

COVID-19

PARENT HANDBOOK FOR

McNicoll Avenue Child Care

Program

September 2022

About Us

McNicoll Avenue Child Care Program (MACCP) was formed in 1985 as a non-profit, community-based childcare centre located in McNicoll Avenue Public School. MACCP is a former tenant of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and is located on former school property, now owned by the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Infrastructure Ontario (IO). MACCP is committed to providing high quality childcare and offers programs that provide a unique opportunity for the children to develop skills in social, physical, emotional, cognitive and creative areas. The program components strive to meet the needs of each child and to create an atmosphere that fosters cooperation and responsibility.

McNicoll Avenue Child Care Program (MACCP) is pleased to provide you with this Parent Handbook geared to addressing the specific childcare arrangements provided to your child during the pandemic.

Our Team

MACCP is operated by a team of Early Childhood Educators and caring Assistant Teachers and is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of parents, staff and community members. The Board typically meets once a month to review the past month's business and make plans for the future. Throughout this pandemic the Board has been meeting more often, to address the varied issues that have arisen throughout the pandemic.

Our team of professionals includes the Executive Director who is a Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE). She is responsible for developing and implementing planned and responsive programs implemented by a skilled and caring team of staff. Our staff team includes Registered Early Childhood Educators and Childcare Assistants who work together to ensure your child's needs are met while they are in our care. We also have a Food Service Worker/Cook who will ensure your child receives adequate nutrition throughout their time in our care.

Our staffs have current Standard First Aid and Infant/Child CPR Certification and complete Vulnerable Sector Checks prior to their employment and on regular intervals after employment begins. Registered Early Childhood Educators are in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators. Each person on our team receives training and development on an on-going basis.

Care

We will provide care for children from birth to 4 years of age. Your child or children will be placed in one of our 3 classrooms according to age. As class sizes have returned to pre-COVID numbers, we will continue to maintain effective health and safety and infection prevention and control practices throughout your child's day.

We will do our best to provide care for your family, subject to the limitations required by the current circumstances, including Provincial, City, and Public Health directives. We believe every child belongs and will do our best to ensure that your child is welcomed

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into our centre. If your child has extra support needs requiring accommodation, please request an Accommodation Form so we can assess our ability to provide care that meets your child's individual needs, within the parameters of care possible during this pandemic.

If we determine that we are unable to meet those needs despite our best efforts to accommodate your child, either as a result of the initial assessment or as circumstances develop, we reserve the right to decline or withdraw the childcare services.

Response to COVID-19 - Practices and Guidelines

MACCP is dedicated to protecting the health and safety of your children, our staff, partners, and the community. We are closely monitoring COVID-19 and base our response and actions on recommendations from Toronto Public Health, the Ministry of Health, Health Canada and additional relevant authorities.

While infection prevention and control (IPAC) has always been an integral part of our childcare culture, we have adapted and enhanced our policies and procedures in response to COVID-19, to mitigate risk and ensure the health and safety of all.

The following practices will be in place:

- Staff and children are required to self-screen for any COVID symptoms prior to entry into the facility
- MACCP families will be asked to use the bus loop driveway (right beside our playgrounds) for all childcare drop offs and pick-ups at Door #7
- Only one parent per child is allowed to enter the building with their child/children
- In-person visits from non-essential visitors is limited at this time
- Children will be monitored throughout the day for COVID-19 related symptoms
- Children will be excluded from care if they develop any 1 or more symptoms related to COVID-19, or if parent or child answer "Yes" to 1 or more of the screening questions
- Policies and procedures have been developed specific to COVID-19 in order to increase the health and safety of children, staff and families
- Staff have received thorough enhanced infection prevention and control, and health and safety training which is updated as required and provided to ensure best practices and consistency
- Only one entrance/exit (Door #7) will be used to limit congestion from other programs in the building
- Regular communication on health, safety, and infection, prevention and control practices will be shared with families for use at the childcare centre and at home
- Procedures will be updated and revised regularly to ensure best practices in accordance with Public Health authorities

Operating Hours

Care is offered between the hours of **7:30-6:00** Monday through Friday. We recommend that your child arrives by 10:00 a.m. in order to participate in the full day of activities.

