



We Care

A young boy with light hair and blue eyes is the central focus of the image. He is wearing a dark t-shirt with a red and white graphic that includes the word "Roller" and a stylized tongue. He is holding a large, intricate structure made of colorful geometric toys (blue, yellow, green, and red sticks and connectors) in front of his face, looking through it with a slight smile. The background is a blurred indoor setting, likely a classroom or playroom.

**PARENT
HANDBOOK**

Dutton Co-operative Child Care Centre Inc. Parent Handbook

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Our Mission

Our mission is to provide inclusive, high-quality child care programs, enriching learning experiences & family resources in collaboration with area partners to inspire lifelong learning and to help build a healthy community.

Philosophy

The Dutton Co-Operative Child Care Centre Inc. (DCCCCI) strives to be a place that inspires lifelong learning among children, families, educators, and beyond. Our organization believes that the children come first above all. We strive to provide learning environments that are responsive to the interests and needs of the children we serve through play and inquiry. DCCCCI believes that the children we serve must be provided with a safe space to be their most authentic self. This belief is why we cultivate staff teams that are warm, responsive, and who see the inner most potential of each child that comes through our doors. Our staff understand that they are co-learners within the classrooms and co-construct knowledge with their colleagues, children, families, and the community.

Family Code of Conduct

We value the important role parents, guardians, caregivers, and extended family play in creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all children. This Family Code of Conduct outlines the expectations we have for all families to ensure our programs remain a positive place for children, staff, and the greater community.

Respectful Communication

- Address conflicts respectfully, calmly and constructively, using appropriate language and tone.
- No disruptive or aggressive behaviour that could negatively impact the safety and well-being of others will be tolerated.

Safety & Security

- Follow centre procedures for drop-off and pick-up, including authorized pick-up requirements.
- Ensure your child is fit to attend (free from illness and meeting health requirements).
- Be respectful of anaphylactic allergies present at the centres/programs and do not bring outside food into our spaces.

Collaboration & Problem-Solving

- Direct concerns, questions, or feedback to the appropriate staff or leadership team members.
- Participate in meetings or discussions when requested, with the goal of finding constructive solutions that support your child's well-being and the program's success.

Confidentiality

- We recognize that personal connections between staff and families may exist outside of our programs. However, our staff are expected to uphold strict professional boundaries and maintain confidentiality in their roles. We kindly ask for your support in respecting these expectations and avoiding situations that could place staff in uncomfortable or compromising positions.
- Families should refrain from contacting staff after hours and through personal means (such as, but not limited to, social media).
- If you have any concerns, please direct them to the appropriate individuals who are equipped to respond outlined in the Parent Issue and Concern Policy.
- Families will refrain from using public forums (such as, but not limited to, social media) to discuss centre related concerns. This collaborative effort will ensure we respect the confidentiality of all involved and protect the integrity of any investigation.

Inclusivity & Anti-Discrimination

- Support a welcoming environment for all families and children, regardless of race, culture, gender identity, ability, religion, or background.

Acknowledgement

By enrolling your child in our programs, you agree to uphold this Family Code of Conduct and work collaboratively with our team to create a safe, respectful, and positive environment for all. Failure to adhere to our Family Code of Conduct may result in the removal from our programs.

