

Welcome to East Toronto Village Children's Centre

Family Handbook

About ETVCC's Family Handbook

ETVCC's *Family Handbook* offers a snapshot of many of the policy and procedure items that are essential to parents and guardians of the children in our care. Copies of the condensed version of ETVCC's *Family Handbook* are readily available to any current or prospective parent. Prior to a child entering our care parents/guardians are required to sign an agreement that verifies they have read the complete *Family Handbook*. The complete copy is routinely forwarded via e-mail but if a paper copy of the complete version is desired forward the request to a Supervisor. ETVCC's *Family Handbook* is available free of charge to any parent/guardian considering enrollment, any parent/guardian of a child at the time of enrollment, and at any time that the *Family Handbook* is modified. It is also publicly available at our website.

Other ETVCC Policies and Procedures

Full copies of a number of policies and procedures can be found in the 'parent information' and 'faculty information' pouches posted in the program rooms. Those copies are for revision on site and are to be returned to the pouches before leaving the Centre. Inform a Supervisor or staff member if you would like a specific document e-mailed to you or a paper copy left in your parent mailbox. The policies and procedures are often lengthy but they are what binds the Centre. They inform all of the responsible adults about what is expected and required in order to provide the superior childcare that is our mission.

Introduction

East Toronto Village Children's Centre was incorporated in 1985 as a non-profit day care centre. This was in response to the area's need for additional quality day care for preschool and school-age children.

With the demand overtime changing in the community for younger child care, in 2020 we renovated to expand and create toddler and preschool programs. Two toddler programs are now on the main floor (4 stairs to descend to the yard), and two preschool programs are in the basement (20 steps to descend to the yard).

We currently also have ramp access at the front of the building. The toddler 1 room and preschool 1 room use the front ramp, to get to the yard. The toddler 2 room and preschool 2 room use the inner stairs to access the yard.

Our program is managed by Early Childhood Educators and administered by a voluntary Board of Directors. ETVCC is inspected and licensed yearly by the Province of Ontario under the requirements of the CCEYA. We are also inspected annually by Toronto Children's Services as we have a Purchase of Service Agreement with the City which provides fee subsidies to families who qualify.

A Board of Directors is elected annually at a General Meeting. The Board is responsible for the major financial concerns and the policy direction of the Centre, and consists of parents of children in care, church members and interested members of the community. The Board of Directors reviews ETVCC Policies and Procedures, including this Family Handbook annually. All parents of children enrolled at ETVCC are members of the Corporation and are eligible to sit on the Board of Directors. Parents are encouraged to bring their concerns and comments to the attention of the Board of Directors. This should be done through either the Centre's Supervisor or a Board member.

Upon admission into ETVCC, families are in good standing. However, breaching any of the policies outlined in the handbook places the family at risk of being found not in good standing with ETVCC. A parent who is not in good standing is ineligible to be on the Board of Directors.

It should be noted that discrimination on the grounds of race, creed, colour, national origin, political or religious affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family relationships or disability is prohibited by or within East Toronto Village Children's Centre.

Mission Statement

To provide superior childcare where a child is encouraged to thrive to his or her full potential in an environment that is stimulating, fun, safe and secure, and is financially accessible to the community.

Program Philosophy

The program at East Toronto Village Children's Centre is based on identifying and meeting the child's mental and physical needs to encourage optimal individual development.

ETVCC believes that an ideal child care setting

- respects and values individual differences of children, parents and staff
- promotes learning through play
- encourages children to explore and learn within a flexible framework
- promotes social interaction in a warm, loving, trusting environment
- provides appropriate games, toys and equipment to promote learning
- promotes active participation of parents and staff in the operation of the day care
- invites frequent communication between staff and parents about the child's progress
- encourages and supports staff in self-directed continuing education and learning

Statement of Inclusion

ETVCC is committed to promoting developmental care and education for each child in collaborative relationships with the family and community. We believe an inclusive approach encourages tolerance, understanding and cooperation in all children.

Through our program we strive to provide the experiences each child needs to grow to his or her fullest potential and recognize success comes differently to children at different developmental levels. We place an emphasis on social skills believing that children with other limitations do better if they have good social skills.

We work to balance our desire to support inclusion with a realistic assessment of the current challenges in the group. We understand the necessity to address the needs of all children in the group, not just the needs of the children with identified diverse or unique needs. There is a

continual effort towards making reasonable accommodations, modifying and adapting activities and routines, to embrace differences and abilities.

Sometimes the process results in a determination that a child is no longer deriving the benefits from the program that will help them maximize their potential. An alternate early childhood environment may be seen to be more beneficial for a child's or parents' needs. There is reflection of what did or did not work and what needs to be in place for future success. The crucial question is how can we best help meet the basic human need to belong, to participate, and to contribute.

CWELCC Program

As of March 28, 2022, Ontario reached an agreement with the federal government for the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System. The implementation of the CWELCC System is a five-year plan which includes improving affordability, enhancing quality, increasing child care access, supporting inclusion, and supporting data reporting. ETVCC is enrolled and approved for the CWELCC System as of September 29th, 2022.

We will be working with our municipal and provincial partners to determine refunds for all eligible families. An "eligible child" is a child from 0-6 years, up to the 30th day of the month in which the child turns six. This funding will flow to us through Toronto Children's Services (TCS). Refunds will be issued to ETVCC's eligible families only once the Centre secure the funding from TCS, and in accordance with CWELCC guidelines.

Facebook

ETVCC participates in social media via our *Facebook* page. It gives family members a little insight into how your child spends their day with their 'ETVCC family'. Postings are sensitive to images and/or captions not divulging a child's identity. Please 'like' and 'share' our page when possible and add a review so we can continue to spread the good word of our Centre in the community.

Storypark

Storypark is an easy-to-use private online service that helps teachers, parents, and families work together to record, share, and extend children's learning. It allows users to capture a child's development by posting photos, videos, stories, moments, notes, and responses. The cloud-based application facilitates collaboration and communication between parents and teachers. It is something that all classrooms use daily, and can only be accessed by the teachers, management and family members who are authorized to view it. Once the families accept the term and conditions to Storypark they become the administrator of their child's account. You can add other family members to your personal discretion. Once the family has left the centre the file is archived.

Availability of Care

Days of operation: Monday to Friday, 52 weeks, except statutory holidays

Hours of operation: 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
except: Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve **when we close at 12 p.m.**

Age groups: Toddler - 18 months through 2 ½ - maximum capacity 20
Preschool - 2 ½ through 4 years - maximum capacity 32

Preschool children are ages 2.5 to 4 years old.

All preschool children that are aged 4 prior to September of each year are expected to attend a kindergarten program in September of that year. These children will not be eligible to attend the preschool program in East Toronto Village. We do not offer services for kindergarten aged children and our agreement with the City of Toronto does not include services for the Kindergarten aged children.

Full Time Care

Full time enrollment is 5 days per week from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Waiting List Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair process is followed. There is no fee or deposit charged for the placement of a child's name on ETVCC's waiting list. In the *Application for Day Care Space* parents provide the contact information. Applicants are responsible for informing ETVCC if contact information changes. ETVCC's *Waiting List Policy* is reviewed annually by the Board of Directors and all ETVCC staff members.

Waiting List Organization

When ETVCC receives an *Application for Day Care Space* information is entered electronically on the waiting list and the form is retained.

The waiting list is organized first according to the 'date you want your child to start', after verifying the child will be of a proper age. It is then organized by the 'date of application', chronologically, with those first received by us at the top of the list. 'Siblings' is a priority group recognized by ETVCC. Families with a child already in the program may get a sibling child into the program ahead of someone who applies earlier.

Transitioning From One ETVCC Program to Another

ETVCC will make our best efforts to accommodate as many students as possible who are moving from each level of program through to the next level. However, there are limited spaces available and parents must complete a waiting list application for each program if they will be wanting their child/ren to continue to attend.

Waitlist Priorities

Families who are currently enrolled in any of the programs will get priority, others someone on the waitlist.

Additional Priority / A child who has withdrawn because the parent was laid off work will have the next priority for an available space if the parent is able to return to the workforce within a one year period. Documentation will be required for proof of lay-off.

Children on the waiting list who do not qualify for any of the above priorities are then organized by the 'date of application', chronologically, with those first received by us at the top of the list.

If the number of children in a priority group (sibling or current child moving from a younger program) exceed the available spaces priority is based on the start date of the sibling or child, with the family with the earliest start date receiving first priority.

Position of a Child on the List

The question of where a child is on the waiting list can only be answered if your child is at a correct age to start and you are prepared to take a spot within two weeks of your being informed that it is available. There are too many variables to predict how our waiting list will have progressed when the requested start date is months or years in the future. When the time your child is ready to start is near, to ascertain your place on the waiting list forward the question by phone or e-mail to a Centre Supervisor. In this way, a child's place on ETVCC's waiting list is 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.

Notification when a Space is Available

ETVCC will attempt to contact applicants three times to inform that a space is available. This will be done within a period of three days to one week. Contact information provided by parents may be used in varying ways but the procedure we are most likely to follow is first contact via e-mail address → second contact via a home or cell phone number → third contact via an alternate phone number.

Once two-way communication is established a parent will have 24 hours to decide to accept or decline the spot. If the spot is accepted a parent will be granted a two week period, where we will hold the space at ETVCC free of charge, to allow the family time to arrange the transition.

If an Available Spot is Declined

If a spot is offered and turned down and the parent wishes to keep their child's name on the wait list, the application date reverts to the new date applied (i.e. date turned down and re-applied). If a spot is turned down a second time then the child's name may be removed from the waiting list.

When Future Dates are Known to be Available

Often we know a spot will be available for a date beyond the standard two week period. This is common for September in our preschool program but not limited to that. The date may be when your child will turn 2-½. At various times we can make an agreement for your child to enroll and set a delayed start date.

When we do anticipate a future start date selected by you will be available, ETVCC will contact you using the same process described above in 'Notification when a Space is Available'. When possible, the first contact will be made three months prior to the future start date.

Deposit Payment For an Agreed Upon Spot On a Future Date

If ETVCC and a parent agree to a secured future start date for a child, an enrollment fee deposit is required to be paid in order for ETVCC to hold the space, which get's applied to your first month's fees. The deposit is one week of fees, which is applied directly to your first payment. The remaining amount is due on your child's start date.

If a parent has a subsidized-fee agreement with Toronto Children's Services (TCS) the parent is required to inform their contact at TCS, via e-mail, to inform them of the date of transfer/start date at ETVCC, with a 'cc' to easttorontovillage@rogers.com. That will indicate your permission for ETVCC to contact TCS for information regarding confirmation of your child's transfer to ETVCC.

If a parent's plans change and ETVCC receives notification at least one month prior to the agreed upon start date that they are declining their child's enrollment, the enrollment fee deposit will be refunded to the parent. If notification is not received by ETVCC at least 1 month prior to the agreed upon start date, the enrollment fee deposit is not refunded.

Extenuating Circumstances

The ETVCC Board of Directors reserves the right to offer a vacant spot to any student if the need arises, foregoing the standard waiting list procedure.