Drop-Off Procedure

We ask you to enter and exit through Door #7. Currently we ask that only one parent per child enter the building with the child/ren and the parent is required to wear a mask when inside.

Upon arrival, please take your child to their cubbie to remove any coats/jackets, then escort them to the children's washroom to use the facilities and wash their hands prior to dropping them off at their classroom door. Please do not leave your child unattended at any time and that the teacher has received your child prior to you leaving.

Pick-Up Procedure

Please share instructions and/or custody arrangements with the Director concerning pick up or access to your child and ensure we are notified of any changes. We require legal documentation concerning custody arrangements and we will only release your child to individuals that you have authorized for pick up. We may confirm identity by requesting government issued identification.

Again, we ask that only one parent per child enter the building at Door #7 and the parent is required to wear a mask when inside.

Door #7 will be unlocked at 3:00 p.m. If you need to pick up your child/ren earlier due to an appointment, please phone the centre and a staff member will open the door for you. If your plans change suddenly or it is an emergency, please call the childcare centre at **416-499-9743** to advise a change in your pick-up time. **Late pick-up fines will be fully enforced as of 6:00 p.m.**

If your child is new to the centre or has transitioned to a new classroom, staff will need to be able to see your faces to learn and recognize your identity. You may be asked at any time to briefly lower your mask so staff can visually identify the correct parent and/or to verify with your photo id.

Immunization

We are required to collect and retain up-to-date immunization for children in our care. Please provide us with current immunization information.

If your child has not been immunized, please provide The Statement of Medical Exemption Form completed by your health practitioner. You may also complete the Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief which requires a signature by a Commissioner of Oath.

If you cannot provide either of these documents, we are unable to provide you with childcare.

If an outbreak occurs, a child who is not adequately immunized will not be able to attend care unless the child receives the required vaccine or until the outbreak is over.

When Your Child is Sick

Parents are required to observe their child at home using the current Public Health screening checklist to ensure your child is asymptomatic when they arrive. If at any time your child has 1 or more of the identified symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, stuffy or runny nose, headache, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, or feeling unwell, muscle aches or tired), **your child will not be admitted to care** and will be referred to stay home, self-isolate and recommended to conduct COVID testing as available (as per TPH current guidelines).

If your child becomes sick at the centre (or develops 1 or more of the identified symptoms), they will be separated from the group (if able) and supervised by one of our staff members. We will notify you to pick up your child within an (1) hour. If it is appropriate and feasible, we will place a mask on your child. If your child requires immediate medical attention, your child will be taken to the hospital by ambulance and examined by a legally qualified medical practitioner.

If you or your child are being managed by Toronto Public Health, (e.g., confirmed cases of COVID-19, household contacts of cases) follow instructions from TPH to determine when to return to the facility and **keep the childcare Director informed of TPH's instructions** as applicable.

Medication

Our staff will only administer prescription medication. Prescription medication must be provided in the original bottle/packaging, clearly labeled with your child's name, and instructions for administering. Parents must complete and sign the appropriate medication administration form before the medication can be administered by our staff. Please try to minimize the amount of medication that is administered at the childcare centre.

Non-prescription or over the counter medication must be accompanied by a written prescription by a medical practitioner outlining the exact dosage and time(s) to be given and symptoms of when to administer the medication.

For the safety of the children, all medication must be handed directly to the staff so that it can be securely stored away from the children's reach. All medication should be given to a staff member at the Screening Area.

Individual Medical Plan

An Individual Medical Plan will be developed and put in place for any child requiring medication for a chronic or acute condition or diagnosis or who requires medication on an emergency basis. All individual medical plans will be developed in partnership with

the child's parent/guardian.