Our Curriculum

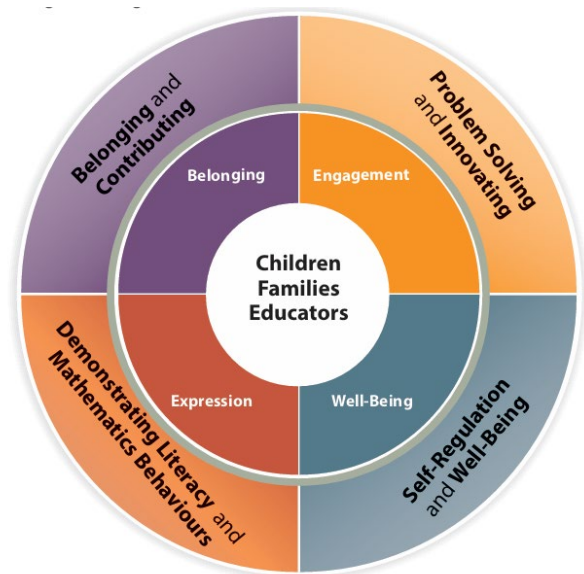
Imagine a classroom where children are seen as co-learners, alongside their educators and families. This approach is rooted in a deep understanding of children's capabilities and learning styles. It encourages educators to be attuned to children's knowledge, curiosities, and theories about the world. Through this interactive process, children engage in meaningful play that supports the development of lifelong learning skills.

Our curriculum is guided by *How Does Learning Happen?, Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, which focuses on learning through relationships. This professional resource aids in curriculum development and supports educators in fostering children's growth. The beauty of this approach is that it supports a child's holistic development in an inclusive environment. It ensures that every child has the opportunity to participate meaningfully, with their well-being at the forefront. Where belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression are the pillars of early years curriculum, learning happens naturally.

Our classrooms are not structured around stereotypical "School Readiness" where children practice ABCs and 123s. "School Readiness" in our programs is focused on the four frameworks of *How Does Learning Happen?*: Belonging, Well-being, Engagement, and Expression. The children, families, and educators are at the core of these foundations.

Ontario's Kindergarten Curriculum then expands on these foundations through the Four Frames of the Kindergarten Program: Belonging and Contributing, Problem Solving and Innovating, Self-Regulation and Well-Being, and Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours. We share this with you, so you understand that your child is most definitely getting School Ready in our programs.

As we continue to evolve our understanding of early childhood education, it's clear that play is not just an activity—it's a vital component of a child's lifelong learning journey. By embracing this playful exploration, we lay the foundation for a lifetime of learning and discovery.



Pedagogical Documentation and Our Philosophy

To better understand pedagogical documentation, here is an excerpt from *How Does Learning Happen, Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*:

“Moving beyond simply an objective reporting of children’s behaviour, pedagogical documentation helps to find meaning in what children do and what they experience. It is:

- a way to value children’s experiences and include their perspectives;
- a way to make children’s learning and understanding of the world around them visible to the children themselves;
- a process for educators to co-plan with children and with families;
- a means of sharing perspectives with parents and colleagues.

When families and others are invited to contribute to the documentation and share their own interpretations, it can provide even more insights that children, educators, and families can return to, reflect on, and remember in order to extend learning.”

Our educators spend their days co-learning with the children in their programs. Our teams create documentation that goes beyond capturing “moments” – it serves to create meaning from the child’s experiences. Documentation makes your child’s learning visible to not only you, their family, but to them. We invite you to share your interpretations to help provide the educators more insight and extend learning.

We understand that you are eager to hear about your child’s daily events from the perspective of their educators. We strongly believe in quality over quantity when it comes to documentation. Our teams are often engaged in co-learning with the children in their classrooms so if you feel like you’re not seeing as many posts, please always feel free to connect with the educators directly by sending them a message on Lillio.

Program Statement

Dutton Co-Operative Child Care Centre Inc. provides a positive learning environment fostering children’s well-being, learning and development through experiences that are initiated by the child and supported by reflective and responsive educators. Children will explore environments through play that will encourage:

- Curiosity, creative initiative, and independence
- Self-esteem and well-being
- Positive interaction and problem-solving
- Active play and self-regulation
- Cognitive and fine motor development

Children are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious and rich with potential.

Through this view, programs are developed to meet the child's needs, interests, and sense of belonging. Environments and activities support active play, rest and quiet time and are geared to each individual's needs and interests. Children choose the activities and areas that they want to participate in during their indoor play and 2 hour outdoor play time. (Before and/or after school programs will have at least 30 minutes of outdoor time each day weather permitting.) Educators support children to self-regulate by encouraging self-help skills, providing positive interaction, resources, and activities such as turn taking, social interaction and problem solving. These interactions help children develop the skills to manage their emotions, control bodily functions and maintain focus and attention.

