

KIDS CLUB

FAMILY HANDBOOK



**This handbook is available and free of charge to enrolled families or parents considering enrollment.
Please speak to the centre supervisor if you would prefer an electronic copy sent to you.**

Daycare Connection Kids Club Family Handbook

(Revised December 2017)

Welcome to Day Care Connection/ Downtown Montessori

As founders of Day Care Connection (DCC)/Downtown Montessori (DTMS), our goal is to provide consistent, transparent, and creative direction for all of our programs. Although we consult and work together regularly, we are each responsible for the overall management of specific programs. Mona Stephens oversees the Home Childcare, Family Resource Centre, and Kids' Club services. Elizabeth (Liz) Ferguson is in charge of the Montessori Schools.

We like to think that we are very hands on at every site. This provides us with direct knowledge of the day-to-day way in which the programs operate and makes us familiar with teacher/child/parent interactions. Hopefully this sends the message to staff and families that all work in the organization is important, and that we are accessible to children, parents, and front-line teachers alike.

Listening and responding to the needs of children and their families, our staff, and our community has always been our passion. We believe in children and their families and in providing programs that will foster their growth and development.

Should you have any concerns or complaints regarding the school and/or its policies, Mona is available upon request. If there are differences with your child's teacher or the on-site manager that cannot be worked out directly, or if you wish to register dissatisfaction or concerns about our services, please call Mona at 416-691-1101

Thank you for choosing Daycare Connection Kids Club for your child(ren).

Elizabeth Ferguson, Director

Mona Stephens, Director

Downtown Montessori is Bill 168 Compliant **Downtown Montessori is also compliant with the Accessibility for** **Ontarians with Disabilities Act/IASR**

At Daycare Care Connection Kids Club, the documents required by the Customer Service Standard are available upon request and can be provided in a format that takes a person's disability into account. The information can also translate into other languages. Please let us know how we can help you.

Please note: Daycare Connection is a co-educational centre. However, to avoid the use of somewhat awkward expressions, such as he/she or his/her when referring to children, we will alternate between the masculine and feminine gender or use the plural form.

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Mission and Values

Mission

Daycare Connection is a non-profit organization committed to enhancing the lives of children. At DCC, people of all ages are involved in the care of children and helping them to get the best possible start. We offer high quality programs, opportunities for mutual support, guidance and education about child development and learning – all in a welcoming environment. We work together with others in the community to meet the emerging needs of children and improve the quality of their lives. We operate our child learning centres under the name Day Care Connection/Downtown Montessori to better reflect what we do.

Values

Daycare Connection fulfills our mission by listening and responding to emerging community and family needs. We believe in:

- **The Best Possible Start for Children**
Children’s self-esteem and optimal development depend on growth in all areas, including social, emotional, language, cognitive, and physical.
- **The Rights of Children**
Children are entitled to have their basic needs met within a caring family and community, and to have the resources and opportunities necessary for the best possible start.
- **Mutual Support**
Community members of all ages affect each other’s’ well-being and development; sharing our experiences, our wisdom, and ourselves has mutual benefits for younger and older individuals alike.
- **Choice**
Families need opportunities for choice about their children’s care and services to strengthen family life. These opportunities should be affordable and accessible.
- **Accessibility/Inclusiveness**
DCC strives to create a bias-free climate of mutual respect and understanding in our workplace and provision of service. We are committed to a culture of dignity, integration, equality of opportunity and independence which is necessary in fostering a rich learning and working environment for all.

Service Principles

In developing our organization and services and delivering our programs, we are guided by the following principles:

- **Involvement**

Our programs provide opportunities for individuals and families to belong, contribute, and make decisions about services that affect their lives. Listening and involvement are essential to high-quality programs and easy-to-use services.

- **Building on Abilities**

Our programs build on individuals' strengths and abilities, which are the basis for everyday coping and personal change.

- **Humour and Sharing**

Our programs recognize that a safe, warm, and enjoyable social environment enables sharing, confidence, and personal and family development. In particular, programs for children must be fun, stimulating, and nurturing.

- **Variety of Expertise and Experience**

The knowledge, skills and leadership of volunteers, support staff, and professionals are all necessary for program quality and organizational development, and are supported through opportunities for growth.

- **Wise Use of Resources**

We believe that public and private resources must be used creatively, efficiently, and effectively in the fulfillment of our mission and service delivery.

- **Advocacy**

Our commitment demands advocacy to bring about change in public policy that positively impacts the lives of children and those who care for them.

Program Statement Kids Club

We know that the early years for children are the learning years and this learning continues into adulthood. Staff view children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. We want children to be learners, to love to learn, to be part of a community of learners.

We have developed our own method of delivering care and education to school aged children. Our philosophy is a blend of the best practices of Early Childhood Education, using Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (How Does Learning Happen and the Early Learning for Every Child today- ELECT) the Toronto Middle Childhood Strategy and The Assessment for Quality Improvement (AQI) as a guide.

We believe that engagement, expression and belonging are key components to providing quality care to school aged children.

A. PRINCIPAL: *To promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children.*

GOAL: Ensure that we have environments that promote and support the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of the children in our care. We know that setting this foundation is key in the early years.

Nutrition- Food and snack times are viewed as learning experiences that promote social interactions and a healthy relationship to food. During snack times, staff engage in meaningful conversations with children to extend learning and facilitate on-going conversations. By positive role modeling and healthy suggestions, we encourage the children to try all foods. Children self-serve all foods and assist with snack routines (1). By following and meeting the Canadian Food Guide, through our catering company, we offer portion sizes/servings and nutritious value from all food groups that allow children to grow and thrive. Menus are reviewed semiannually by a registered nutritionist. We are a nut free environment. Allergy, dietary and cultural restrictions are supported, documented and discussed with all staff. Menus and resources are available to families on our parent board. Well-being resources are accessible to families and children on related topics such as healthy child development, personal hygiene, body image resources, healthy eating habits, bullying and cyber bullying.

Health and Safety- The safety of the children, staff and families is our primary concern as we strive to offer safe indoor and outdoor environments where children are encouraged to explore. Kids Club meets all health and safety requirements from the Ministry of Education, and local government bylaws including fire and public health. We use a variety of policies and procedures to promote overall health and safety for both children and staff. Some of these policies include Serious Occurrence, Playground Safety, Anaphylaxis and Allergy, Supervision, Accidents, Health and Illness, Infection and Control, Standing and Recreational Bodies of Water, Immunization policies Workplace Violence and Harassment (and all Ministry of Labor mandated policies and procedures). These can all be found on the parent board or policy binder. Furthermore, we follow Toronto Public Health's Communicable Disease guidelines and post notices if we have confirmation of 2 or more cases of the same illness/symptoms in an effort to curb the spread of illness. Our practice includes excluding an ill child by keeping them comfortable while a family member is en route.