Allergies and Anaphylaxis

Let us know in writing if your child has an allergy that requires the administration of an auto-injector. We will need written and specific details of your child's allergy and symptoms of an allergic reaction from a medical practitioner including a prescribed epinephrine auto-injector. All allergies will be listed in our program to ensure all employees can respond appropriately to any potential reactions. If your child requires an auto-injector due to a severe allergy, it must accompany them into care.

Accidents and Injuries

Despite close supervision, accidents may occur. If your child is injured at the centre, the staff will provide immediate first aid. If the situation requires attention beyond basic first aid, we will contact you or the emergency contact person on file. If required, we will call 911. If your child experiences a head injury, you will be contacted.

Staff will provide you with an accident report documenting the accident or injury. A parent or guardian's signature is required at the bottom of the form to verify that you were informed of the accident/injury. A copy of the signed report will be provided to you.

If your child has an accident or injury at home, please inform the staff when you drop off your child the following day, so we are aware of the incident.

Nutrition

MACCP provides a nut free environment for your child/ren however we do use nut-free spreads such as "Wow Butter." The Toddlers and Preschoolers are provided with a hot, nutritious lunch and two snacks every day.

Infants over 1 year of age; lunch and snacks will be provided. Infants under 1 year of age; parents need to bring in their formula, juice, cereal, crackers, vegetables and fruits etc. in 1 lunch bag/box clearly marked with the Infant's name and the food identified (to avoid any allergens within the room).

At this time parents are asked NOT to provide lunch or food from home if possible. If your child is unable to eat from our menu because of allergies or any other food restrictions, please advise the Director.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play time will be used to support children's immune systems. It is important that children be dressed for various types of weather to ensure they can actively participate in the outdoor program. Please ensure that adequate and suitable seasonal clothing, hat and footwear is provided as well as individually labeled sunscreen.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Please provide the following items (labelled with child's name) on the first day **to be left at the centre**:

- Diapers, wipes & cream (only if necessary)
- Infants only: 2 bottles for milk
- Toddlers: 2 spill proof cups (1 for milk and 1 for water) (if child cannot drink from a cup unassisted)
- Preschoolers: 1 spill proof water cup
- 1 full change of clothes in a large Ziploc bag
- Sunscreen & Sunhat
- Light jacket / Winter coat, hat, mittens, winter boots *no scarves are permitted due to possibility of entanglement on the playground
- The 1 spill proof cup for water (all children) is to be brought daily from home. Staff will fill it up with more water as needed during the day. Staff will give you the water bottle at pick up time to take home to clean and return filled each school day.

*Please note that stuffed toys and blankets from home are **NOT** allowed at this time.

Rest Time

Each child in the Toddler and Preschool group has a rest period not exceeding 2 hours in length; and are permitted to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on the child's needs.

As Infants sleep in a separate sleep room area, staff will follow and document Safe Sleep Supervision practices for each individual Infant.

Your child will be provided a crib or cot with a sheet and a blanket. Cribs and cots will be sanitized weekly, and sheets and blankets will be changed and laundered weekly.

Children's sleep/rest time is monitored by staff ensuring that regular visual checks are completed on each child and documented to ensure their health and safety. Children in the Infant classroom will sleep in a designated crib.

Absent Days or Ending Care Arrangements

Spaces in our childcare are indicated by our licensed capacity to operate. Please phone or email the Centre/your child's room, if your child will be arriving at a different time (arrival should be by 10:00 a.m.) or if you are not attending on any particular day and the reason for the absence.

If you no longer require care, please let the Director know by phone and in writing by email. In the event of withdrawal of a child from MACCP, the parents must give a minimum of one month written notice to the Director. The security deposit and only unused post-dated cheques will be returned on the child's last day of care. If subsidized, include your client file number and your last day you require childcare.

