards are implemented to maintain the safety and protection of all children receiving care from First Stage Child Care Centres. New employees, students and volunteers will sign the Risk Management Procedure prior to employment or placement, and annually thereafter.



Feedback: Compliments, Comments and Concerns

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

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by First Stage CCC and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

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

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 1 business day. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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

Confidentiality:

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

Conduct:

Our Centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

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

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

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

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



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

For more information, visit

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

How to address a concern or complaint:

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program Room-Related</p> <p>E.g.: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the classroom staff directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 2 business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail.</p> <p>Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
<p>Centre General, - or Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor. 	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>



Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Staff-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related	Raise the issue or concern to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly or - the supervisor. All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	
Student- / Volunteer-Related	Raise the issue or concern to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or - the supervisor. All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	



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

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

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

Contacts:

Site Supervisors:

Burnhamthorpe 416-394-7534 or firststagebcalc@yahoo.ca

Highfield 416 -746-6847 or firststagehfs@yahoo.ca

North Albion 416-394-4689 or firststagenaci@yahoo.ca

West Humber 416-394-7515 or firststagebcalc@yahoo.ca

Program Manager 416-394-4689 or fsccejennifer@yahoo.ca

City of Toronto Program Consultants: 416-397-7359

Ministry of Education Child Care and Quality Assurance & Licensing Branch:

1-877-510-5333 or information.met@ontario.ca

Toronto Public Health Department: 416-338-7600 publichealth@toronto.ca

College of ECE: discipline@college-ece.ca

A detailed list of contacts for the Ministry of Education, City of Toronto and Toronto Public Health is posted in the foyer at each location.



Support

Although the main focus of First Stage C.C.C. is providing a nurturing and learning enriched play-based program for all children, we value the importance of meeting the needs of the whole family. Parents are encouraged to speak to our staff when needing support and direction. The staff and Supervisor will attempt to meet each family's individual needs.

Smoking/Vaping

Smoking and/or Vaping of any substance is not permitted within First Stage Child Care Centre or on the playground before, during or after operational hours.

Confidentiality

Personal information is treated confidentially.

Handbook Updates and Revisions

Parents will be informed of any major updates or revisions to the handbook through email or hardcopy.