Disputes

Any disputes regarding placements will be forwarded to ETVCC's Administrator with final resolution, if needed, determined by the board of Directors in its sole and absolute discretion.

Record Retention

Paper and electronic information are stored in a secure environment. If a spot is declined the *Application for Day Care Space* form is destroyed and electronic information is deleted.

Overview of Environment and Learning Areas

Our programs revolve around various area's in the room for learning: the cognitive areas, which have floor and table activities, books, writing materials, measuring tools, indoor sand and water play, as well as teacher directed activities; the arts and craft areas, which stock a variety of paints, papers, glues, textured items, modeling materials and include sand and water play; and the gross motor areas involving climbing apparatus, covered outdoor sand area, large blocks, and equipment for riding, pushing, pulling, music and movement. Our outdoor yard is well shaded. Inside or out, your child will have a variety of activities which he/she can choose from during free-play time as well as group activities. We incorporate some major field trips as well as neighbourhood outings into our program. Examples include Cassels Park and splash pad, the Glen Manor nature trail, Ted Reeve's skating arena and the library (this is only for our preschool children). Our goal is to provide a stimulating program that challenges each child at his or her own developmental level.

Our Educators and Caregivers

Our team is made up of qualified Registered Early Childhood Educators, teaching assistants, a cook, and 2 Supervisors who are all dedicated to providing a quality program for your child. Only adult employees, 18 years of age or older, can be alone with a child. Direct unsupervised access is not permitted for volunteers or students completing placement hours. The operators of East Toronto Village Children's Centre support staff development, providing employees with in-house workshops and reimbursing the costs for field-related courses.

ETVCC includes vulnerable sector screening/criminal reference checks (VSCRC) as part of the recruitment process. All staff, students, volunteers, or other individuals over the age of 18 years who come into the program on a recurring basis require VSCRC's to be completed by a police force prior to working with children in the daycare.

Additional Persons Providing Care or Other Services in the Centre

Vulnerable sector protection extends to persons occasionally participating in the program. An Offence Declaration or Attestation is obtained by ETVCC prior to any other person such as an entertainer, workshop presenter, or occasional volunteer, interacting with the children.

Parents

Parents or other family members are welcome to participate in the program at any time. Please feel free to speak with your child's teacher if you wish to bring your energy and enthusiasm on a field trip or if you have something you would like to share with us in the Centre. If you have any questions, concerns or comments, speak with one of your child's teachers or a Supervisor as we want you to feel that this is your day care centre also. The Board of Directors is mainly comprised of parents whose children are enrolled at the Centre and you are encouraged to attend a Board meeting as they are enjoyable and fulfilling. You may very well find yourself wanting to join. There are many other ways that you can help us as well, i.e. from time to time we will issue a list of recyclable items we need collected or we may be asking for your help with fundraising projects. Please try to fit some of these things into your busy schedule as they are all things that help our Centre to run smoothly, making this a better day care for all.

Parents Participating in the Program

There are guidelines that must be followed when participating in the program. You can never be alone with other people's children. If a child needs to use the washroom, for example, let a teacher know. You can encourage appropriate behaviour with other people's children but if a situation calls for discipline turn that responsibility over to an ETVCC teacher. When you are with your child on a trip **you** are responsible for ensuring **you and your child** follow the group rules at all times. The Centre supplies all participants with lunch. If you have special diets or allergies, please feel free to bring your own nutritious lunch (peanut & nut free). If, on a trip, you wish to purchase food or other items, wait until you have a break away from the children. If you need to smoke, again wait until you have a break away from the children and staff. Smoking is prohibited anywhere on ETVCC/St Saviour property.

A Vulnerable Sector screening/Criminal Reference Check (VSCRC) is required if a parent is volunteering on a Field Trip. An Offence Declaration (OD) is acceptable if a parent is volunteering on site.

Volunteers and Students on Placement

Volunteers are people who spend scheduled time during regular operating hours at the Centre, bringing with them their enthusiasm, energy, skills and experiences to benefit the program free of pay. For our purposes the title 'volunteer' does not apply to parents or family members occasionally accompanying a child on a trip or for a special event at the Centre, who are considered to be participants in the program, or Board members, who do not receive pay but attend after regular operating hours.

Be assured every child in attendance is supervised by an adult employee of ETVCC at all times. Only employees of ETVCC shall have direct unsupervised access to the children, meaning no one who is at that time volunteering or completing student placement hours can be alone with a child. Our policies and procedures are reviewed with volunteers and students on placement before they begin and at least annually afterwards and a VSCRC is required for all volunteers and students having direct contact with children at ETVCC.

Child-Centered Play-Based Program Statement

ETVCC recognizes children as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. ETVCC is dedicated 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 of all children, including children with individualized plans. This is done through caring and responsive Early Childhood Educators, who focus on active learning, exploration, play and inquiry, and who see children and their families as valuable participants in all aspects of the program.

The foundation of our program is based on the resource document *How Does Learning Happen?*. Organized around the foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression, the goals and expectations integrate the six guiding principles of *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)*.

At ETVCC we provide a warm, supportive and nurturing environment, where children are respected as individuals and are offered a curriculum to enrich their learning. We strive to cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults and the world around them. By responding positively to children's cues and engaging in reciprocal interactions with them educators support the development of secure relationships which contribute to children's emotional well-being and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn. Children learn best when they feel safe, secure and comfortable in their surroundings allowing them to discover and express their knowledge and opinions freely in a variety of ways, fostering an enthusiasm for lifelong learning.

The staff recognize that all children are individuals with a right to quality early childhood education that is thoughtfully planned and offers developmentally appropriate, meaningful learning opportunities. Research shows that early experiences play an integral role in brain growth and development. The Early Childhood Educators at ETVCC foster communication and expression in all forms. Building strong relationships with families enables families to develop trust, confidence and a sense of belonging within the centre. We view families as important contributors with unique knowledge, experiences and strengths. By exploring connections between home and the early childhood program children's sense of belonging and feelings of security are strengthened. We nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self through the opportunity for healthy eating, physical activity and sleep patterns. Educators support children's development of strategies for self-regulation by enabling them to recognize and modulate their emotional states and impulses and become more aware of the effects of their actions on others.

Connections with community partners better support mental health and well-being of families and children. Our programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry.

How Does Learning Happen ? Our Child-Centered Play-Based Curriculum in Practice

In order to achieve these goals we will:

- a) Promote the health, safety and well being of young children, families and educators by;**

1. Completing attendance checks of children during group transitions and after critical staff changes in a program room.
2. Ensuring that required adult to child ratios are maintained at all times and supporting enhanced ratios when possible.
3. Planning daily routines with limited interruptions and transitions providing large blocks of time for children to be engaged in sustained complex play and inquiry.
4. Incorporating opportunities and time to practice self-help and self-care skills based on each child's capabilities into our daily routines.
5. Fostering and supporting a child's understanding of his/her emotions and encouraging expression of a range of emotions in socially acceptable and safe manners.
6. Recognizing that a child who is able to self-regulate can deal effectively with stressors in his/her environment and then recover. The indoor and outdoor environments will be designed to support the children's varied sensitivities, states of arousal and help them maintain a calm, focused and alert state. Staff will provide strategies to assist children in recognizing and modulating their emotional states.
7. Taking a strength-based approach, recognizing and valuing the capacities that families have, while supporting them in accessing supports if needed.
8. Adapting programs and making physical accommodations to allow every child to participate and be challenged in meaningful ways. Valuing each child as unique and acknowledging their differing abilities.
9. Ensuring that each program has an emergency pouch that travels with the group and contains current emergency information for each child and basic first aid supplies. In addition, each program room has a first aid kit. All staff, student and volunteers are required to have valid Standard First Aid/CPR Level C training.
10. Providing education, guidance and monitoring strategies for hand washing and hand sanitizing for all children, staff and volunteers. Children will be educated in the importance of hand hygiene at a developmentally appropriate level. Toileting and diapering routines will be adhered to in accordance with Toronto Public Health (TPH) requirements. All TPH Infection Control information sheets will be posted in appropriate areas.
11. Posting Individual Anaphylaxis Plans in program rooms for each child with a life threatening allergy. These physician-approved plans will be reviewed and updated annually. All staff, student and volunteers will be trained annually in the use of an epi-pen and emergency response.
12. Maintaining a clean and safe environment through regularly scheduled toy cleaning and disinfecting according to the requirements of the City of Toronto Assessment for Quality Improvement (AQI). Inspecting toys on a regular basis for hazards and promptly removing, repairing or replacing damaged items. Following TPH guidelines for sanitizing surfaces and reviewing rooms on a regular basis to ensure optimal health and safety standards.
13. Providing children with healthy meals and snacks that incorporate family and cultural preferences and meet the requirements of the Canada Food Guide, the City of Toronto AQI and the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA). Menus will be reviewed by the Centre's Cook and a Supervisor on an on-going basis and child care staff will establish positive eating environments for all children, responding to children's cues for hunger and fullness.
14. Complying with regular TPH Day Nursery Inspections and Food Safety Inspections.
15. Ensuring safe supervision of playgrounds through education of staff on staff positioning and scanning of children's activities while providing a balance between supervision and direct interaction with children to facilitate outdoor programming. Daily, monthly, seasonal and annual playground inspections will document safety issues and the resolution of these issues.

16. Encouraging a connection to the physical natural environment by using the outdoors as a learning space in all weather and bringing natural materials indoors (rocks, shells, water, plants, tree logs, twigs, branches, etc.).
17. Encouraging environmentally sustainable practices within the Centre

b) Support positive and responsive interactions between educators, children and families by;

1. Asking children open ended, reflective, and meaningful questions about their interests and what is happening in their play, listening attentively and maintaining eye contact when in conversations with children.
2. Teachers being engaged and interacting as co-learners while at the same time encouraging child to child interactions and being a facilitator of play, interacting with children at their level i.e. sitting on the floor, bending down to talk and breaking down directions into individual steps.
3. Providing opportunities for children to explore and to be in control of their play, following cues from children and showing enthusiasm for children's interests and eagerness when introducing new experiences to children.
4. Teachers being positive and supportive with all children, peers and other adults. Continually role-modeling appropriate social skills throughout the day by using a welcoming, positive tone of voice and endeavoring to remain patient, calm, even tempered and composed during all situations.
5. Observing, listening to and providing support to children in social situations and supporting problem solving by providing language children can use with each other.
6. Allowing children to express their emotions in a safe and non-judgmental environment and assisting the child to deal with their emotions in socially acceptable ways (i.e. squeezing/using a manipulative instead of throwing something). Encouraging an upset child to take a breath, if appropriate and calming with a hand on their body to ground them, or modelling deep breathing.
7. Labelling their feelings, "It looks like you are feeling angry" or asking child to describe their feelings "how does that make you feel?" while assisting the child to recognize their feelings (i.e. how does it make their body feel). Providing guidance to deal with feelings appropriately and in a pro-social manner.
8. Teachers making suggestions to help children self-regulate – (read a book while waiting, stomp feet if angry), or redirection to an area or activity that will support child to control emotions / self-regulate and where appropriate including the child in that decision making.
9. Building and establishing positive, supportive, responsive and authentic relationships with parents and children. Providing open communication with parents and assisting with strategies and common goals. Focusing on strengthening valuable connections with families. Looking at relationship with parents as a partnership and co-learners.
10. Understanding each child and family is unique, respecting family circumstances, culture, needs, requests and values and recognizing that family, educators and child are all linked. Child's home environment, relationships and family greatly influences development so exploring how we can deepen the child's learning by weaving family strengths and characteristics into our program allows families to feel connected to the environment and have a sense of belonging.