Toy and equipment washing/disinfecting schedules follow Toronto Public Health requirements. Health and Safety related resources are accessible to parents and available on the parent communication board. Some of these may include information on recalled equipment and toys, car seat and day to day safety tips, and illness prevention.

Each of our programs are divided into age appropriate rooms. We encourage self- help skills in a safe yet nurturing way keeping each child's ability in mind. Children are encouraged to be involved in cooking, art and science experiments with the use of safe utensils, materials, appliances and ingredients in mind. When engaging in outdoor play, temperature both wind shield and heat and smog advisories are checked before going outdoors. Accident reports are filled out and given to parents notifying them of any accident that may have occurred.

B. PRINCIPAL: To support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.

GOAL: Create an environment that supports positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, childcare providers and staff. To foster and engage in ongoing communication between parents and staff about our programs and their children.

It is our belief that a collaborative, positive relationship between our teachers/centre and parents/families is a key component to a child's positive development. Staff are friendly, showing pleasure when welcoming individuals into the environment. They maintain positive

voice tones, speaking in a supportive manner with others. They model appropriate positive social behaviors. They demonstrate the ability to accommodate for unexpected changes, providing flexibility while looking at individual needs. All staff display empathy, understanding and support towards individual's feelings. Staff interact with children at their level, are approachable, engaged and interested (1).

Staff engage with parent/guardians daily at drop off and pickups, commenting on the events of the day, any situations that may have occurred, and encourage positive relationships where parent/guardians feel welcomed and open to discuss any concerns (1).

A current daily schedule is posted outside each of our programs, this allows parents the opportunity to reflect on the full day of their child for regular and non-instructional days. Pedagogical documentation is available for parents both outside each program door and on our parent board. Staff and children use artwork, displays and documentation of children participating in learning experiences, accompanying a description of the learning taking place. Parent/guardians are welcomed to come into the programs daily and share experiences of the day, by viewing art pieces in progress, documentation and displays (1).

Program plans are posted outside each program with the direct reference to the root skill within the Continuum of Development describing the potential learning opportunity being offered. Our daily program plan provides detailed communication of activities to parents. Through communication, we work hand in hand with parents to provide the child with the best experiences possible to contribute to child and family well-being. Children participate in the planning of weekly experiences by giving suggestions, during group meetings, daily conversations, and on white boards. Play equipment, toys and materials are adapted to meet the needs of all children (1).

C. PRINCIPAL: *To encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.*

GOAL: Ensure that our environments are designed, and our staff respond to children, in a manner that encourages the children to communicate in positive ways and supports their ability to self-regulate.

DCC staff encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and supports their ability to self-regulate. We believe that Kids Club age children need their non-academic hours to be full of opportunities to develop their interests and skills and to spend time in positive, learning relationships with other children and adults. While our staff provides activities and resources that complement the Kids Club day, we also recognize that need to unwind and have quiet times to support self-regulation.

Children are provided with choices and equal rights to participate in learning experiences based on their interest. We recognize and respect individual differences and developmental abilities Staff provide opportunities for children to take developmentally appropriate risks and challenges to support their ability and promote self-regulation. Children are given time to complete play/tasks at their own pace, not being rushed through routines. Staff focus on encouraging children to succeed in completing tasks, without doing it for the children. Staff are engaged in mutual relationships with children as co-learners responding to spontaneous or

emerging learning opportunities. Communication and conversations are encouraged to promote inquiry, and extend learning (1).

We believe that children develop best as individuals in social settings. We encourage children to demonstrate their feelings and needs through interaction and cooperation with peers and with adults. Staff assist children in processing their own emotions and recognizing the emotions of others. Children are taught to recognize that their actions have consequences. Furthermore, they are active participants in conflict resolution and are taught skills that help them to solve interpersonal conflicts with minimal adult intervention. Children learn about empathy, impulse control, emotion management practice negotiation and communication skills with staff collaboration. We cultivate caring relationships where children and adults develop a sense of belonging that support positive interactions among children, parents and staff.

We follow Dr. Shanker’s **“Three Key Steps to Self-Regulation”**: Dr. Stuart Shanker has described self-regulation as the way the child deals with a stressor and how they recover from it (Shanker, Calm, Alert, Happy, 2012).

- 1) **Reduce the child’s overall stress.** If we can determine what is causing the child’s stress levels to rise, we will minimize those factors. Teachers in our Kindergarten classrooms are keen observers who are able to adapt/add apparatus, such as squeeze balls during circle time, pencil grips, or left handed scissors in their classrooms, in order to support children who may have difficulty with these tasks. These modifications help minimize potential stressors and provide the child a chance to feel successful. All our programs provide sensory materials which have been linked to having a calming effect, and our staff respond to children with nurturing, calm tones, making sure to label emotions, especially when a child is upset or agitated.
- 2) **Help the child to notice what it feels like to be calm, focused, and alert:** It is our practice to label the child’s feelings and the feelings of other children in order to help every child develop empathy, self awareness, and awareness of others.
- 3) **Teach the child what they need in order to feel calm, focused, and alert:** Labelling emotions is the first step towards awareness. Once this self-awareness happens, we have found that the child often seeks out the materials, or words that comfort them and return them to a calm state. It could even be as simple as a sleep toy or hug from a teacher.
- 4) Incorporated into all our programs is the development of self-care. We give the children ample time between transitions to dress themselves in preparation for outside, and eating when they are hungry (especially at snack times). Our snack times are flexible. We offer snacks at a small table. The children come to the table when they are hungry and serve themselves (with a staff member observing and assisting, if needed). All of our practices, as well as those outlined above, lead to self-regulation, determination, and independence (HDLH, 2014, pg. 33).

D. PRINCIPAL: *To foster the children’s exploration, play and inquiry.*

GOAL: Foster children’s active exploration through play and inquiry-based learning in positive learning environments that incorporate child-initiated and adult-supported experiences where each child’s learning and development will be supported.

Our programming reflects this goal by providing high quality learning opportunities, available and accessible play materials that allow children to make choices. Children are provided with the opportunity to lead experiences and routines to build and support leadership skills (1). Our positive learning environment is play based and emergent, observations of children's interests/behaviors will inform staff in program plan development. As children grow and develop, these learning opportunities must reflect a child's changing capacities for exploration, play and inquiry. We offer an inclusive, non- judgmental, welcoming environment where children belong and are supported and their unique qualities are valued.

E. PRINCIPAL: To provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences.

GOAL: To offer inclusive, flexible practices, learning experiences and opportunities for children that are based on individual interests.