Educators are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience.

Through education, experience and reflective practices, Educators create engaging environments and programs that foster every child's learning and development. Weekly programming is influenced by the child's interests that have been documented and observed by the educators. Each child has their own documentation portfolio that is shared with other children, families, and educators inspiring each child with a sense of accomplishment and belonging. A daily report is sent home with each family to share the child's experiences. Educators communicate daily with families about developmental accomplishments and interests. Classroom news and events are provided monthly to each family.

Educators use a warm, responsive, and inclusive approach, building positive relationships with children, families, other educators, and community partners. Educators participate as co-learners with families and children, learning with children about children, and from children by listening, playing, and talking with them. Educators provide a safe environment through supervision and inspections, therefore reducing hazards that may cause injuries. All educators, administrators and the Board of Directors seek and engage in continuous professional learning opportunities. It is our goal to provide quality child care programs to the families in the community.

Families are composed of individuals who are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience.

The Dutton Child Care Centre recognizes that families are the experts on their children, and they are the first teachers. New families are welcomed by providing information about the centre and the programs through an individual parent tour. The parent tour provides an opportunity for engagement with the educator and other children and delivers a warm sense of belonging to the new family and child. Educators communicate with families to share individual characteristics, knowledge, and support. They incorporate this information to reflect a cultural and diverse program that is unique to our community.

Dutton Child Care Centre promotes the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children through nutritious meals and snacks that meet the CCEYA and follow Canada's Food Guide. Meals and snacks are planned and prepared by a Certified Food Handler and reviewed by a Registered Dietician every

three years. Children have access to drinking water throughout the day. Educators eat with the children during meal times and encourage tasting, self-service and group discussion.

Planned menus are posted in prominent locations with any substitutions noted on the posted menu. Menus are also posted on the child care centre's website. All food allergies and food restrictions are posted in the kitchen, staff room, each classroom and emergency binders. For health and safety reasons, no outside food is permitted beyond the administration area of the centre unless specific dietary needs are requested. Educators will familiarize themselves with all information concerning the children and their conditions.

Dutton Co-Operative Child Care Centre strives to ensure that your children have a safe and positive experience that promotes their innermost potential. The Director and/or Program Supervisor will observe adult-child interactions to ensure they align with our program statement and the behaviour management policy of the centre.

Dutton Co-Operative Child Care Centre takes pride in networking with community partners and collaborating on community barriers and community awareness. We provide in-kind space to partners so they can deliver their services to a broader area and increase access for families. Dutton Child Care provides workshop opportunities for families and the community and enjoys hosting an Open House that gives community partners an opportunity to promote their organization and the activities they offer.

The Dutton Co-Operative Child Care Centre Inc. will implement the program statement goals on a daily basis through programming and the physical operations of the centre. Monitoring of the program statement will be conducted daily by management, through parent communication, surveys and through monthly classroom monitoring. Community involvement will be conducted and evaluated through collaboration with community partners and participation in community events.

Inclusive Care

Dutton Co-Operative Child Care provides inclusive care for children 0-12 years of age. If special assistance, enhanced program support, or Individual Support Plans are needed, the Program Supervisor will consult with the parents and/or guardians to determine how our organization can best support your child(ren) and family and create meaningful experiences.