11. Sharing and documenting activities, conversations and accomplishments with families.
Providing the opportunity for meetings with parents if necessary.
12. Displaying empathy, understanding and support towards individual feelings.
13. Valuing each individual child as capable and competent and allowing the child to take on and have their own perspective and allowing the child to express this perspective.
14. Teachers being flexible, using teachable moments to further develop positive social behaviours focusing on the positive as well as creating positive experiences.
15. Teachers allowing time for evaluating the time spent Connecting/Directing/Correcting (CDC) with each child.
16. Offering an environment that is consistent and fosters a child's independence allows them to learn self-care, how to face challenges, persevere, and explore how to deal with and manage positive stress.

c) Encourage and enable children to interact and communicate in a myriad of ways with each other, with educators and their communities by;

1. Involving children in setting up play areas (dramatic play, construction, creative).
2. Providing opportunities for children to represent through language, art work, sensory (playdough/clay) etc.
3. Interacting at their level.
4. Encouraging children to start and participate in conversations.
5. Show & share opportunities.
6. Encouraging other ways of expression and communication i.e. different languages or various mediums of artistic & creative expression.
7. Role playing in a prosocial, developmentally appropriate manner.
8. Connecting with cultural traditions of families.
9. Supporting children's ability to regulate their emotions and behaviour by encouraging using language to make needs and wants known, by labelling their feelings (It looks like you're feeling angry, take a breath, calm down and let's see how we can solve the problem).
10. Modelling appropriate communication between staff.
11. Using positive language when redirecting or describing behaviours.
12. Singing/ keeping children actively engaged during transitions (walk like an animal/fly like a plane).
13. Offering instructional and non- instructional activities that promote social skill development, friendship and co-operation.
14. Being aware of and respecting each child's comfort zone & temperament.
15. In the environment – recall and retell past events, revisit documentation with children, encourage sharing stories.

d) Foster exploration and inquiry that is play based by;

1. Providing child initiated and adult supported experiences with language , literacy and math concepts embedded in the program naturally, with adults and children being co-learners, co-planners and co-investigators.
2. Providing a variety of experiences and an indoor and outdoor environment rich in content that encourages choices, active play and the blending of materials in a naturally flowing way to spark curiosity and invite investigation.

3. Documenting observations of children that will be used to plan and create a positive learning environment that will provide appropriate challenges for individual capabilities.
4. Fostering a child's exploration, play and inquiry by asking open-ended questions, and providing new open-ended materials and thought provoking experiences to engage, sustain and extend the children's complex play and inquiry.
5. Encouraging children to interact and communicate in a positive way, and supporting their ability to self regulate.
6. Teachers reflecting on their own practices and modelling strategies for reflection by children.

e) Provide both child initiated and adult supported experiences to foster development by;

1. Using children's input when planning. Older children can write down suggestions or use a voting system. Younger children can tell ideas to an adult who can write them down, documenting child initiated experiences.
2. Taking children's curiosity and building programs based on observations and their interests.
3. Offering small group experiences daily.
4. Providing leadership opportunities (leader of the week or leading an activity) and offering adult supported child led experiences.
5. Teachers balancing their time between initiating play and observing.
6. Accepting and facilitating children's requests to pursue activities which are not on the program plan.
7. Encouraging child directed play / creative experiences i.e. art activities without example of expectation.

f) Provide many opportunities for a range of experiences that support each child's learning and development by;

1. Having areas in the room are open for meaningful exploration to engage in creative problem-solving and inquiry.
2. Allowing children not participating in group time to explore alternative experiences within their environment.
3. Providing planned daily routines with a fluid schedule allowing for long periods of uninterrupted play with limited interruptions and transitions, offering ample opportunities for children to engage in sustained complex play and inquiry.
4. Being co-learners, engaging with, observing and listening for cues to ensure experiences are met for individual needs. Providing inclusionary learning opportunities and experiences that challenge and provoke learning through the child's interests.
5. Allotting time for teachers to meet and plan for the types of interests that have potential for rich and complex experiences.
6. Building connections between home and family by documenting through checklists and portfolios to make children's thinking, learning and competence visible to families.
7. Teachers providing daily opportunities and enriched programs to explore and build connections to the natural world around them reflecting sensory, science and nature through cause and effect experimentation and observation making children's learning and understanding more visible to the children themselves.

g) Incorporate a range of different experience modalities including indoor and outdoor play, active play, quiet play, rest and quiet time, considering the individual needs of the children by;

1. Using written planned activities (indoor & outdoor) utilizing observations of each child.
2. Providing both a written and visual schedule of daily activities which address all aspects of play.
3. Staffing with enhanced ratios allows for small groups to transition. Children who need more time are provided with time to utilize self help skills.
4. Teachers moving around the room to connect with each child daily.
5. Providing the opportunity for rest time where sleep routines meet the needs of the children i.e. children who need limited rest time are able to participate in quiet activities or books on their beds.
6. Offering a variety of materials for both indoor and outdoor programming.
7. Planning developmentally appropriate activities including reflecting, gross motor, art, pretend play, group play, solitary play, sensory, language and math.
8. Incorporating quiet space with cushions/soft area as well as outdoor reading space (blanket & books) and including an area of indoor space for active play.
9. Providing open shelves with easily accessible materials / toys and offering diversity in play materials.
10. Discouraging playing with food & edible materials as sensory experience e.g. dry pasta, lentils, rice etc) in respect of our global community and hungry families in Toronto.

h) Foster engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children by;

1. Speaking with parents at drop off and pick up daily, phone calls, e-mail correspondence, newsletter updates, using whiteboards for general messages, parent surveys.
2. Utilizing a variety of recording techniques including portfolios, observation books and photo documentation.
3. Displaying art work and seasonally updated parent information boards.
4. Having open non-judgmental discussions regarding both challenges and positive aspects of each child's day, embracing differing family structures and providing families with information regarding Centre's curriculum model.
5. Extending invitations to parents the opportunity to join in programming or group activities, participate in room or Centre open house.
6. Sharing projects or activities between home and childcare (e.g. Theodore Bear).

i) Actively engage with community partners and provide opportunities for the children and families to develop close connections with a range of community supports by:

1. Visiting the local library.
2. Engaging the Resource Educator to build confidence and capability in using educational tools and supporting children and families.
3. Engaging local instructors in, for example, yoga or dance.
4. Community walks and visits to dentist, firefighters, police and grocery store.
5. Providing community resources for parents.

j) Strengthen the capacity of educators to collaborate effectively with children, families and their colleagues through the provision of ongoing opportunities for continuous professional learning by;

1. Providing opportunities, time and financial support for staff to participate in professional development workshops and courses to support continuous professional learning.
2. Promotion of a variety of continuous professional learning methods such as Ministry of Education web modules, on line research, Association of Early Childhood Education, Ontario (AECEO) membership information re current issues in childcare, collaboration with other professionals through focus groups and meetings.
3. Supporting teamwork with Resource Educator in conjunction with parents.
4. Providing opportunities for reflective practice.
5. Sharing information / materials with parents pertaining to their child's needs or interests.
6. Allot time off program for weekly team meetings and program planning.

k) Use many languages to document and review the experiences of the children and the educators in order to provide an ongoing record of development/provide tools to enable educators to reflect on the impact of their activities and strategies & provide a visual & oral record to enable parents to review & explore the developmental trajectory of their child by;

1. Documenting evidence of learning and the children's involvement in the program through photographs, examples of work, written observations and ongoing, up-to date communication with families.
2. Demonstrating a Commitment to Continuous Improvement by participating in relevant professional development activities and being aware of current research and issues pertaining to child development.

Program Statement Implementation Plan

All educators, volunteers and placement students will review the Program Statement prior to working in program with the children and annually thereafter or upon any changes or modifications to the Statement. Annual review of the Program Statement and these policies and procedures ensure our educators and volunteers are knowledgeable and understand the Program Statement and its implementation.

ETVCC wants to ensure that your children have a safe and positive experience that promotes their growth as a learner. To this end a Supervisor will observe staff interactions with children on a daily basis ensuring that they align with our program statement and beliefs in adult-child interactions. A Supervisor will use observations, interactions and conversations to monitor all staff.

The following Prohibited Practices are not permitted with respect to any child receiving care at ETVCC:

- corporal punishment of the child;
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;

- depriving the child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding;
- locking the exits of the Centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children;
- 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;
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Every staff member, student doing placement hours, and volunteer at ETVCC will implement the strategies that are outlined in the *Program Statement*. Any incidences involving any prohibitive practice are considered abusive and will be reported to the appropriate child welfare authority, including the College of Early Childhood Educators.

All Early Childhood Educators have made a commitment to abide by the standards of their profession as set out in the College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of practice. All Early Childhood Educators hold themselves accountable, and will use the Code of Ethics, the Standards of Practice and the CCEYA to guide their decisions and practice.

Teachers will reflect on *How Does Learning Happen?*, by working through the reflection exercises in the document, by reviewing their observations and engaging children in meaningful activities, by maintaining communication with parents and building trusting relationships with the families, by working with their co-workers to create a safe and healthy environment, and by taking the time to engage in self-reflection in a regular basis.

Each classroom will maintain observations, plans and documentation to support their understanding of the program statement. Copies of the documentation, relevant to their child, will be shared with all parents or guardians of the children in the program.

This reflection by educators, communication with parents, and documentation relevant to the children in the program will be reviewed and discussed at each staff meeting as 'Analysis of the effectiveness of ETVCC's *Program Statement*' will always be included on the Agenda. In this way assessment of the effectiveness of the *Program Statement* approaches on the children and their families will be consistent and ongoing.

A Supervisor will meet annually with each team to establish a clear understanding of the Program Statement, to support staff in their delivery of the Program Statement and to aid the staff in reflection on their own performance, their contributions to the environment and the development of each child in their care. These meetings will be recorded, and added to the Program Statement Binder. Time and financial support will be available for professional development along with training through resource material such as webinars on the Ministry of Education website.

Program Statement Monitoring

Monitoring is ongoing and is for both the strategies outlined in the *Program Statement* and for Prohibited Practices.

If there are no breaches of the rules set out in the *Program Statement* a Supervisor will meet twice annually with each individual staff member to discuss and complete ETVCC's *Supervisor's Semiyearly Record of Caregiver's Supervision of Children, Program Statement Review, & Prohibited Practices Monitoring Tool*.

In the event that a Supervisor observes or is made aware of any practice that does breach the rules set out in the *Program Statement*, they will address the issue promptly with the staff member according to the disciplinary measures outline in ETVCC's Policy & Procedure Manual. With regards to students, volunteers, or employees in their probation period, even one incident of inappropriate conduct to do with a contravention/breach of the practices/rules set out in the *Program Statement* will result in immediate termination of services rendered.