The teacher's role is to determine the developmental level of each child and to plan for activities that will encourage growth. Staff demonstrate inclusive practices and are observed engaging in play, learning experiences and/or opportunities with the children. Positive environments based on play based learning encourages a sense of belonging, through collaborative discovery staff can gain a better understanding of children's skills. Children are provided the opportunity to direct the daily schedule allowing for flexibility and independence. Children are invited to investigate, create and solve problems encouraging self- expression and self- regulation both indoors and out. Opportunities are created for enhancing self- help through play (1).

We are constantly evaluating and refining our program to better meet the individual needs of the children. We believe that each aspect of development is interrelated, and we therefore endeavor to provide a program that meets the child's needs in a consistent and progressive manner. Observation, reflection, monitoring, documentation, planning and training are ongoing.

F. PRINCIPAL: To plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported and which is inclusive to all children, including children with individualized plans.

GOAL: To view children as capable, competent, curious and rich in potential. Through Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT), we aim to look at each child's stage of development in an inclusive way to provide a holistic environment for them to belong, feel safe and strive developmentally.

By looking at children's individual and unique abilities, we encourage each child to offer their own skills to the group. Learning experiences are adapted to ensure that all children are able to participate. Staff utilize emergent opportunities to encourage leadership skills and support positive self-esteem. Through the use of different materials, and natural elements both indoors and out, we invite children to investigate, problem solve, engage in critical thinking and create through play (1).

Resource educators and third party organizations such as Child Development Institute are available to work closely with children with different abilities, families and staff to establish individual goals as needed. A resource consultant is also able to assist with the development and implementation of an Individualized Program Plan (IPP) if required. We believe that not

only must we strive for excellence in the provision of physical and nurturing care that promotes but we must also excel at providing a learning-enriched environment. We are aware of the vast differences that exist among children at all ages.

G. PRINCIPAL: *To incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care.*

GOAL: To incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children.

DCC understands that children need to move and be active to support the development of healthy body and mind. We plan for safe outdoor experiences where children can master their movements while taking safe risks. Designated safe indoor and outdoor space for physical play is available at all times including inclement weather. At least 30 minutes of outdoor time is included each day, weather permitting unless a parent of a child advises otherwise in writing.

Quiet time is always available during program time, children can rest in a conformable and quiet area of the room. Homework is also encouraged in a designated area, where children can work freely.

H. PRINCIPAL: *To foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.*

GOAL: To initiate healthy family connections and built a strong sense of community between children, parents and staff.

DCC builds a strong sense of community and supports positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, and staff. By initiating healthy family connections we offer daily feedback, whiteboard write ups, observation and communication, workshops and school gathering information. We invite parents to share and participate in children's ongoing learning by capturing, documenting and sharing daily experiences, viewing current displays reflecting recent interests. Our inclusive learning environments are built upon diversity, equality and inclusion. We recognize each child and their family by respecting culture, ethnicity race, language, gender, gender identity, and family environment in an inclusive environment (1).

Parents are viewed as experts on their child, knowing them best, and are vital to their child's successful experience in the program. Knowing that communication between families and staff is key, we aim to provide positive enriched relationships where parents feel welcome to share concerns (1). Parent meetings are set up if necessary where staff and families can work together for the overall success of the child/ren. Documentation, resources, and expertise are passed on and available to parent/guardians to help support them with any concerns or issues. Parents are encouraged to be involved in various events and activities in the centre. Parent surveys are conducted annually to allow parents the opportunity to review and give insights on how they feel staff and management are upholding the school policies and guidelines.

I. PRINCIPAL: *To involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff.*

GOAL: Connect children and their families to outside community partners in order to a) support families, b) educate children on topics of interest to the child's development, and to c) broaden their understanding of the larger community.

We involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff. We view the community as a valuable resource. Their provision of information about current resources, child development and health and safety allows parents to make informed choices about their families. The use of resource consultants helps Kids Club be better equipped to support children, their families and staff. Resource consultants can assist with the development of an Individual Program Plan (IPP) if needed.

Community partners provide many useful resources and information on public health, education and hot topics in our surroundings. Our children also visit the local library, safe parks and family resource centre. Resources to families on recreation programs, events and experiences within the community are available. Community and cultural celebrations are acknowledged throughout our programs. These activities build connections between community partners and children. All family structures, disabilities, and diversity are reflected in the room environment.

J. PRINCIPAL: *To support staff, who interact with the children at a child care centre in relation to continuous professional learning*

GOAL: Support DCC staff in their professional growth and development through a variety of measures.

Through attendance of outside workshops and conferences or discussions, staff are given numerous opportunities to further their professional growth. By involving local community partners, such as resource consultants, DCC is better equipped to support children, their families, and staff, all while creating an environment for professional collaboration between consultants and staff. Routine Staff Meetings allow for staff and managers to engage in collaborative discussion, to reflect on their practices, to pose questions and have those questions consulted upon amongst their peers. Regular Room Meetings give teachers of the same age groups the opportunity to consult on best approaches; to share their written notes, observations, and findings on their students' social, emotional, physical, and academic progress in order to gain outside insights on how best to continue refining their teaching practices. Using the AQI as another resource, teachers are also able to use the Reflective Questions as a means to reflect on their daily work and to consult on how to continue providing, and engaging in, the best possible approaches.

K. PRINCIPAL: *To document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families.*

GOAL: Program Statement and its principles will be routinely reviewed by staff and managers. Reviews will be done to determine whether the approaches and goals specified have been achieved and their impact on children and their families

This Program Statement will be documented as reviewed at least annually and whenever modified;

- by the Director with consideration of its impact on families and children and the development of additional strategies resulting from ongoing feedback and observation.

- by staff, caregivers, students and volunteers prior to interacting with children and as needed based on concerns or contraventions.

All approaches outlined in this Philosophy and Program Statement are observed within the program and approaches that contravene are unacceptable. In addition to regular meetings with staff to ensure understanding and compliance Supervisors/Managers/Co-coordinators will observe staff annually and record observations of compliance/non-compliance. Action plans will be developed to assist staff in meeting requirements including increased monitoring and additional training. Consequences for non-compliance to requirements will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The centre manager visits classrooms ongoing and as needed. Through these visits, each manager is able to observe and make note of classroom environments, interpersonal interactions, and teacher practices. At least once a year an Ongoing Program Statement and Prohibited Practices Monitoring for is completed by managers.

This document allows for the review of each staff member's practices in relation to prohibited practices while ensuring approaches set in our Program Statement are being upheld and adhered to. Staff and managers review the completed form together, with Managers suggesting a goal for each staff in relation to their professional development. In a situation where a staff member is not adhering to practices that are in line with our Program Statement, Managers would schedule a meeting with the staff member in order to discuss their observations and set goals. Specific professional development tools will be offered in order to help bridge any gaps. In addition to our own internal monitoring, when reviewing for impact of these principles routine visits from the City of Toronto Children's Services, The Ministry of Education, and Toronto Public health provide opportunities to ensure that our principles are being upheld.