Respectful Environment

Everyone has the right to feel safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated. This is an expectation of everyone entering into our centre. Failure to adhere to this expectation may result in denied access to the centre.

If a parent/guardian or employee feels threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Director.

Behaviour Guidance

Our staffs use behaviour guidance strategies that support children to develop appropriate social and emotional skills. MACCP and the Childcare and Early Years Act **prohibit** the following practices:

- corporal punishment,
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, 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,
- locking the exits of the childcare centre or home childcare 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,
- 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,
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

If a staff member implements any of these practices, the appropriate children's protection agency would be notified and disciplinary action is taken, including notification to the College of Early Childhood Educators. Incidents of this nature are reported to the Ministry of Education as a Serious Occurrence.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, and staff, 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).

Duty to Report

We have a duty to report suspicions and disclosure of child abuse. If the Director and/or staff of the centre have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may have been abused, the suspicion, and the information upon which that suspicion is based, must be reported immediately to a Children's Aid Society.

A professional, who works with children, can be charged and fined for failing to report. It is the responsibility of the child protection agency to investigate and follow-up on the situation, as necessary.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected while in our care, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly. Any concern or complaint made by a parent or visitor that suggests an allegation of abuse will be reported to a local Children's Aid Society by the staff who received the complaint.

Complaints

If you have a concern or complaint concerning your child's care, we encourage you to phone the centre and make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher directly for clarification. If you feel your concern or complaint has not been addressed or resolved to your satisfaction or you prefer to speak to someone else, you may contact the Director.

Complaints are reviewed promptly, and we attempt to resolve them quickly. We monitor complaints and use them to improve the quality of service we are able to provide to you.

Complaints are treated confidentially, and steps will be taken to help protect your privacy. You will be informed when a decision is made and provided with an explanation for the decision. Complaints involving staff conduct will be investigated and you will be informed when it is resolved; however, no disciplinary information can be shared.

- All written complaints will be responded to in writing.
- While there are certain steps that need to be taken to ensure fairness for all concerned, there can be unavoidable delays; however, we will treat each case in a prompt and thorough manner.

If you are making a verbal complaint, you may be asked to put your complaint in writing, especially if it involves a serious or complex matter.

Collection and Use of Personal Information

All personal information requested in connection with the admission of your child, as well as his/her childcare records established with the childcare centre, will be collected, used, maintained and in future destroyed in full compliance with rules established under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Consent

By submitting personal information to MACCP you agree that we may collect, use and disclose such personal information in accordance with this Privacy Policy and/or as required by law. Subject to legal or contractual requirements and reasonable notice, you may refuse or withdraw your consent to our use of your personal information for certain purposes at any time. However, if you refuse to consent or withdraw consent previously given, we may be limited or unable to provide some or all of our services to your family.

The way in which we seek consent, including whether it is expressed or implied, may vary depending upon the sensitivity of the information. In addition, in certain circumstances as permitted or required by law, we may collect, use or disclose personal information without the knowledge or consent of the individual. These circumstances include: personal information which is subject to solicitor-client privilege or is publicly available; where collection or use is clearly in the interests of the individual and consent cannot be obtained in a timely way; to investigate a breach of an agreement or a contravention of a law; to act in respect to an emergency that threatens the life, health or security of an individual; for debt collection; or to comply with a subpoena, warrant or court order.

Information collected by MACCP will be used for the purpose of ensuring the delivery of high-quality early learning and childcare services, to meet obligations we have under law, as well as the Toronto Quality Assessment for Improvement.

Inquires or Further Information

Any questions or concerns related to this Privacy Policy or the handling of personal information by the Centre should be directed to the Executive Director at (416) 499-9743. If you are not satisfied with our response to a privacy-related matter, you may contact the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada at 1-800-282-1376 or at

www.privcom.gc.ca

You are asked to sign the form in the Registration Package where indicated to confirm that you have received, reviewed, and understand the Privacy Policy in this COVID-19 Parent Handbook.