At ETVCC records pertaining to monitoring of our *Program Statement* are stored in a secure location for at least 3 years.

Program Statement Review

ETVCC's *Program Statement* is a living document. It comes from a place of collaboration where various perspectives and ideas come together. We support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, guardians, staff members, and other care providers. The engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children is central to our *Program Statement*. Our staff members are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

Notices are posted, at the entrance and via e-mail, about Board meetings and other activities that bring families together. We solicit opinions from parents through one-on-one direct conversations, random e-mail requests for feedback, and formal surveys.

Program related feedback received through informal conversations are relayed to a Supervisor and may be noted in the daily log or in the file of a child whose parent has offered ideas. Items that are addressed at Board meetings are noted in the minutes. Families may refer to ETVCC's *Parent Issues & Concerns Policy & Procedures* for more information about that type of communication.

ETVCC's *Program Statement* will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors. Approval, including of any amendments, will be recorded in the Board meeting minutes. An Officer of the Board or the Centre Supervisor will record the date of the review and Board approval in the program statement binder.

At ETVCC it is our continuous role to promote the health, safety, nutritional,
and overall well rounded balance of each individual child while at
the same time encouraging the children to interact with their teachers and with one another.
This responsibility is achieved through ETVCC's emphasis on
fostering positive interactions between
staff members, children, parents and members of the community in which we share.

Fees

Effective January 1, 2025, base fees for child care in CWELCC-enrolled programs will be capped at a maximum of \$22 per day for eligible children. Both our toddler and preschool programs have a set monthly fee of \$478.50 (full fee families). Those who are subsidized will continue to pay the daily rate provided to them by Toronto Children Services.

Fees are based on the fixed costs associated with operating ETVCC. Reimbursements are not provided for closures due to statutory holidays, or reduced operating hours due to something (eg. water or power outage) out of our control.

Available Subsidies

Government subsidies are available to those families requiring it. Parents must make subsidy arrangements with the Toronto Children's Services Office.

Fee Payments

Fees are due at the beginning of every month via e-transfer / **automatic withdrawal. All families are required to fill out a pre-authorized payment form upon registration (whether you are pay full fee or have subsidy).**

When paying by e-transfer: Payments are to be transferred to easttorontovillage@rogers.com

Payment is based on enrolment. If you have registered for a specific time and your child does not attend you are still responsible for the fees for that time.

We regret we cannot give refunds for days absent, holidays, or illness as we have our expenditures for staff and other essentials regardless of these situations. For these same reasons there is no discount for those families with two or more children enrolled.

For full fee families, a 1 week deposit is made to secure the spot of \$110 (\$22 per day based on CWELCC guidelines). The \$110 is put towards the first months fees. Subsidized families do not give a deposit.

For any refunds that may take place, a cheque will be written out and handed to you. Another option is the funds be e-transferred to the account provided upon registration.

We do not charge a registration fee, or any fee for our waitlist.

Process for Payment of Overdue Accounts

A Supervisor will contact the parent/caregiver and will determine a payment plan/date for any fees in arrears. Failure to provide fee payment by the agreed upon date will result in discharge from the centre on 2 weeks' notice. Should extenuating circumstances exist, it is the parent/caregiver's responsibility to discuss this with a Supervisor or a Board member. A review of whether or not an extension of childcare services can be granted will be completed. This review may include a meeting between a Supervisor, Treasurer, Board member, and /or parent/caregiver at the discretion of a Supervisor/Treasurer.

Any overdue account/NSF agreements do not release the parent/caregiver from the regular monthly fee payments. If an extension of childcare services and a repayment plan has been established the parent/caregiver may be required to pay current fees in the form of cash or money order.

If discharge occurs, ETVCC will continue to pursue and collect upon any overdue accounts. If necessary, legal action will be taken.

Admission and Withdrawal

A visit to the Centre will be arranged to familiarize you and your child with our program and staff prior to the start date. If feasible families are recommended to do a slow transition into the program example: 2-3 hours the first day, ½ day pick up before nap, picked up after nap, and then full day. Otherwise the child starts a regular day and teachers will touch base with the families via phone call and/or Storypark.

On admission and on an annual basis the parent will be required to complete the green *Emergency Information Card*. Printing must be clear and easy to read as this card is taken with the child on all trips and it is where teachers look for names and numbers in the event of an emergency. Be sure you do not use a marker or ink that runs when wet. Regular ball-point pen works well. We recommend you provide a picture of your child with his or her eye colour and information about any distinguishing features written on the back to be kept in your child's file. With your permission we would release the photo to police if there was a crisis.

The following required documentation must also be submitted on admission:

- General Information form, including work information and emergency contact information
- Immunization and health information forms
- Emergency Medical Release and Local Field Trip Consent forms
- Parent/Caregiver Agreement to indicate compliance with ETVCC policies and procedures

On an annual basis the parent will also be required to update the *General Information Form*, *Health Information Form*, *Local Field Trip Consent Form*, and *Emergency Medical Release Form*. If a trip involves the use of transportation or any type of swimming you will be required to complete a separate *Special Field Trip Consent Form* for each individual trip. On your child's first day we encourage you to stay with your child for a while in order to reassure him/her and minimize fears. You are welcome to call at any time to find out how your child is doing.

There is a period of adjustment during the first 3 months of care. This type of group care, with the large space, family grouping, and transitions, may not suit all children. The teachers will assess the situation and communicate on an on-going basis, especially if your child is unhappy or not thriving in our program.

If your child starts during school holidays you may be asked to have an adult accompany your child on the first few 'big' trips. These special trips are once per week. It takes time for your child to be able to recognize the teachers and other children in the group and it takes time for the teachers to become familiar with your child's habits. Extra vigilance is needed on these trips that are further afield and the safety of your child is our main concern.

Written notice of permanent withdrawal must be given one month in advance. If notice is not received, full program fees will be charged. The paid notice period may be reduced if we have a family on the waiting list able to take the spot sooner. A permanent space cannot be guaranteed if you wish to temporarily withdraw your child, but you can request to have your child put on the waiting list. East Toronto Village Children's Centre may terminate services if policies are not followed or fees not paid.

If a child ceases to attend without notification the tenth operating day will be considered the date of 'no notice withdrawal'. The child will be withdrawn and fees will continue to be charged for the one month period of 'no notice withdrawal'.

Discharge Due to Breaches of ETVCC Policies / Issue Notice of Withdrawal

Upon admission into ETVCC, families are in good standing. However, breaching **any** of the policies outlined in the handbook places the family at risk of being found **NOT** in good standing with ETVCC. The Board of Directors reserves the right in its sole discretion to discharge any child for breaches of any of ETVCC's policies. Said breaches, by either the child or the parents/caregivers include, but are not limited to, infractions related to:

- Policies and Procedures Regarding Child Behavioural Expectations
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Fee Payment
- Late Pick-up
- Access & Equity

In extreme cases (as determined by a Director with approval from the President or Member/President-Designate of the Board of Directors) of violent or threatening behaviour by either a child or a parent/caregiver where the safety of other children and/or the ETVCC staff are at risk, the one (1) month notice of withdrawal is waived.

Internal protocol will begin, and the Director will gather documentation, present it to the Board of Directors and have a meeting.

The center would also notify the Children's Services District Consultant of potential withdrawal of a child.

In the event a child is asked to leave ETVCC, due to the centre's inability to accommodate a child, then the following will be done before a final decision is made by the centre.

- A meeting would be held with the family to address concerns, and would be documented
- Support would be sought out from Children's Service Special Unit, for a Resource Educator and access to child care support funds
- The centre will follow its Accessibility plan and policies, as well as our Withdrawal policies and procedures
- Notification would be made to the District Consultant prior to a withdrawal notice
- Notification and consult would be done with the Board of Directors
- Seeking legal advice may be required (depending on individual case)
- ETVCC would support the warm transfer to potential alternate care program

Arrival and Pick-Up

Young children depend on regular routines for their sense of security. We recommend that you establish regular times for arrival and departure from the Centre. Please escort your child (both toddler and preschool) into and from the room or yard area where his or her group is at that time. Make sure that the teacher knows that your child is here or is leaving.

Parents need to relay all important messages to the teachers at arrival and departure times. Unless otherwise arranged, children will not be released to any person other than those specified on the *General Information Form*, so please make sure that you tell us, send a note, or call that day if someone else is picking up your child.

Whenever a parent is with a child **the parent** is responsible for directing and disciplining his or her child. As a parent you must follow through with directing or disciplining your child yourself-- whether picking up, dropping off, staying for a visit, or attending a trip.

Sometimes, usually at pick-up time, children are just too excited about your arrival to calm down and play within the expected boundaries. If this is the case, for example if your child is running in the room unable to focus on an activity, please see it as the time to go home. Transition times are often a time of upheaval for many children. It may be too much to expect your child to be able to settle down and behave appropriately at that time. As well, as soon as one child starts 'winding back up' often other children follow suit which isn't the tone the teachers are trying to establish at pick-up time.

If a trip is scheduled for your child's group, have your child at the Centre one-half hour before the departure time. If this is not possible, call by 9 a.m. to let us know. If you are arriving closer to the departure time, assist your child to prepare for the trip *before you leave* (sunscreen applied, Centre T-shirt on, bathroom, knapsack packed and ready). No alternative care can be provided for children who arrive after their group has left for an outing or field trip. Never drop your child off at a trip location without having made previous arrangements with the teachers on the trip.

Children must be escorted into and from the Centre by an adult or designate at least 14 years of age. The escort needs to sign the child in and out on the parent form and also needs to make sure a teacher is aware the child is arriving or departing.

As the Centre is closed at 6 p.m. it is important to make sure you allow time to help your child prepare to leave before 6 p.m. That means all dressed and leaving the building by 6 p.m. We welcome parents to relax and spend time with their children in the program but the last ½ hour of the day is a difficult time. The teachers are trying to assist the children to settle down to quiet transitional activities. At the same time they are making sure they are aware of and recording children who are leaving as well as passing on vital information to parents before they leave.

We want for parents to take the time to talk to one another, share ideas, form friendships, but please do it outside the building when it is close to closing time so ETVCC teachers can leave on time. A few minutes can mean the difference between a missed GO train, missed bus, or an on-time arrival for a night school class or other commitment.

Our Centre is open 10 ½ hours per day which is quite a long time for children who are here from opening-time until closing-time. The faculty at ETVCC endeavour to be respectful of the different needs of children through the ebb and flow of each day but often it is difficult to lessen the necessary routines, the stimulation, and the activities generated by a large group. Younger preschoolers especially tend to be vulnerable to long hours in care. If you or the teachers find your child is exhibiting behaviours that indicate s/he is overstressed by too long of a day, try to take every opportunity you can to shorten the hours in care.

Absence or Arrival After 10 a.m.

Parents are required to call the Centre by 10 a.m. if their child will be late, not in for the day. Methods of contact are phone call, emailing or Storypark message. This allows the staff and cook to know how many children for which to prepare.

Toys from Home

We cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys if they are brought to the Centre. We recommend that your child not bring toys from home. Groups occasionally have days scheduled where all of the children can bring in something special from home to share.