Agency Internal Strategies:

The program statement will be used as a guide for the staff, children of Kids Club and families. Staff will conduct ongoing program statement and prohibited practice monitoring. Through monthly room meetings with supervisor and staff, setting child, program and individual goals, the program statement will be used as a living document to guide and support each staff, program, child and family.

Feedback opportunities to support ongoing communication are available to staff at all times. Apart from ongoing dialog with families, parent/guardians are given the opportunity to complete an annual anonymous online survey to give feedback, suggestions and comment about their experience in the child care.

1. Toronto Children's Services, Assessment for Quality Improvement 2016. School Age Assessment Document.

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Programs and Services

DOWNTOWN MONTESSORI AT INFINITY PLACE -Newborn to five years, 416-849-369, 226 Grand Trunk Blvd

This accessible school is located in a brand new community in downtown Toronto overlooking the CN Tower, Rogers Centre, and Air Canada Centre. Like all of our schools, we follow the Montessori methodology in our work with Under-2, Under-3, and 3-6 (Casa) children. Our proven track record of successful services surrounding a high-quality child learning centre attracts families living and working in this community to this dynamic condominium development. Design and start-up costs have been donated by the Conservatory Group.

DOWNTOWN MONTESSORI AT CONCORD CITYPLACE- Newborn to five years, 416-623-1738, 335 Bremner Blvd

This school is built into the community master plan of Concord CityPlace with design and start-up costs donated by Concord Adex Developments. Modeled on similar success, this accessible facility for Under-2, Under-3, and Casa children adds to the enrichment of community lifestyles and operates professionally, peacefully, and commercially non-partisan.

DOWNTOWN MONTESSORI AT COATSWORTH CRES. -Newborn to five years, 416-694-9444, 11 Coatsworth Crescent

Located in the Beach/Riverdale district, this school offers a warm and stimulating curriculum for Under-2 and Under-3 children with a full range of activities and materials tailored to their developmental needs. Casa children participate in a full-day casa program. Their classrooms provide a carefully prepared and ordered learning environment in which children have freedom and choice. Included in their classrooms are didactic and sequenced materials geared towards encouraging children to develop their full intellectual, social, and physical potential. Because we are situated in a residence for seniors, there is ample opportunity for spontaneous and planned interaction between generations. We feel our program enhances the quality of life for both age groups, as children become a resource for seniors and seniors a resource for children.

DOWNTOWN MONTESSORI AT SIMCOE PLACE- Newborn to five years, 416-340-8757, 200 Front St. W.

Situated on the accessible ground floor of an office tower in the middle of Toronto's financial district, we are able to respond to some of the special requirements of parents working at downtown workplaces, such as lunch hour roundtable meetings and an open-door policy for parents to visit during their work day. Our programs for Under-2 and Under-3 children help them to get off to the best possible start and acquire a solid foundation for healthy development and learning. Casa children attend our full-day Casa program. This program, like all authentic Montessori schools, emphasizes learning through all five senses. Children learn at their own individual pace and according to their own choice of activities from hundreds of possibilities.

HOME CHILD CARE: DAY CARE CONNECTION- 416-698-0750

Our family home child care program provides government regulated home-based child care. The caregivers, agency-trained paraprofessionals, provide care in a family atmosphere for children from infancy to age twelve. The homes are carefully selected and monitored to ensure that children receive care in a loving, safe, and stimulating environment. This care fills a need for parents who want their children to experience the comfort and intimacy of a family environment. This program also offers information and advice to help families obtain services outside our jurisdiction of child care beyond our regular services.

FAMILY DROP-IN CENTRE: FAMILY RESOURCE CONNECTION - 416-690-0102

Our drop-in Centre is open to parents, caregivers, nannies, grandparents, or any adult who is caring for young children, newborn to five years. The Centre has a sense of community where problem solving, peer counseling, and support around common issues occurs. A Parenting Book Library and Child Care Registry are part of the Resource Centre. We also provide support, education, and referrals to families who need other specific services, such as counseling or assessments.

KIDS CLUB: KINDERGARTEN and SCHOOL-AGE CARE- 416-693-6596

Our school-age program, located within a school, offers many advantages. Children get programs they enjoy, choices about how they will spend their leisure time, and are in a setting that is child friendly and safe. We offer high-quality structured programs for skill development, balanced with time for play, socialization, and reflection.

Day Care Connection/Downtown Montessori programs are required to follow the Province of Ontario's Smoke-Free Act, which prohibits smoking at all times in licensed day nurseries. As an operator, we must ensure that employees and visitors do not smoke on the premises (including the playground). Your co-operation is appreciated.

Morning and Afternoon Procedures

Kids Club Hours

Monday – Friday

Morning Hours- 7:30 am- 8:30 am

Afternoon Hours 3:00 pm- 6:00 pm

Morning Arrival

The children are greeted and are offered the opportunities to enjoy a morning snack and participate in open activities.

Afternoon Arrival

Kindergarten and grades 1 and 2- Each afternoon our staff escorts kindergarten, grades 1 and 2 children from their last classroom to Kids Club.

Grade 3- During the first few weeks of each new school year our staff escorts grade 3 children to Kids Club as a transition until they are ready to come to the Club on their own.

Grade 3-6- Children arrive between 3:00 pm and 3:15 pm, on their own, and check in with Kids Club Staff.

As part of our **Safe Arrival Procedure** attendance is taken in each community. If we have not received a message from you stating that your child was absent from St. John's or is not attending Kids Club we begin looking for them which requires our staff to initiate phone calls to your home or office as well as sending staff to your child's last classroom. Calling us when your child will not be attending Kids Club avoids this unnecessary and often confusing situation.

Dismissal

In addition to calling Kids Club when your child is absent from St. John's, please help us with our **Safe Arrival Procedure** and phone us if you are picking your child up prior to 3:00 pm. If it is often confusing when we, and the other children, have seen your child throughout the day and then do not have them arrive at Kids Club as scheduled. A phone call from you avoids this situation.

When you arrive at Kids Club and your child has greeted you, he becomes your responsibility. Please remind your child that they are responsible for putting away all equipment and activities that they were involved at the time you picked them up. This means that you may have to wait a few minutes for them to tidy up. Please plan for this.

Children will be allowed to leave the Kids Club only with their parents unless otherwise stated. On the application form the parent will give names as to who can pick up. Parents or legal guardians are the only people who can request that someone else pick up. The Kids Club reserves the right to request identification from those receiving the child.

This must be picture identification. We will not allow a child to leave the Kids Club with a person we do not know unless all precautions have been taken.

Late Pick-Ups- KIDS CLUB CLOSSES AT 6:00 P.M.