Locations

Program	Location	Contact
Dutton Child Care Centre Infants, Toddler, Preschool	3 Lions Rd. Dutton, ON NOL 1J0	Phone: 519-762-2399 Email: mindy@duttonchildcare.ca
DDPS Before & After School PD Day, Winter, March Break, and Summer Camps offered at this location	239 Miller Rd. Dutton, ON NOL 1J0	Phone: 519-870-3904 (call or text) Email: ddps@duttonchildcare.ca
Aldborough Before & After School PD Day, Winter, March Break, and Summer Camps offered at this location	11443 Furnival Rd. Rodney, ON NOL 2C0	Phone: 519-870-3944 (call or text) Email: aps@duttonchildcare.ca
Aldborough Child Care Centre Infants, Toddler, Preschool	11443 Furnival Rd. Rodney, ON NOL 2C0	Phone: 519-914-2399 Email: jessica@duttonchildcare.ca
St. Mary's Before & After School PD Day, Winter, March Break, and Summer Camps offered at this location	128 William St. West Lorne, ON NOL 2P0	Phone: 519-281-4831 (call or text) Email: smces@duttonchildcare.ca
St. Mary's Child Care Centre Family Age Grouping	128 William St. West Lorne, ON NOL 2P0	Phone: 519-916-2399 Email: lori@duttonchildcare.ca

Hours of Operation

Child Care Centres and School Age Programs are open twelve months per year, Monday through Friday, with hours of operation as follows:

Program	Hours of Operation
Dutton Child Care Centre <i>(Infant, Toddler, & Preschool Programs)</i>	7:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Dunwich-Dutton Before & After School	7:00 AM – 9:00 AM & 3:30 PM – 6:00 PM
Aldborough Child Care Centre <i>(Infant, Toddler, & Preschool Programs)</i>	7:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Aldborough Before & After School	7:00 AM – 9:00 AM & 3:30 PM – 6:00 PM
St. Mary's Child Care Centre <i>(Family Age Grouping)</i>	7:00 AM – 6:00 PM
St. Mary's Before & After School	7:00 AM – 8:45 AM & 3:15 PM – 6:00 PM
Day Camps @ All Locations <i>(PD Day, Winter, March, and Summer Break)</i>	7:00 AM – 6:00 PM

All programs will be closed for the following statutory and non-statutory holidays:

New Year's Day	Victoria Day	Thanksgiving Day
Family Day	Canada Day	Christmas Day
Good Friday	Civic Holiday	Christmas Eve
Easter Monday	Labour Day	Boxing Day

Your account will be billed for the daily rate for all statutory and non-statutory holidays.

Scheduled Closures:

- All programs will be closed for the week between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day. Families **WILL** be billed for the Christmas and Boxing Day Statutory Holidays and will **NOT** be billed for non-holiday days during this closure.
- School Age programs **DO NOT** run on the first PD Day of the school year or the last PD Day of the school year.
- Summer School Age programs **DO NOT** run in the last week of August.

Other closures:

As part of the ongoing federal funding through the Canada-Ontario Early Childhood Workforce Agreement, our organization participates in full-day professional development events. These opportunities support our Registered Early Childhood Educators and early years and child care staff in ongoing professional development in order to enhance their expertise on how children develop and learn. During these events, our centres will be closed for the day and they often align with the TVDSB & LDCSB PD Day schedule. As much notice as possible will be given for these closures. It is our hope that sufficient notice will support you to access alternate care and that you will see the value in this amazing opportunity that is being offered to those who support the growth and development of your child(ren).

Program & Number of Educators Required

Program	Age	Ratio
Infants	0-18 Months	1:3
Toddlers	18 Months – 2.5 Years	1:5
Preschool	2.5 Years – 4 Years	1:8
Kindergarten	JK/SK	1:13
School Age	6 – 12 Years	1:15

Admission Policy

Due to the overwhelming need for child care, our waitlists are a minimum of 18 months long. This is why it is our priority to accommodate families who require full-time, Monday to Friday care. In **very rare** circumstances, families who require part-time care may be matched up with other part-time families to equal one full-time spot. In the event that one of the part-time families withdraws, the persons holding the other part-time spot will be given the choice of assuming a full-time space or giving up their position. If a full-time position is not an option for your family, the child will remain in the part-time position for two weeks in order for your family to make other arrangements.

Registration packages must be completed and submitted to the Program Supervisor at least **one week prior** to your child(ren)'s start date.