Mail Boxes

Each family has a mail box assigned to them for important messages, notes, newsletters, meeting announcements, etc. Please check your mail box on a daily basis.

Guardianship / Custody Agreements

If a parent instructs ETVCC staff to only allow limited access by the child’s other parent, a notarized copy of the court order, outlining the terms relevant to ETVCC policies and procedures, must be submitted to ETVCC to be kept in the child’s file. It is the responsibility of the child’s parents to provide ETVCC with a copy of any subsequent court orders regarding custody or access.

ETVCC requires written permission from the custodial parent whenever deviations to the court order are requested. The custodial parent must complete a *Form to Allow a Child to be Picked Up by a Non-Custodial Parent on a Day Not Allowed in the Court Order on File at ETVCC* each day in which a change to the court order is requested. Phone messages will not be accepted.

**East Toronto Village Children’s Centre
Late Pick-Up Policy and Fine System**

East Toronto Village Children's Centre closes at 6 p.m. Late pick-up of children is hard on both your child and the staff. You must make sure that alternate arrangements are available if you cannot be here before 6 p.m. There will be an initial fee of \$1. per minute charged for parents who have not left the building with their children by 6 p.m. **If a child is not picked up by 7 p.m. and the parents have not called and we have not been able to contact them or the emergency persons listed on the child's information form, the child is deemed abandoned and we will call the Children's Aid Society.**

The late pick-up policy applies to all parents/caregivers authorized to pick-up children, regardless of family structure. Each late pick-up of a particular child is considered an occurrence regardless of which parent/caregiver picks up the child. For example, if Mom is late to pick-up the child twice and Grandpa is late to pick-up the same child once, there have been three occurrences.

Set out below is a chart outlining the strictly enforced steps to be taken by ETVCC in response to the number of late pick-ups:

Occurrence #: Step:

1 - 3	A fee of \$1.00 per family per minute late will be charged and the late log must be signed by the parent/caregiver acknowledging the lateness.
4 - 6	The fee is raised to \$5.00 per family per minute late, and the late log must be signed by the parent/caregiver acknowledging the lateness.
	The fee remains at \$5.00 per family per minute late, and the late log must be signed by the parent/caregiver acknowledging the lateness. Additionally a

7	written notice will be given to the parent/caregiver advising that upon occurrence #8, they will receive two (2) weeks written notice to find permanent alternative care.
8	The fee remains \$5.00 per family per minute late, and the late log must be signed by the parent/caregiver acknowledging the lateness. The parent/caregiver will receive two (2) weeks written notice to find permanent alternative care. The parent/caregiver must sign an acknowledgement that they have received this notice.

Late fees will be charged in all situations as our staff must stay regardless of their plans and therefore must be compensated accordingly. The late fine may be paid by cash or cheque directly to the staff person who remained with your child. Late fees must be paid in full within 3 business days. Late fees revert back to step 1 after a period of 6 consecutive months of ongoing compliance with centre hours.

Activities Off the Premises

ETVCC recognizes that field trips are an important way to expand the children's knowledge and language development through concrete experience. Field trips support the objectives of the teachers at our Centre, offering children opportunities to :

- extend the children's classroom learning
- learn about the community and the city that surrounds the Centre
- investigate and have hands-on experiences
- encourage social interaction

Our primary goal is to ensure the safest possible care in environments which cannot be as stringently controlled as our on-site premises. The number of children in the care of each teacher is reduced on field trips while the frequency of attendance/headcount procedures are increased. Adjustments are determined in relation to all safety factors specific to each trip.

With the exception of routine trips to and from schools, trips to any location other than St. Saviour's property are classed as field trips or off-site.

Daily Care

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing and according to the weather. Each child needs a complete change of clothing (top, long or short pants, socks, underwear and sweater) at the Centre. Please use a cloth bag for the extra clothing and label all clothing and the bag. To avoid accidents we require that the PS children wear rubber-soled shoes at day care and clogs, crocs, or sandals with no back are considered unsafe on the playground. Also, please choose runners with velcro fasteners if your child has not yet mastered laces.

To allow your child to feel comfortable and at ease while exploring his or her environment, dress your child in clothing that is suitable for active/messy play and allows the child to dress and undress themselves as easily as possible.

Diapers

All articles needed to meet a child's diapering needs are supplied by the child's parent/s including disposable diapers and/or pull-ups, wipes, any creams or powders to be used, and

a carrying/storage bag.

Sleep Policy and Nap Room Supervision

It is a requirement of the *Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)* that all children be permitted to sleep, rest, or engage in quiet activities based on the child's needs. The rest period does not exceed 2 hours per day. At ETVCC on-going communication between parents and teachers allows for awareness of each child's individual needs. There is the option for children to engage in quiet activities for the entire rest period. Occasionally, after a busy summer morning for example, it may be determined that all of the children would benefit from a lie-down, with calming music, a mat, and the option of having a book, for 30-45 minutes. Some children can be reluctant to settle but we think it is important for children to learn to be able to relax their minds and bodies. Whatever age your preschool child, if s/he benefits from a nap, please send a comfortable blanket and a cuddly toy for their rest.

At ETVCC:

- each child who does nap is assigned an individual cot
- a direct visual check of each individual child occurs, at minimum, every ½ hour
- room lighting is sufficient for conducting the visual check
- each visual check is documented by teacher conducting the check
- teachers check for any indicators of distress or unusual behaviours
- any significant changes are communicated to parents and if determined,
- the manner in which a child is supervised during sleep is adjusted to meet individual needs

Nutrition

Our meals are planned in accordance with *Canada's Food Guide*. A nutritious meal is served at lunch time as well as a well-balanced breakfast in the morning and a snack in the afternoon.

Our policy is to encourage the children to try some of everything to broaden their tastes but we do not insist that children finish each meal. Neither do we withhold foods for not eating another part of the meal. The weekly menu is posted on the parent board by the entrance way. Special dietary restrictions are to be discussed in advance of enrolment with a Supervisor.

As young children have a difficult time understanding why one child has something that they cannot have children are not to bring food from home to the Centre. If you want to provide a special snack for the whole group it must be arranged through the cook and items must be sealed in their original package with an ingredient label. Homemade birthday cakes cannot be brought to the Centre as it is impossible for staff to monitor the ingredients.

If you arrive with your child after lunch has been served, and did not call ahead to say you were coming late, lunch may or may not be available. If lunch is available and you would like your child to have the lunch, you are required to sit with your child until s/he is finished eating.

Health Care

Anaphylactic Policy

ETVCC is a PEANUT and NUT AWARE Facility -- Nuts or Peanuts are Not Allowed

Foods containing nuts, peanuts, or nut products are not allowed at ETVCC. Never send foods containing nuts or peanuts to the Centre with your child. If you do wish to send food, on a birthday for example, leave it in its original package with the contents labeled.

A Supervisor/Supervisor designate has the discretion to restrict or allow other foods being brought to the Centre.

Anaphylaxis is a severe life threatening allergic condition that can quickly lead to a fatal reaction known as anaphylactic shock. Foods with peanut and nut products or being stung by certain insects are the most common but there have also been children enrolled at ETVCC with severe allergies to other foods containing wheat, fish, or dairy products.

ETVCC will make every reasonable effort to reduce the risk to children with severe allergies but faces limitations including the large number of children attending the Centre and the fact that the facilities are shared with other organizations.

As tenants in a shared space the operators of ETVCC do not claim to be, nor can be deemed to be, free of foods and non-food items that may lead to a severe allergic or anaphylactic reaction. ETVCC may decline to admit a child where the operator is not comfortable that the level of risk posed by a child's condition can be reasonably accommodated at the Centre.

ETVCC Will Administer Medication (Epi Pen) Prescribed by a Physician Providing the Parent/Caregiver:

- inform the centre in writing of any life threatening allergies at the time of admission or whenever they become aware of their child's medical condition
- provide the child's Epi Pen and complete a medication consent form
- provide instructions from the physician to be used as an 'action plan' for Centre staff
- keep the centre staff informed of any changes in allergies
- educate their child regarding the need to avoid foods to which he/she is allergic

Information about children with severe allergies is posted in each room in a visible place, included on the Medical Information Sheets kept with the teachers at all times, and noted on the daily attendance sheets. In this way information about food allergies and restrictions is available wherever the children are present. The Epi Pen's are stored in an easily accessible place and are taken on all field trips.

Although our usual policy is that children do not bring food on trips, for parents with children who have severe food allergies we do give the option of providing snacks if the group may be purchasing food at a site (where contents are less controlled).

Children With Individual Medical Needs

East Toronto Village Children's Centre is committed to meeting the needs of people with differing abilities and medical needs. An ETVCC Supervisor will meet individually with anyone identified as needing accommodation for a diverse medical need.

Prior to enrolment, the parent/guardian will meet with the Supervisor/designate to provide input for the child's *Individualized Plan for a Child with Medical Needs* and emergency procedures. This plan will include but is not limited to:

- Description of the child's medical needs
- Prevention information to reduce risk of causing or worsening the medical condition
- Support information (devices or resource supports)
- Signs and symptoms of an episode of distress
- Emergency procedures (medical, evacuation, on a field trip, parent contact)

The individual plan will be a reference to determine strategies to reduce risk of exposure to causative agents or situations through identification of things that may exacerbate risk in relation to a medical need.

Parents are required to advise the Supervisor/designate of any change to the child's individual plan, needs, or treatment.

The individual support plan communication and training for staff members/students/volunteers will include but is not limited to:

- Risk reduction
- Any medical devices used by the child and any instructions related to its use
- A description of the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency
- A description of the supports that will be made available to ETVCC
- Any additional procedures to be followed when a child with a medical condition is part of an evacuation or participating in an off-site field trip

Individual Plans will be reviewed with ETVCC staff members/students/volunteers at any time when new information is received from the parent or physician.

Individual Plan information is in each child's file, posted in both the preschool and school-age rooms (contingent of parental approval to post), and included with all copies of the orange emergency sheets that are kept with the daily attendance clipboards, the 3 school escort bags, the first aid kits, and the evacuation trolley.

Limitations: We work to balance our desire to support inclusion with a realistic assessment of the current challenges in the group. We understand the necessity to address the needs of all children in the group, not just the needs of the children with identified diverse or unique needs. There is a continual effort towards making reasonable accommodations, modifying and adapting activities and routines, to embrace differences and abilities, including those related to medical needs.

Sometimes the process results in a determination that ETVCC is unable to reasonably, and without undue hardship to the organization, accommodate a medical need. With open communication we will work to help meet each child's basic human need to belong, to participate, and to contribute.

Health Records

Each child is required to have their immunizations up to date before admission to East Toronto Village Children's Centre. Each child must have an *Emergency Medical Release Form* signed by the parent in order for us to obtain emergency medical help in case of illness or accident. If a child needs emergency medical help we would escort him or her by ambulance or taxi to hospital.

Illness

When attending the Centre children should be in good health and must be able to participate in the full program, including outdoor activity time. Our concern, in all cases of illness, is the welfare of the sick child and the health of the other children in our care. Therefore, children may not attend the Centre when they are ill.