Please do not be late as **children worry.**

Please remember that staff members have families and commitments of their own. If they unexpectedly have to stay late it means their plans are disrupted, streetcars missed, their own childcare arrangements upset, etc.

Parents who are late picking up their child will be charged a late fee of \$10.00 and an additional fine of \$1.00 per minute, beginning at 6:01 pm. This fee is to be paid directly to the staff members who have stayed with your child.

If you are more than 30 minutes late, and we have not heard from you, we will call your emergency contact to see if they are able to help us. We are obligated to inform a Children's Aid Society worker if you are more than 60 minutes late and we have had no contact with you.

Kids Club Closings

If St. John's is to be closed due to severe weather, mechanical failure, etc., Kids Club will be closed.

In the event of severe weather, mechanical failure, etc. Kids Club will close/ cancel the program, as the circumstances dictate. In the event that these circumstances develop after Kids Club has opened for the day, the Supervisor will determine if and when the Kids Club should close for that day. Once the announcement has been made, we ask that you make every effort to pick up your child as soon as possible so that staff members may arrive home safely as well.

Emergency Evacuation and Relocation Plan

Fire drills are held on a monthly basis and the evacuation plan is posted in all the rooms of the centre. All staff members, students, and volunteers are familiar with these procedures. The Director or a designate will be the last to exit the building.

In the event that the children and staff need to evacuate the building, they will proceed to a place determined by the police/fire department. The school will only be evacuated in the event that the building is not safe for occupancy.

Other Emergencies

We have procedures in place to cover a range of other emergencies such as medical, fire, snow/ice storms, utility disruption, hazardous materials, suspicious articles, disgruntled or impaired parents, employees, etc. These roles and responsibilities are reviewed, and modified, with staff annually. For more details please review our Emergency Response and Management Policy and Procedures.

Should an emergency as described in the sections above occur, every effort will be made to contact families electronically. If this is not possible, parents will be called by the management and designated staff members.

Serious Occurrence Notification Form

In the event of a Serious Occurrence, a notification form will be posted in a conspicuous space for 10 business days and may be updated if necessary.

Everyday Life at Kids Club

Starting After School Care

Please consult with our Staff if you are concerned about your child's transition to after school care. Our staff will have suggestions that are specific to your child's Kids Club community and will vary according to your child's age and previous after school experience.

Clothing

Since we are located in St. John's Catholic School building, we adhere to the formal dress code. The appropriate dress code consist of any combination of white and navy blue garments (e.g. plain white top, navy blue bottom or, navy blue top and bottom, no denim) Reflecting the principles of modesty, the dress code shall not include short shorts or skirts, bare midriffs, halter tops, or tank tops.

Clothing plays a vital part in your child's enjoyment of Kids Club and activities. Carefully chosen clothing contributes to your child's comfort, participation, success, and independence.

We do go outside to for active play for a minimum of **30 minutes daily** except if it is too cold, hot or terribly wet (in this case, active indoor play time is available in the gym). In order for children to enjoy outside play, they must have proper clothing. Please see that your child has appropriate clothing available at Kids Club. Try to keep an extra vest or light jacket, extra mitts and hat, tucked in their backpacks so they can add it or take it off as the weather dictates.

In our efforts to provide an atmosphere of peacefulness for the children, **please refrain from sending your child to Kids Club in clothing that reflects fantasy or violent characters** such as The Hulk, martial arts, wrestling, superheroes, Power Rangers, Star Wars, etc. We feel that allowing children to wear these clothes leads them to engage in play that is violent and often sexist. In turn, **this undermines the values we teach- kindness, peaceful conflict resolution, empathy.** It is really upsetting to some children and families to see children pretending to hurt people. We want to teach them that violence is unacceptable. You can help us by limiting the amount of violent and fantasy related themes your child is exposed to at home. Avoid **buying toys, videos or music that suggest the possibility of power and violence, ask adults who might give your child toys to steer away from these items,** and let relatives and friends know that you are taking a position against merchandise-oriented child's play. Working together we can foster a healthy and peaceful environment that will enable children to learn how to gain control over their own behavior, to adapt to the demands of life and to appreciate the rights and needs of others. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

“Indoor” Shoes

During the winter and wet weeks of spring children need to have a pair of “indoor” shoes.

Food and Nutrition

Since good nutrition is essential for healthy growth and development, it is an important and intrinsic part of our program. Before and after school snacks are professionally catered.

Our snack menus are quite substantial and exceed the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act. Menus are posted on the bulletin boards by the kitchen and classroom areas. Any changes to the menu will be flagged with a post-it note.

Children are encouraged to try everything that is served and may have several servings if they wish. The staff will not limit intake to one serving. A child who is hungry will not be able to fully participate and enjoy the day's events. If a weight problem is indicated, we require a note from the child's doctor and a copy of the child's diet.

Please remember, that morning snack is just a snack and is not intended as a substitute for breakfast served at home.

Peanut allergies are usually severe and can be fatal. If an allergic child is exposed to even the smallest trace of peanut product, it could trigger a violent reaction. Although it is our policy to not knowingly use any foods that may contain peanut products, we also ask for your cooperation to help make our environment peanut-free. This means not sending any foods from your home for snack, or after school treats, that contain peanut products.

We know you will appreciate that we have children with life-threatening allergies who must not be exposed to certain food substances. We need your help to administer this policy in a fair and consistent manner, and we are sure you will want to play your part in making this work.

All food restrictions/allergies/medical alerts, permanent and temporary, are updated regularly, and posted in the child's room, kitchen preparation area and a list will be taken with each group outside. **Please advise your child's teacher of any changes as they occur.**

Field Trips

If we go on a planned excursion other than within walking distance, we will provide you with detailed information regarding the trip, and ask you to sign a special permission form.

Birthdays

Sorry, due to allergies, cultural, and financial differences we ask that no cakes, loot bags, junk foods, etc., be brought into Kids Club.

We request that you mail or discreetly hand out birthday party invitations after KIDS CLUB hours to avoid hurt feelings for those that you have not included. Birthday parties will not be discussed in the classroom. Thank you for your support.

Celebrations and Holidays

Canada is a multicultural country. We believe that knowledge and awareness of other cultures is an integral part of a child's education. We endeavor to celebrate as many holidays as possible and try to introduce such cultural celebrations as Kwanzaa, Ramadan, Passover, Diwali, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Easter, Canada Day, St. Patrick's Day and Hanukah.

In keeping with the DCC Philosophy, we do not focus on the commercial aspects of these events (Santa, presents, rabbits laying candy eggs, etc). Instead, we plan activities around these holidays such as finding a country on the map, learning about some of the popular foods of a culture, a country's flag, perhaps some culture-specific dances or songs.