Discharge Policy

If you are Formally Withdrawing your child(ren) from any of our programs we require 10 business days' written notice submitted to the Program Supervisor. Account balances will be adjusted upon receipt of the withdrawal notification. Formal Withdrawal notifications received with less than 10 business days' notice will be charged for the 10 business days' period.

Waitlist Policy

The Municipality of St. Thomas-Elgin has implemented an online waitlist for Elgin County requiring all families inquiring about child care to register on this list by going to www.onehsn.com/stThomas; families who do not have access to technology will receive assistance. Information on the waitlist is kept confidential and only accessed by authorized Dutton Co-operative Child Care Centre employees.

It is the responsibility of the parent to remain active on the waitlist by logging in at least every 6 months. After 6 months the application is deactivated by the system and will not show up in our records.

We prioritize offering spaces to siblings of children currently enrolled in our programs and to children of our staff, based on availability. When spaces are limited, **full-time care will be given priority over part-time care.**

Parents will be contacted when they have reached the top of the list and a space is available. Parents will have a minimum of 48 hours to accept or decline the space. Should they not accept the space at that time, they may request that their name remain on the list, but the **parents will be responsible to update their required start date.** A subsequent refusal will result in their name losing priority. Every reasonable effort will be made to contact the parent to offer the space including both email and phone. No response will indicate that the space has been declined. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure their waitlist information is up to date and accurate.

Parents can email waitlist@duttonchildcare.ca at any time to see where their child/ren are on the waiting list. Please understand that it is extremely difficult to accurately predict how long a child will sit on the waiting list. This is dependent on many factors that can slow down or speed up the enrolment process.

School Age non-instructional days (PD Days, Winter Break, March Break, and Summer Camp) are first offered to current families. Any remaining spaces will be offered to the public on a first come first served basis. **Full-time care will take priority over part-time care when spaces are limited.**

Fee Structure

We are pleased to inform you that our centre has enrolled in the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC) which will be used to build and leverage the success of Ontario’s existing early learning and child care system by increasing quality, accessibility, affordability and inclusivity.

Our fees are as follows:

Base Fees for Children 6 Years and Under						
Program	Full-Time Daily Fee			Part-Time Daily Fee		
Dutton Child Care Centre						
Infant	\$20.31			\$22.00		
Toddler	\$19.75			\$21.02		
Preschool	\$16.72			\$18.08		
St. Mary’s Child Care Centre						
Family Age Grouping	\$21.82			\$21.82		
Aldbrough Child Care Centre						
Infant	\$22.00			\$22.00		
Toddler	\$21.82			\$21.82		
Preschool	\$20.37			\$20.37		
School Age Programs						
ALL SITES	Before	After	B & A	Before	After	B&A
Before & After School	\$8.92	\$11.18	\$12.00	\$9.30	\$11.60	\$12.00
Full Day Non-Instructional	\$14.41					
Non-refundable Base Fee Deposit*	\$50/week/child for all registrations					
Non-Base Fees						
Volunteer Fee (Centre Based Programs)	\$150.00/year billed in February					
Late Pick Up Fee	\$1.00/minute per child					

Service Charge for NSF	\$50.00
Interest Charges on accounts over 30 days past due	2% of total owing per month until balance is paid

Base Fees for Children <u>6 Years and Older</u>						
Program	Full-Time Daily Fee			Part-Time Daily Fee		
ALL SITES	Before	After	B & A	Before	After	B&A
Before & After School	\$10.54	\$13.23	\$19.99	\$11.00	\$13.71	\$23.16
Full Day Non-Instructional	\$36.05					
Non-refundable Base Fee Deposit*	\$50/week/child for all registrations					
Non-Base Fees						
Late Pick Up Fee	\$1.00/minute per child					
Service Charge for NSF	\$50					
Interest Charges on accounts over 30 days past due	2% of total owing per month until balance is paid					

*Please see [Fee Payment Policy](#) for further clarification.