Following are some examples of symptoms which require that a child be kept at home:

- fever higher than 37.7 ° C / 100 ° F (under arm), especially if persistent or higher
- diarrhea or vomiting
- undiagnosed rash or skin condition, especially if accompanied by fever or behaviour change
- discharge from the eyes, ears, or nose, especially if thick or coloured
- lethargy, irritability, drowsiness if accompanied by another symptom
- cough if frequent bouts of three to five times per hour, especially if choking or vomiting
- persistent pain or ear ache
- breathing difficulty (breathing faster than 40 breaths per minute)

A receiving staff member who notices any of these symptoms when a child arrives will ask that the child be taken home or to a doctor. If any of these symptoms is normal for the child, and the Centre can accommodate the child without harm to the other children, the child may return with a doctor's note explaining the situation.

A child must stay at home if diagnosed with any contagious diseases such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, roseola, gastroenteritis, impetigo, or conjunctivitis. ETVCC refers to Toronto Public Health's *Guidelines for Common Communicable Diseases* to determine the period of exclusion.

If your child becomes ill during the day it is expected that someone will come to pick the child up as soon as possible. We will first attempt to contact the parents and if we are unable to reach the parents we will contact the child's emergency contact person noted on the child's information form. If an ETVCC staff person thinks it has taken an inordinate amount of time for a person to arrive to pick up a sick child the person will be required to document the reason for the delay on ETVCC's *Symptoms of Ill Health Form*. The need for a staff person to repeatedly request this documentation places the family at risk of being found not in good standing with ETVCC.

Medication Policy

Our staff will administer most prescriptions that a child requires provided that a parent completes a *Medication Authorization Form*. Prescription medication must be in the original container with the child's name, dose instructions, and current date on the pharmacy label. "Over-the-counter" drugs must be accompanied by written approval by a medical doctor which includes the child's name, dosage, time to be administered and length of use. ETVCC staff do not apply medication or do health care procedures on rectal or genital areas.

When "time to be administered" is stated to be "as needed", for example in the case of an asthma inhaler, the doctor must provide clear written instructions regarding:

- a] the specific symptoms the teacher needs to observe when determining if the medication should be administered, and,
- b] the maximum number of doses allowed in a specified period.

Teachers do not administer the 'relievers' (eg. Ventolin) day after day on a regular basis. Unless the doctor's letter specifically instructs otherwise, we only administer 'relievers' if symptoms are apparent. If the instructions on the 'controller' (eg. Beclomethasone) say "2 times per day", parents give both doses at home. *Any* instructions that differ from those on the prescription label must be included in the doctor's letter.

Head Lice

Head lice are tiny insects that live on the scalp. They lay eggs, called nits, which stick to hair very close to the scalp. Head lice are very common in child care centres and schools because

they spread easily among children who are together in one place. Head lice do not spread disease.

If a child has live lice a parent will be called to pick the child up. Parents are given information from Toronto Public Health about how to treat the problem. Children cannot return to the Centre until the live lice are gone. Parents must be prepared to stay for a while at drop off time the day after their child had live lice to allow us to do a thorough head check before the parent leaves. Please respect that a teacher may not be available to do the check the minute you arrive.

Sun Screen

On admission parents complete a *Sun Screen Information & Permission Form*. On days when needed parents of all children who use sun screen must apply a coat prior to the child arriving at the Centre. ETVCC provides sunscreen for both toddler and preschoolers if a second application is needed. If you prefer to bring in your own, then it will need to be labelled and form will need to be filled out. If there are siblings in the Centre, then each will need to have there own.

Smoke-Free Environment

ETVCC is committed to providing a smoke-free environment and is in compliance with the *Smoke Free Ontario Act*. Smoking is prohibited anywhere on the property. Please support our efforts to keep our surroundings tidy; do not deposit cigarette butts on or around the property.

Emergency Management

ETVCC's Emergency Management Policy & Procedures

The full document provides information to support through 3 phases: Immediate Emergency Response; Next Steps during an Emergency; and Recovery. Parents/guardians can review the full document by visiting our website or there are paper copies in the 'parent information' and 'faculty information' pouches posted in the program rooms. Refer to 'Other ETVCC Policies and Procedures' on page 1 of this *Family Handbook*.

Communication in an Emergency

As soon as possible, after the initial first response/first aid, parents are notified of any emergency or serious occurrence that directly involves their child/ren. Primary notification to the parent/guardian is via phone. E-mail contact may be used as a secondary attempt. That is why it is critical that parents/guardians ALWAYS keep us informed when any phone information (cell,work,home) changes. Changes must be directly communicated to your child's teacher at drop off on your first day in after the change. Changes must ALSO be sent via e-mail to easttorontovillage@rogers.com.

For situations that involve everyone and the Centre as a whole, refer to *Weather Alerts* section in this handbook as you can call us for recorded notification.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event of an emergency at East Toronto Village Children's Centre, our emergency evacuation location is Community Centre 55 at Swanwick and Main.

Critical Staff Shortage

Although it has never occurred since the Centre was incorporated, ETVCC has a procedure to follow if unable to meet mandatory teacher/child ratios. We always maintains a group of capable supply teachers familiar with our children and have a working agreement with Nursery Support Services and Healthcare Resources, 2 providers of qualified child care personnel to cover last minute staff shortages.

In the unlikely event of a critical staff shortage ETVCC will:

- 1) Call full-time parents and tell them our concerns about meeting ratios. Parents will be asked if they are able to keep their child home, with no charge for the day if they are able to find other care.
- 2) Cancel trips requiring less children per teacher.
- 3) Once ratios are met we will not allow any more parents to leave their children. There will be no charge for the day if care can not be provided.

Weather Alerts (Cold / Heat / Sun / Smog / Electrical Storms)

The staff at ETVCC will take the following steps on a daily basis to provide protection from extreme weather conditions:

Listen and Watch for Weather Alerts on the TV or Radio

Conditions warranting consideration include:

- Cold weather reported forecast temperature of 25°C below zero (without a wind) or colder OR any combination of wind and temperature that is 25°C below zero or colder
- Severe ice or sleet weather conditions
- Blizzard or other severe snow-fall conditions
- Electrical storms
- Smog/Pollution/Heat – smog alerts are issued by Environment Canada when the Air Quality Index reaches or exceeds 50

Make Information Available to Parents

- Prior to 7 a.m. a Supervisor and the a.m. preschool ECE will discuss the situation and make decisions regarding any changes to our normal operations
- If there are to be changes a Supervisor includes that information with the recorded message on the direct line to the Centre is 416-694-1733, accompanied by the date and time for the next information update – if there is no message by 7 a.m. we should be operating as usual.
- **A Supervisor/supervisor designate retains the right, at any time, to use his/her discretion in deciding whether or not to cancel or curtail or reinstate activities due to weather conditions including sending children home or not accepting them into care**

Reporting to Children's Aid Society

Every person in Ontario is required under the *Child and Family Services Act* to report his/her suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected or is at risk for abuse or neglect (i.e.,

in need of protection). Included and defined specifically are the “operator or employee of a day nursery.” This definition includes all Centre staff. It is an offence under the *Child and Family Services Act* if a staff member does not report a suspicion of abuse or neglect. **Child care centre staff are directed not to inform a parent/guardian that a suspicion of child abuse has been reported** as such action could jeopardize the child and/or the investigation.

If a parent witnesses or suspects child abuse s/he too has a duty to report to a Children’s Aid Society. Telephone numbers are posted in the Centre on red sheets with a large 911 and other emergency numbers on them.

If the person believed to have been abusive towards a child is someone who holds a working relationship with the day care (employee, volunteer, student, supplier, contract worker, etc) it is appreciated if the parent informs an ETVCC Official (a Supervisor, the teacher in charge of the Centre in the Supervisors’ absence, or the President of ETVCC’s Board of Directors) after the call is made to Children’s Aid. We need to ensure the safety of all the children.

A parent’s signature on ETVCC’s *Parent Agreement* indicates s/he pledges to maintain ethical standards in respect to observing the strictest confidentiality regarding any accusations of child abuse against any person involved with the Centre (other parents, family members, family friends escorting children to and from the Centre, staff members, volunteers, students, community members associated with the day care, suppliers, etc). Discussing any information about the situation with others is a breach of confidentiality; doing so may interfere with the investigation and may leave the person passing on the information liable for slander. The need to inform Children’s Aid and an ETVCC Official overrides this confidentiality agreement. After you inform the ETVCC Official of your call to Children’s Aid s/he will also contact Children’s Aid to get advice about how and to whom to discuss, or not discuss, the situation.

Child care centre staff, or anyone witnessing suspected child abuse, are not responsible for proving whether or not child abuse or neglect has occurred; that is the responsibility of a Children’s Aid Society. A person reporting suspected child abuse cannot be sued if it is proven that the report was made in good faith and not to cause trouble for anyone. The child’s safety must take precedence over all other concerns.

Expectations for Children’s Behaviour

ETVCC believes in the right of each person to be treated with dignity and respect. The tenets set out in our *Program Statement* set the stage for a rich environment that engages the children, lessening challenging behaviours. However, as children are individuals, reactions and interactions are varied. Our goal is for parents, children, and educators to work together to enrich curriculum objectives and content; both parents and educators are seen as experts and resources in the process of providing care and education in an environment that is safe for everyone.

General Techniques Teachers Use in Effective Behavioural Guidance

ETVCC teachers ensure the children are fully aware of their expectations and the consequences of not meeting those expectations. Expectations are appropriate, meet the needs of the children in the group, and allow for flexibility for individuals within the group. Consequences are logical ones, which are directly related to inappropriate actions. Whenever possible, the children are involved in discussions of why the rules are important.

Children are Expected to:

- respect the rights of others;
- settle problems in a peaceful manner, first on their own and, if necessary, with the aid of a staff person;
- show courtesy and respect to their peers and teachers; and,
- control their anger/aggression in such a manner as to not inflict any physical harm on their peers, teachers, or themselves

ETVCC Teachers use the following strategies:

- listen to the child and attempt to understand what had caused the problem
- redirect behaviour if a child is having difficulty in one situation, and find an alternative for them without directing attention to the problems
- use positive reinforcement, letting children know they are exhibiting positive behaviour
- make shifts in arrangements to assist a child who is unable to do something or is hesitant in a new situation—for example, make sure his/her friends can assist and make it easier for the child
- model appropriate behaviour
- restructure activities if individuals or groups are encountering failure. Break down activities into small steps
- provide the upset child with a quiet space within the room where s/he can be by him/herself to calm down or restrict space within reasonable boundaries
- tell children how to change their behaviour, thus they can then concentrate on what they should be doing rather than what they should not be doing
- redirect the child to focus on a less stressful or more appropriate activity
- program age-appropriate activities. If children are not attentive to activity, it will be changed to capture their interest, or left for another time
- be aware of how situations must be reorganized on a continuing basis (e.g., move to smaller groupings, reinforce turn taking, monitor noise levels, etc.)
- remove the child's source of anger when possible and appropriate
- be receptive – ETVCC staff will take their cues from the children

Further actions will:

- relate to the nature of the inappropriate behaviour
- be appropriate to the developmental level of the child
- be designed to assist the child to learn appropriate behaviour
- be implemented as soon as possible after inappropriate behaviour
- be discussed with a parent if a difficult situation arises with a child

The following 'Prohibited Practices' are not permitted with respect to any child receiving care at our facility (as formerly noted with the Program Statement):

The following Prohibited Practices are not permitted with respect to any child receiving care at ETVCC:

- corporal punishment of the child;
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding;

- locking the exits of the Centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children;
- 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;
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Serious Child Behavioural Occurrences

Our goal is to ensure that the children learn to deal with all day-to-day situations in socially acceptable ways, by means of communicating, reasoning and taking responsibility for their actions and learning what it means to live cooperatively in a democratic society.