Sharing Items Brought From Home

Children often want to bring to Kids Club items to share with their friends. We would like to share with you some thoughts on this. We encourage children to bring realistic books as well as geography related items to share with others. Souvenirs from family trips, items from other countries, photographs, stamps and money from other areas as well as cultural items from other regions or things that they have made independently can all be enjoyed and are welcome. Please leave toys, electronic media and devices at home. Our Kids Club environment is rich with games, crafts, outdoor equipment etc. to provide children with the opportunities to participate in activities and work with materials that they might otherwise not have the opportunity to take part in.

In keeping these special and often expensive items at home you can be assured that they will remain safe and that your family's values for what media (ex. music, video games, etc.) your child will be exposed to will be respected.

Our goal is not to limit the frequency of sharing for children but rather, we wish to elevate the caliber of both the experience and the knowledge gained.

We cannot be responsible for items brought from home.

We do not permit guns or any other weapon play at Kids Club, and we ask that parents not allow children to bring this type of toy into our building.

Student Health

Immunizations

All children must be immunized against disease at appropriate ages as recommended by the local medical officer of health, unless there is evidence of a medical exemption (please ask for a Statement of Medical Exemption Form) or a notarized form, in cases where immunizations conflict with a family's conscience or religious beliefs (please ask for a Statement of Conscience or Religious belief form).

When Your Child is Ill

Whenever your child is ill and won't be coming to Kids Club, please call the office or email to let us know that she will be absent so we don't worry. For everyone's well-being, ill children cannot be admitted to school.

If Your Child Gets Sick at Kids Club

If the Manager or designee considers a child too ill to be exposed to other children, or if a child develops an illness at school, the child will be comforted and isolated. Staff will then call the parents and discuss arrangements for the child to be picked up. Every effort will be made to ensure that your child is comfortable. If needed, and with your consent, your child can be given medication provided that a Non-Prescription Medication form has been signed by the child's health care provider.

Please note that it is your child's behaviour, together with their symptoms, that indicates if a call is to be placed for you to pick them up. This is a case-by-case decision. Children with a low grade fever who are happy and eating well may remain at school while children who have no fever but are lethargic and have no appetite may be sent home.

In the event that your child becomes ill at school, the teacher will record and document their observations and actions. The parent will sign this form during pick up.

Emergency Care

All of our staff are trained in Standard First Aid and CPR. Each site has a defibrillator for emergency use.

In the event of any medical situation that requires immediate medical attention, we will want your child to see a doctor right away. Please remember to keep your emergency information form up-to-date in the office. We must be able to reach you at any time during the school day.

Infectious Diseases

In accordance with the Department of Public Health, all cases of infectious diseases will be reported and recorded. Policies and procedures are posted.

Parents will be notified immediately of any outbreaks of illness through Fact Sheets on the illness, and verbal communication.

Medication

The staff at Kids Club cannot administer over-the-counter medication unless you have provided us with the doctor's written instructions. In the event of an unexpected fever or illness, verbal communication (by the parent or guardian) over the phone or by fax is needed before it can be given.

If your child is on medication prescribed by a doctor, you are required to inform the Director or designee. The Director or designee will delegate the medication to **one** teacher in your child's room. The teacher is the only person who will administer the medication. You will be required to fill out a **Permission to Give Medication** form, indicating the dosage and time it is to be given. The parent must sign this form.

A drug or medication that is to be administered to a child must be in the original container as supplied by a pharmacist. Please note: Health Canada has advised not to administer over-the-counter cough and cold medication.

Medical Resource

The medical resource guide that we use for information to help us meet the health needs of children in our care is: ***Well Beings – A Guide to Promote the Physical Health, Safety and Emotional Well-Being of Children in Child Care Centres and Family Day Care Homes. A project of the Canadian Pediatric Society.***

This book is located in the managers office for use by the staff and parents/guardians.

Reporting Child Abuse

DCC staff are legally obligated to inform the appropriate Children's Aid Society if we are concerned about the safety or well-being of a child. It is not the responsibility of the school staff to prove that a child has been abused or neglected, nor to determine whether a child is in need of protection. School staff shall not contact the child's family or any other person to determine the cause of any suspected abuse or neglect. The school's Child Abuse/Neglect Policy and Procedures will be followed.

Standing and Recreational Bodies of Water

As per Ministry of Education guidelines, DCC will not attend any facilities where there may be access to standing or recreational bodies of water (pools, wading pools, inflatable pools, ponds, etc). A policy in regards to this has been created and signed by all DCC staff, students, and volunteers. Any use of water in the playground (water tables, and sprinklers) will be supervised by staff. Staff will monitor for pooling of water and follow the procedures set out in DTMS Standing and Recreational Bodies of Water Policy and use the Playground Checklist as a means of ensuring these guidelines are being met.

Parents and the Kids Club

Communication Between Home and Kids Club

Communication is encouraged between school, parent/guardian, and child. The success and future of the school depends largely on effective communication as the core of our organization.

We ask that you inform us of any illnesses, impending trips, separations, or deaths in the family. These events often affect behavior at school, and it is helpful to the staff to be aware of these changes in your child's life. All information of this sort will be held in strict confidence.

You can request that your child's teacher call you at a specific time to discuss any school-related topics. Please understand that messages left for our staff will be returned as soon as possible, as we are working in our classroom communities and cannot leave unless it is an emergency. Please save phone calls unrelated to school business for after-school hours.

We recognize that parents are busy and need choices about their level of involvement. We provide a number of opportunities that reflect the interests, skills, and available time of our parents – written input and options for regular and one-time get-togethers.

- Informal conversations: Parents have told us that these chats are the best way to communicate with teachers, so we make sure staff have the time for this face-to-face communication at the beginning and end of the day. Parents use us as their consultants about child development and management: “What can I do about....?”; “Do children usually...?”
- White/Chalk boards: teachers make notes on the board about the day's activities in the room – for example; meals, snacks, sleep times, and highlights of the day.
- Parent/Guardian satisfaction surveys: parents are asked to evaluate our services through a written survey.
- Direct access to middle and senior management: our Managers and our Executive are active and visible in the programs, providing opportunities for informal and formal contact.

Confidentiality & Privacy

All members of our staff have signed a Pledge of Confidentiality - a serious undertaking that obliges all employees to maintain strict confidentiality of any information pertaining to children, parents/guardians, staff, and all other matters relating to the affairs and activities of Kids Clubs. **Please do not ask the staff to compromise their employment by asking questions about children other than your own or for personal information concerning current or former staff members.** If you have concerns or questions regarding DCC policies, staff, etc., please address them to the Director.

We strongly discourage private babysitting arrangements between staff and families. This is not part of our service, and we assume no responsibility for any loss, cost, damage or injury to persons or property that may occur as a result of this arrangement.

Collection, use, storage, and disposal of personal information comply with current legislation. A detailed privacy policy is posted in the Centre. When required by law, there may be instances when staff is required to share information without parental permission (i.e.; duty to report suspected child abuse). In other cases, it is the right of the parent/guardian to determine what information can be shared and with whom. Informed Consent ensures that the parent/guardian signs a release allowing any specific information to be shared with appropriate professionals.

Parent Participation

Collaboration between our Kids Club and your home is truly important to us. We can provide educational expertise, objectivity, years of experience and other elements that are useful and unique to your child's education. But you, by virtue of being a parent, add knowledge about your child that can only be acquired through the intimacy, love and caring that exists in your family environment.

We are committed to a philosophy of parent involvement. Parents need to have the opportunity to participate in both their child's program and in the policies and procedures of Kids Club. Staff need and want input and help.

Mechanisms for involvement and communication are:

- Each room has system that provides information regarding the children's activities during the day.
- Staff are available at the beginning and end of each day for short discussions.
- Parents can visit at any time. This includes extended family members as well.
- Either parent or staff may initiate interviews at any time.
- Program satisfaction surveys provide an opportunity for parent feedback.
- We partner with the school in offering parent education workshops

We will always make time to hear parent's questions, concerns, information, suggestions and compliments.

Employees

Staffing

Skilled and nurturing staff is fundamental to creating a stimulating, safe, and warm environment. At Kids Club, our experienced and trained staff members are responsible for each community and work with the Directors as a team for the overall management of the school. Our teachers provide a curriculum that promotes, enhances, and celebrates learning that evolves from the interests, strengths, and needs of the children. The teachers for each age group take into account the individual differences in developmental patterns and are cognizant of the skills involved within these stages. Our staff mirrors the cultures of our community and is responsive to parent/guardian requests related to religious and cultural differences. Teachers are aware that they are adults of influence and model empathy, kindness, and acceptance of all individuals.

Prohibited Practices

All staff, caregivers, volunteers, and students must adhere to DCC Program Statement Implementation Policy, in accordance with ONT. REG 137/15, and are **prohibited to carry out any of the following practices:**

- i) Corporal punishment of the child;
- ii) 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 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 risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- iii) Locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purposes 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;
- iv) Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- v) Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- vi) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Students/Volunteers/Contract Staff

Some Early Childhood Educational Programs at Community Colleges and High School Co-Op programs utilize Kids Club for field practice placements. This is a necessary and valuable part of their training. The benefits are not only for the students but for Kids Club as well. Through these programs we are able to take advantage of the many talents and resources students have, in addition to their enthusiasm and helping hands.

No child is supervised by a person less than 18 years of age. Volunteers and students may not be counted in the staffing ratios. Direct unsupervised access (i.e. when the adult is alone with a child) is not permitted for persons who are not employees of the centre.

The Program Statement along with the Program Statement Implementation Policy, as well as individual plans for a child with anaphylaxis or on-going medical needs, are reviewed with volunteers or students who will be providing care or guidance at the day nursery BEFORE they begin providing that care or guidance and at least annually thereafter.

Criminal reference checks and vulnerable sector checks are required for all staff, caregivers, students, and volunteers having direct contact with children, and are updated every 5 years. In the interim they are required to complete an Offence Declaration, annually or more often as needed.

We welcome parent/guardian feedback with respect to the performance of ratio staff, students, and volunteers.

Discipline and Guidance

Discipline and Guidance Policy

As anyone who comes in contact with children knows, they inevitably become involved in conflicts. There are many kinds of conflicts, ranging from possession disputes to power struggles to aggressive play. Our staff work very hard to provide our children with a safe and peaceful setting and to teach them peacemaking and problem-solving skills. Of course, we know that it is impossible to have conflict-free classrooms, but we also know that we can help children to begin to understand, accept, and attempt to control their feelings.

Our teachers define and maintain consistent, reasonable rules and limitations for a child's behaviour. We teach, and encourage orderly conduct, empathy for others and age-appropriate behaviour. **Staff know that they themselves are seen as adults of influence and are aware that they must model peaceful and respectful interactions through their own attitudes and behaviours.**

Some of the most common strategies for guidance and discipline are:

Environment – We arrange the physical environment to elicit pro-social interactions.

Natural Consequences – Letting the child experience the natural fallout of his actions.

Logical Consequences – Letting a child experience consequences that we have devised and that are related to the situation.

Rules that make sense - This involves concepts such as, "hands are for helping not for hurting," and taking care of the environment, "if you spill it you need to clean it up."

Positive Behaviour - We encourage the children when they are making good choices.

Reminders - We remind children of the rules and expected behaviours and sometimes warn in advance about the consequences.

Redirection - We interest a child in another activity, usually by casually substituting another activity for the current one. This can potentially eliminate difficulties.

Renewal Time - We may need to remove the child from the situation and place the child in another area of the environment to give her an opportunity to refocus and consider alternate behaviours.

Children are not allowed to hurt themselves, to hurt others, or to damage property.

Parent Involvement Discipline Policy

When a parent is present in the child's school environment, it is the responsibility of the parent to take any necessary disciplinary action or redirection for his or her own child. Staff members are not responsible for disciplining children when the parent is present. Staff members may alert the parent to any situation that needs attention for their child.

Some areas of the school are not intended for children to be in. The staff room, office, kitchen, staff washroom, and hallways are occasionally used for meetings, temporary storage of boxes, broken equipment, or resource materials. Children are welcome in these areas, but a parent/guardian must stay with them.

Rules of the School

When necessary, please remind your child of the school's rules:

- People are treated with respect
- No teasing, bullying, hitting, or pushing
- Children must stay in the same room as the adult who is supervising them
- Children may not run inside the building
- Children may not leave the building without an adult

Financial Policies

ENROLLMENT PROTOCOL

Day Care Connection/Downtown Montessori does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, colour, creed, cultural heritage, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, national origin or ancestry, political beliefs, disability or special needs.

Admission

The Director, based on a waiting pool, admits new children into the school. We strive to maintain or exceed teacher/child ratios in each group and attempt to achieve a balanced age mix in each classroom.

The age of the child and hours of care required are the two most important factors that are considered in admitting children. It is critical that you adhere to your agreed-upon hours, as fees and staff scheduling are based on having children and staff arrive and depart gradually each day. Fees would be astronomical if we were to have every child and every teacher at the school for 10+ hours each day!

Giving Notice

Our fee policy is designed to protect the school from financial loss resulting from unexpected withdrawal and to minimize the expense to families when such withdrawals occur. In the event that you wish to withdraw your child from DCC, **written notice must be given the first of the month, at least 1 months in advance of the date of withdrawal. In lieu of appropriate notice, 1 months fee will be charged.**

Withdrawal Policy and Procedure

Daycare Connection will make every effort to serve all children in their ongoing programs. This is accomplished by observation of individual children and the entire group, gathering additional information from parents/guardians, teachers and other appropriate professionals (with proper release of information), and developing the program to meet the needs of both the individual child and the group.