Definition

A behaviour or series of behavioural occurrences that involves a child engaging in any persistent abuse (ie. kicking, punching, throwing objects, spitting, or any physical, emotional or verbal abuse) directed towards another child, an adult or him/herself.

Parent / Teacher Communication

Communication is the key as parents and teachers work together to reduce problem behaviours. Talking to one another at drop-off and pick-up is the most common way to relay information and share ideas. A respect for privacy or a need for more time to converse may make a phone conversation during the day or a time to meet in the office more helpful. When you do want to converse at the end of the day make sure you arrive in time to do so. After 5:45 is a time the teachers need to be able to concentrate on the signing-out and closing routines.

Formal Reports Used to Clarify Communication

The following forms are often used by the teachers to clarify what has occurred and/or strategies to try to reduce reoccurrence:

ETVCC's *Report of Incident Concerning Child* is the format we use to provide written communication to parents about the behaviours defined above. If there has been more than one incident report, we strongly recommend that you set up a meeting with staff to discuss solutions.

Parent / Teacher / Supervisor / Child Meetings

When time and privacy are needed to facilitate communication parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with a combination that may include any of the following: parents, other primary home caregivers, ETVCC teachers, Supervisor, and the child if appropriate. The purpose is to plan and set goals to support the child's development and to help the child thrive in our program.

Guidelines for De-escalating Volatile Situations

ETVCC does not approve the use of any restraint as a method of intervention for children with challenging behaviours. However, in some extreme and rare situations staff may find themselves having to respond to a crisis situation using physical guidance as a method to defuse and/or de-escalate a volatile situation. Physical restraint is only used in situations where a child is in imminent danger of compromising the safety of themselves or others in the program. It is the first priority of the staff at ETVCC to make sure that we provide a safe environment for all children and families at the centre.

The following guidelines are provided to ETVCC staff to deal with children who are at risk of hurting themselves or others and are not intended to provide approval or endorse the use of physical restraint.

In order to de-escalate the situation:

- if at all possible ETVCC staff will direct the other children to a safer environment, keeping calm control, aware that their anxiety may be acute
- acknowledge and discuss with them the feelings of the rest of the children in the group, working to alleviate their fears
- if ratios allow, two ETVCC staff should stay with the volatile child until the child has calmed down

The following steps should be taken after the child has calmed down:

- reintroduce the child into the program in a supportive manner, remaining with the child until s/he is settled into an activity or task
- the staff who used physical guidance with the child will document the incident, sign the document and submit it to the Centre Supervisor
- ETVCC staff on duty to call parents of child involved
- Supervisor/designate to call the City of Toronto Serious Occurrence Line within 24 hours to report the incident
- Supervisor/designate to comply with the Child Abuse Reporting Policy if a child alleges they have been injured during the restraint
- Documentation is placed into the child's file permanently
- Supervisor/designate to call the President of the Board of Directors to report the incident
- Meeting with staff/Supervisor/child's parent(s) to discuss the incident and determine strategies which will be utilized should the child encounter a similar situation—parent's will sign off on both the incident report and the strategies
- Staff will keep the parents up-to-date, and visa versa, on the child's progress and to review the strategies

Outside Resources to Support Inclusion

ETVCC attempts to utilize resources from outside the Centre that may support ETVCC teachers and a child's primary family caregivers as they work together to support and enhance a child's development. A family may already have established connections that can come to ETVCC or we will offer suggestions such as the Child Development Institute. A willingness on the families part to accept support and written consents to share information are part of this process.

Notification of Others

During the process of dealing with serious child behavioural occurrences the following will be notified: President of ETVCC's Board of Directors and ETVCC's Consultant with Toronto Children's Services. At what point that notification occurs depends on the individual circumstances and severity of the occurrences in terms of protecting everyone at ETVCC.

Overview of Process to Support a Child's Development and Inclusion at ETVCC

As outlined above the following are the steps taken and the areas examined by the various people working together to offer support:

- Notes/written documentation of specific behaviours/instances, if possible by different teacher witnesses, noting precipitators, if observed, and follow up. These notes are used to provide better understanding of how the environment may be adjusted to help prevent reoccurrence and the effectiveness of our responses.
- Documentation of conversations between primary home caregivers, teachers, and/or Supervisor.
- Formal reports (Incident / Disrespect / Goals) individually signed by ETVCC teacher, Supervisor, and a child's parent or guardian.
- Documentation of all meetings arranged to clarify communication and set goals.
- Documentation related to observations and suggestions of outside resource consultants.

Discharge Due to Inability to Accommodate

In the event that, despite the best efforts of ETVCC staff in cooperation with a family to include a child/family (see *Statement of Inclusion*) at ETVCC, it becomes clear that ETVCC is unable to accommodate the child/family, a Supervisor will consult with the President or Member/President-Designate of the Board of Directors and the family prior to discharging the child/family from the Centre. If a decision is made to discharge the child/family it will be on two (2) weeks notice and the following will be notified: Toronto Children's Services Consultant, Ministry of Education Program Advisor, and any Resource Consultants from outside the Centre (if involved).

In the event that there is an extreme behavioural concern that is potentially harmful to other children and/or staff the child/family may be asked to leave ETVCC immediately without two (2) weeks notice.

Our aim is to provide a stimulating program with as much choice and freedom as possible, but which also provides a place where children can relax and feel safe.

Parent Code of Conduct

PARENTS are expected to :

- respect the rights of staff, children, and other parents;
- adhere to the Centre's philosophy and policies as found in the *Family Handbook* and on the parent bulletin boards;
- work to keep the lines of communication open and flowing between parents and teachers;
- make an effort to understand what is expected of your child;
- make an effort to understand what opportunities for growth and what challenges our environment and our program present to your child;
- take responsibility for your child's care and behaviour as soon as you enter the room and ensure that all rules continue to be followed; and,
- show courtesy and respect to your child's teachers

ETVCC will neither tolerate nor condone attitudes and behaviours, regardless of intent, that are likely to undermine the dignity, self-esteem or security of an individual, or create an intimidating, threatening, hostile or offensive environment.

Those behaviours deemed unacceptable can include the following:

- unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes, taunts, or other discriminatory language
- practical jokes which cause someone embarrassment or discomfort

- display of offensive pictures, graffiti, or other materials
- racial or ethnic slurs
- attempts to goad or incite aggression or violence in others
- throwing of articles in a deliberate or aggressive manner
- aggressive approaches to another individual or group
- behaviour frightening to the children
- invasion of another person's personal space causing the other person to feel threatened or out of control of the situation
- threats and/or attempts to intimidate
- aggressive gestures (i.e. raising one's fist, wagging a finger in someone's face, using swear-words, or insulting gestures)
- physical assault

Procedure for Handling Contraventions to the Parent Code of Conduct

The Board of Directors and Supervisor of ETVCC reserve the right to enforce immediate disciplinary measures as the situation may warrant. This may include the following:

- removing the offender from ETVCC property/premises immediately and barring the individual from coming onto or in the ETVCC property/premises.
- the police may be called for direction/assistance.
- the Children's Aid Society may be called for direction/assistance.

The following steps will be taken once the code of conduct has been breached:

- a Supervisor will document and report the incident immediately to the President or Member/President-Designate of the Board of Directors, Ministry Licensing Specialist, City of Toronto Children's Service, police, or The Children's Aid Society as necessary.
- a Supervisor and Board of Directors/designate committee will meet as quickly as possible to discuss and assess the incident/situation. The following criteria (some or all) will be used to assess the situation:
 - impact of incident on ETVCC staff and children
 - seriousness of the offence
 - actual or potential risk/harm to child(ren) or adults
 - past documentation or ETVCC staff reports of problems with family involved
 - frequency of occurrence and
 - any previous disciplinary action taken.

Consequences of Breaching ETVCC's Code of Conduct

The following decisions may be made by the Board of Directors/designate committee:

- further investigation by members of the Board of Directors
- verbal warning
- written warning
- requirement for parent to sign ETVCC's *Parent's Code*
- discharge on two (2) weeks notice
- in extreme cases, immediate discharge.

Appeals

Once the decision of the Board of Directors has been communicated, the person(s) involved

in the incident will be given 5 working days to discuss/appeal the decision of the Board of Directors. The Board will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible and establish a process to consider the appeal.

In the case of a decision to discharge the family from the program, either immediately or with notice, by a designate committee consultation will be made with the entire Board of Directors.

Any documentation and formal correspondence related to the family will remain in their file. Any family who has been found to have contravened this policy and received a verbal/written warning from ETVCC will be viewed as not in good standing with ETVCC. This means that future contraventions of this policy or other difficulties with the family may necessitate ETVCC to immediately discharge the family from ETVCC.

Financial Reimbursement

If the parent committing an offence is responsible for any destruction, damage or defacing of ETVCC property, or the property of any person connected to ETVCC, the offending parent will be invoiced for the full cost recovery of repair of damages (materials, labour, plus an administrative charge). As such an act constitutes a criminal act the police would be called.

Communication Statement

Refer to the *Emergency Management* section for information regarding communication to parents/guardians in an emergency.

E-mail is not to be used by parents/guardians to relay important information that needs to be received by ETVCC. Information that needs to be received by us the same day is forwarded to ETVCC in person or via the Direct Line to the Classrooms and is shown on page 1.

Much of ETVCC's operational communication and information we need to pass on to families is done via electronic mailings (e-mail) and parents are asked to provide an e-mail address and sign an agreement to receive electronic communications. If we do not have a parent's e-mail contact it is essential that the adult picking up check the child's parents' mailbox daily. Also commonly used are postings at the main entrance or around 'parent areas' in each room. We expect parent and guardians to make an effort to remain aware of information as it is presented.

Open 2-way communication is also encouraged at East Toronto Village Children's Centre. We strive to create an atmosphere where parents feel as if the Centre is theirs. We hope all people involved will feel comfortable speaking with the teachers, a Supervisor, or the members of the Board of Directors whenever they find themselves with questions, concerns or comments.

At times however there are issues about which people can feel especially sensitive, making communication difficult. When communication breaks down, problems can escalate, making resolution more difficult.

Issues, Concerns, and Complaints

It is expected that issues, concerns, and complaints will always be discussed in a private and orderly manner. ETVCC will not tolerate family members, ETVCC staff members/students/volunteers, ETVCC Board members, or community visitors voicing complaints/concerns:

- in the presence of children
- during program time
- in a manner that is threatening or demeaning to the ETVCC staff, student, volunteers, or other families

- with other children.