There may, however, be unusual situations in which the regular program cannot meet the needs of some children even after accommodations have been made. In this case, the Director has the right to decide that a child should be withdrawn. This will be done as a last resort. A decision to withdraw a child will be made with the consideration of the best interest of the child and the safety of the group. The Director will assist the family as much as possible to find an alternate placement for the child. If a child is asked to leave due to the program's inability to accommodate the child's needs or family circumstances, both the Toronto Children's Services' Consultant and the Ministry will be notified.

Please note that if your child engages in persistent behaviour that may injure or endanger themselves, other children or staff, we will request that you withdraw your child from our program.

Absence Due to Illness (Extended Illness of child or family member)

In the case of extended illness, and where the parent cannot maintain payment of fees, the Supervisor will discuss the matter of reserving the space on an individual basis with the Director. If the child must be withdrawn, they will be given priority on the waiting list.

In the case of an extended absence or leave for other reasons, families are required to maintain payment of full fees or forfeit the child's place in the school. This is necessary as the school has continuing expenses that it must maintain.

Fee Deposit and Payment

Daycare Connections fees are set to cover the ongoing cost of operating the program and to maintain the salaries of our talented and qualified staff at a competitive level. In order to confirm your spot in Kids Club, a non-refundable deposit is required. These funds will be applied to your first month's fee. If you do not start your deposit will not be returned.

Kids Club fees are set to cover the ongoing cost of operating the program and to maintain the salaries of our talented and qualified staff at a competitive level. Fees are generally set annually each July. On the first day your child attends Kids Club, post-dated cheques dated on the first of each month for a four-month period will be required. **Fees submitted after the 5th of the month are subject to a \$20.00 late payment charge.**

You will be required to pay for all days of care regardless of whether your child is in attendance or not. This includes child illness and family vacations, as well as Statutory Holidays when the school is closed.

New Year's Day

Civic Holiday

Good Friday

Family Day

Thanksgiving Day

Victoria Day

Christmas Day

Easter Monday

Canada Day

Boxing Day

Labour Day

Fees are due on the first day of each month. Payments made after the first of the month are subject to a \$20 late payment charge.

A Not Sufficient Funds (NSF) payment will incur a \$25 service charge.

If for some reason payments will be delayed, call us. Many administrative problems can be avoided with your cooperation.

Consequences of Default

The above late payment arrangements are extended as a discretionary courtesy and do not constitute permission to default on the timely payment of applicable school fees and charges. The school reserves all its rights with respect to the collection of unpaid amounts due. Please note that **failure to pay your fees and any other outstanding amounts on time may result in the suspension or complete withdrawal of childcare services to your child.**

Income Tax Receipts

Income tax receipts will be available in February. There is an administrative charge of \$15 for duplicate receipts.

Waiting List and Enrollment Policy

In an effort to ensure that fair process is followed and communicated with all parties, DCC maintains a clear, transparent, and consistent wait list policy for families seeking to enroll their children. Parents, who wish to withdraw their child for a certain period, must reapply for admission at a later date. Please note that your status on our waitlist may change due to the following admission practices. Children enrolled in the program must be a registered student of St. John's Catholic School.

Priority placement is often given to:

- i) siblings of children who are already enrolled at one of our Centres
- ii) returning families
- iii) children awaiting transfers to/from another DCC location

The centre ensures that the waiting list will be made available in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on it, but that allows the position of a child on the list to be ascertained by the affected persons or families. The list is organized by the planned start year of your child.

Once you have been in contact with a centre Manager about an available opening, and have accepted the space offered, you must fill out all necessary forms/documents and pay your first month's fees. Planning for the prior school year commences in April- May of the following school year.

YOUR INPUT

Collaboration between our centre and your home is truly important to us. We can provide educational expertise, years of experience, and other elements that are unique to your child's early education. You can add knowledge about the child that can only be achieved by the

intimacy, love, and care that exists in your family environment. Please keep us informed about your child's life outside of school. And please don't ever forget that we will always make time to hear your thoughts, concerns, questions and comments.

The unbeatable combination of parents/guardians and staff working together ensures that your Downtown Montessori experience will be everything you want it to be.

The following Policies and Procedures are available in the Manager's office for you to review and a set is in a binder located in the main foyer of the centre:

- Access and Equity
- AODA/IASR
- Aids/HIV
- Anaphylaxis and On-Going Medical Need
- Anti-Racism/Bias-Free
- Biting
- Child Abuse Reporting
- Child Booster and Child Restraint System
- Communicable Disease
- Complaints
- Compliance and Contraventions
- Confidentiality
- Criminal Reference
- De-escalating Volatile Situations
- Toileting
- Discrimination
- Electronic Communication
- Environmental Cleaning and Disinfecting
- Fee Payment
- Emergency Response and Management/Fire and Evacuation
- Hand Hygiene
- Harassment in the Workplace
- Health and Safety
- Illness/Outbreak Prevention & Response
- Immunization
- Individualized Support Plan
- Infection Control
- Late Fee
- Lockdown
- Medication
- Missing Child Response
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Parent Involvement
- Parent Issues and Concerns
- Personal Electronic Device
- Playground Safety
- Privacy
- Principles of Ethical Practice
- Progressive Discipline
- Program Statement Implementation Policy (formerly Behaviour Management)
- Safe Drinking Water
- Serious Occurrence
- Smoking
- Standing and Recreational Bodies of Water
- Sun Safety and Smog
- Supervision of Volunteers and Students
- Supervision Statement
- Violence
- Waiting List and Enrollment
- Withdrawal

Kids Club Parent Handbook

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures

PurposeThe purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care centre it operates (i.e. the operator).

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

Student/Volunteer: individual not employed by DCC/DTMS and on a student placement or obtaining volunteer hours for academic purposes

Policy

General

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) 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 DCC/DTMS 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 may be provided to parents/guardians within 2-5 business day(s). 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

DCC/DTMS 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, provider 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/childrensaidd/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

Kids Club Parent Handbook

Procedures

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, indoor/outdoor program activities, food 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 manager or director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. 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
<p>General, Centre- 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 manager or director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral. <p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the parent/guardian being notified is unable to address the matter.</p>
<p>Staff, Supervisor, and/or Licensee-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the manager or director <p>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.</p>	<p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2-5 business days or as soon as reasonable 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>
<p>Student- / Volunteer-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the manager and/or director <p>-</p> <p>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.</p>	

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 director, Mona Stephens 416 691 1101; and if still unsatisfied to DCC/DTMS' Board President, Margaret Simmons 416.699.3262.

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.

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

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.

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