It is the responsibility of families and ETVCC staff to set a good example and work together to provide a safe and secure environment where every child, family, volunteer, and ETVCC staff member feel safe and comfortable.

Informal Resolution

Often people are not aware that their words or actions are negatively affecting others. If a staff/Board member receives a message of dissatisfaction from anyone concerning ETVCC, the first step is to approach the situation informally. Helping those involved talk about their points of view and encouraging their attempts to find solutions that satisfy all is the mediator's role. If the person receiving the concern believes support would be helpful, he or she will inform a Supervisor who will contact the person or group voicing the concern, investigate the specifics, and try to help resolve the issue.

If an issue is resolved through the informal approach, no documentation is needed and the information is classified as a "comment".

Parent Issues and Concerns Addressed Formally

If an issue cannot be resolved at the first level (as a 'comment') ETVCC has a 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.

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 ETVCC and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

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

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 3 business days of direct receipt by ETVCC. An e-mail sent to ETVCC cannot be considered to have been received by ETVCC unless verification of receipt has been replied by ETVCC. 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

ETVCC 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 member feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to a Supervisor, alternate staff member, or an ETVCC Board member.

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 [Toronto Children's Aid Society](http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidtheTorontoChildrensAidSociety) (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/childrensaidtheTorontoChildrensAidSociety>

Procedure when Parent Issues and Concerns Addressed Formally

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:
Program Room Related E.g.: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the classroom staff directly, or - a Supervisor or Board member. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised, or - Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within ETVCC business days.
General, Centre, or Operations Related E.g.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a Supervisor or Board member. 	Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding
Staff Member, Supervisor, and/or Board Member Related	Raise the issue or concern to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly, or - a Supervisor or Board member. All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, a Supervisor, and/or a Board member that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to an alternate Supervisor or Board member as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding

Student/ Volunteer Related	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student, or - a Supervisor or Board member. <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 a Supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>next steps or referral.</p> <p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 3 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>
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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 ETVCC's Board of Director's.

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

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local Public Health department, Police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, Fire Department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Serious Occurrence Notification

To notify parents a Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted at the front entrance within 24 hours of ETVCC becoming aware of an occurrence. The exception is a case of allegations of abuse or unverified complaints which will be posted at the completion of Children's Aid Society and/or Ministry investigation. The information included will be written in a way that protects personal information and privacy. No child or staff names, initials, ages, birth dates, or preschool/school-age group identifiers will be included. The form will be updated if additional actions or investigations are completed. It will remain posted for a minimum of 10 business days after the last update and will be retained on site and available for current and prospective parents for at least 3 years from the date of the occurrence.

The Ministry of Education is notified within 24 hours.

Access & Equity Policy

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Discrimination, intimidation, interference, harassment, restriction, or coercion exercised or practiced with respect to any employee, student, volunteer, or family member because of age, race, creed, national origin, gender, political or religious affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, or ethnic origin will not be tolerated. The following principles guide our quest to ensure access and equity and embrace diversity:

1. ETVCC recognizes the dignity and worth of every person and will ensure equal rights for all.
2. ETVCC values the diverse backgrounds of our community and is committed to an understanding that our multifaceted society is a source of enrichment and strength.
3. ETVCC believes that it must take informed leadership in attaining equality and positive relationships among all participants in the Centre.
4. ETVCC acknowledges the barriers to employment, education, as well as other social and economic opportunities experienced by members of many minority groups. We strive to eliminate these barriers.

ETVCC is committed to demonstrating these principles in all policies, community relations, delivery of services, recruitment, hiring, and ETVCC staff, volunteer, and student development. ETVCC will actively communicate this commitment to all participants.

PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, SERVICES, EDUCATION & TRAINING

The following are some of the ways ETVCC strives to avoid discriminatory incidents by addressing anti-bias proactively:

- Programs, activities, and program materials reflect the diversity of the membership and promote respect and appreciation of differences.
- Participants from diverse racial and ethno-cultural backgrounds are included and encouraged to contribute to planning and implementing programs and activities.
- Resource materials such as flyers, films, and books are anti-bias and actively promote respect for diversity.
- ETVCC staff and Board members regularly review and adapt programs to ensure that they are free of discrimination, racism, and stereotyping.
- ETVCC's Equity & Diversity Policy is posted in each program room to make all participants aware of our expectations.
- ETVCC offers time and financial support for training and education through workshops to provide Board members, ETVCC staff, and volunteers with information to help evaluate their own possible prejudices and to acquire the knowledge and skills to deal with instances of discrimination.
- Anti-bias workshops may be offered to family members and parents are welcome to suggest presenters.

PROCESS TO INVESTIGATE AND MANAGE ISSUES RELATED TO THE ACCESS & EQUITY POLICY

As proactive as we strive to be, incidents may still occur and to prevent recurrence, it is important that they be dealt with immediately, using the following guidelines:

- If a situation of intolerance occurs it is expected that neither the incident nor the resolution will interfere with the day-to-day operation of ETVCC.
- It is expected that all families and ETVCC staff work with each other to resolve any disputes in an open, honest, and professional manner.

- Any incidents of discrimination will require ETVCC to complete all reporting requirements as per ETVCC's Serious Occurrence Policy & Procedures.

Resolving Incidents when Children are Involved

Due to the young ages of the children the onus for reporting or responding to an incident falls to the adults, including staff, parents, Board members and any other adults involved in the program.

Where possible, children who were involved are encouraged to report it to an adult (e.g., teacher, Supervisor, parent). In all situations, parents should be informed by the program if their child has been involved in an incident.

In the case where the parents are aware that their child was involved in an incident and/or personally witnessed the incident, or if another parent witnessed the incident, the parent should make a written or verbal report to a Supervisor who will then take immediate action in resolving the incident.

At the outset, staff should try to resolve the matter by talking to the children and explaining why the behaviour is inappropriate. Some key elements of this process are to:

- recognize the individual children's ages and stages of their understanding
- handle communications in a manner intended to foster the self-worth of all the children involved
- publicly support the targeted child and acknowledge the hurt they have suffered to help the child re-establish self-esteem
- determine if it would be best to speak to the targeted child and the offender individually
- remember that the objective of speaking with the offender is to correct the behaviour, not to punish, and the offender should be assisted in seeking appropriate ways to express themselves
- be aware of other children present at the time and try to facilitate learning by talking to those children and explaining why the behaviour is inappropriate

Teaching children about the inappropriateness of this type of behaviour may involve group activities, group problem-solving, program and curriculum development, or other preventative methods, which may include teaching positive interactions and conflict resolution skills.

If the incident involves Child to Child:

First Incident

1. ETVCC staff speaks with children involved.
2. ETVCC staff documents the incident in the daily log, using first names only.
3. ETVCC staff verbally notifies a Supervisor.
4. ETVCC staff verbally notifies the parent/caregiver.
5. Strategies to educate and prevent further occurrences will be brought to the forefront when program planning.

Second Incident

1. ETVCC staff speaks with children involved.
2. ETVCC staff documents the incident in the daily log, using first names only.
3. ETVCC staff verbally notifies a Supervisor.

4. Supervisor meets with parent/caregiver to discuss the issue and develop a plan of action if behaviour were to occur again.
5. The meeting is documented by a Supervisor and the parent/caregiver signs for acknowledgement.

Third Incident

1. ETVCC staff speaks with children involved.
2. ETVCC staff documents the incident in the daily log, using first names only, and completes incident report.
3. ETVCC staff verbally notifies a Supervisor.
4. Board President is notified that 3rd incident has occurred.
5. Supervisor meets with the parent/caregiver to discuss the implementation of the plan of action previously determined (Supervisor may request that a Board member be present).
6. Meetings are documented by Supervisor and parent/caregiver signs for acknowledgement.

Resolving Incidents when Adults are Involved

The following types of incidents of discrimination may be viewed as violations of ETVCC's *Parent Code of Conduct* and as such may be dealt with under the guidelines of that policy.

If the incident involves Family Member to Child:

1. ETVCC staff speaks with the child involved.
2. ETVCC staff documents the incident in the daily log, using first names only, and compiles written documentation.
3. ETVCC staff verbally notifies a Supervisor.
4. ETVCC Board President is notified that an incident has occurred.
5. Supervisor and a representative from the Board meet with the offending family member to discuss the issue and the consequences if another incident occurs. ETVCC's *Parent's Code* is reviewed and the offending family member is required to sign it. If a second incident occurs, and at the discretion of a Supervisor and Board, the family member may no longer be allowed onto or in the ETVCC property or premises.
6. Meetings are documented by a Supervisor and the offending family member signs for acknowledgement.
7. Supervisor contacts the family of the child involved and discusses the issue.

If the incident involves Family Member to Family Member:

1. ETVCC staff documents the incident in the daily log, using first names only, and compiles written documentation.
2. ETVCC staff verbally notifies a Supervisor.
3. Board President is notified that an incident has occurred.
4. Supervisor and a representative from the Board meet with the offending family member to discuss the incident and the consequences if another incident occurs. ETVCC's *Parent's Code* is reviewed and the offending family member is required to sign it. If a second incident occurs, and at the discretion of a Supervisor and Board of Directors, the offender may no longer be allowed onto or in the ETVCC property or premises.
5. Supervisor contacts the targeted family member involved to provide an update on the investigation with consideration of the need for confidentiality with regards to the offender.

6. Meetings are documented by Supervisor and offending family members sign for acknowledgement.

If the incident involves Family Member to Staff Member:

1. ETVCC staff walks away from the situation.
2. ETVCC staff documents the incident in the daily log, using first names only, and compiles written documentation.
3. ETVCC staff verbally notifies a Supervisor.
4. Board President is notified that an incident has occurred.
5. Supervisor and the ETVCC staff member along with a Board member meet with the offending family member to discuss the issue and the consequences if another incident occurs. ETVCC's *Parent's Code* is reviewed and the offending family member is required to sign it. If a second incident occurs, and at the discretion of a Supervisor and Board of Directors, the family member may no longer be allowed onto or in the ETVCC property or premises.
6. Meetings are documented by Supervisor and offending family member signs for acknowledgement.

Resolving Incidents when the Offender is a Staff Member

The following types of incidents of discrimination may be viewed as violations of ETVCC's *employee/employer agreement* and as such will be dealt with in that context. Consequences may include verbal or written warnings, suspension, or termination, depending on the seriousness of the incident and/or prior occurrences and/or prior disciplinary actions.

If the incident involves ETVCC staff to Family Member or Child:

1. When Supervisor is notified, the incident is documented.
2. Supervisor meets with staff member to discuss incident.
3. Supervisor and the family member, or parent if towards a child, meet with staff member to discuss the issue. The meeting is documented by Supervisor and family member or parent signs for acknowledgement.
4. Supervisor meets with staff member to discuss consequences of this incident and what they would be if another incident occurs.
5. Meetings with staff members are documented by Supervisor with documentation going to the employee's file, and the Board President is informed of the outcome.

If the incident is between staff members:

The handling of discriminatory incidents between staff is consistent with ETVCC's *Workplace Anti-Harassment Policy*. However, if children or parents observe and report such an incident, it is appropriate to take similar actions to those noted in the preceding sections.