Subsidy from the City of St. Thomas-Elgin is available to parents who qualify in addition to CWELCC funding. Contact 519-631-9350 press option #3 to schedule an appointment with the subsidy office.

[Fee Payment Policy](#)

Centre Based and Before and After School Programs:

Payment for child care fees for centre based (Infant, Toddler, Preschool, and Family Age Grouping) and Before and After School Programs are due on the 1st and the 15th of each month. Payments can be made in full on either date or 50% on the 1st and the remaining 50% on the 15th.

Enrolment is conditional on full and timely payment of all fees. Accounts 30 days past due will have child care terminated and will be reinstated after past due balances are paid in full. 2% interest charges are applied to accounts 30 days over. A \$50.00 service charge will be applied to all NSF payments.

E-Transfers are the preferable method of payment and should be sent to:

finance.admin@duttonchildcare.ca

VISA, Mastercard, American Express or Debit card is accepted at our physical terminal at the Dutton Child Care Centre located at 3 Lions Rd. in Dutton. **We do not accept cash or cheque payments.**

Full Day School Age Programs:

PD Day, Winter, March Break, and Summer Day Camp Programs must have fees paid prior to attendance or your child(ren) will not be permitted to attend.

Summer Camp Programs fees can be paid at any time leading up to your scheduled camp dates. **The full balance for July is due by the 1st of July and the full balance for August is due by the 1st of August.** Your child(ren) will not be permitted to attend until all fees are paid.

If families require payment arrangements outside of our current terms and conditions, please email finance.admin@duttonchildcare.ca to discuss further options.

Non-refundable Base Fee Deposit

For school age March Break and Summer Camp registrations, a non-refundable base fee deposit (calculated per child, per week) is required at registration to hold your space. This deposit is applied directly to your program fees and will be deducted from your overall balance. If a space is cancelled at any point before or during the program, or if the child does not attend, the deposit is forfeited and will not be refunded or credited.

Deposit Amount:

- A deposit equal to the first \$50 of program fees, per week, per child, is required at the time of enrollment.
- For part-time or short-duration program registrations where the total fee is less than \$50, the full program fee is required as the deposit.

Application of Deposit:

- The deposit will be applied to the program fee invoice(s) after the child begins the program period.
- The deposit is non-refundable if the family cancels the space prior to the program start date, during the program, or if the child does not attend.

Refund/Credit Policy

Operating costs are based on the number of children enrolled in our programs and these expenses exist whether children attend their scheduled days or not. Our fees are based on holding a guaranteed child care space. This means that even when a child is away, we continue to staff the room and maintain the space for them, so it is available when they return. This ensures consistent care and allows us to maintain appropriate educator-to-child ratios every day.

Refund/credits are not applicable and will not be processed for any:

- unscheduled program closures, including inclement weather closures.
- absences from care related to missed days, sick days and/or vacation.
- formal withdrawal notification from the program made with less than **10 business days’ notice**.
- cancellation of March Break or Summer Camp spaces. The deposit will be forfeited and is non-refundable and non-transferable.

Refunds/credits will only be provided where:

- a formal withdrawal from the program is submitted in writing with at least 10 business days’ notice, and fees were paid in advance, less the non-refundable base fee deposit for March Break and Summer Camp programs.

Late Pick-Up

We understand that life can be busy and unexpected delays can happen. To ensure the safety of children and respect staff schedules, we follow a Late Pick-Up Policy that outlines expectations and next steps when families arrive after closing time. In an emergency, please advise the centre as soon as possible if you will be late picking up your child(ren). If a child is not picked up by 6:00 PM, every effort will be made to contact the parents, guardians, and emergency contacts. If there is no contact made by 7:00 PM, Family and Children’s Services Elgin will be contacted. Families will be billed \$1.00 per minute per child after 6:00 PM. This fee will be billed directly to your account. For repeated offenses, care may be discontinued.

Our program closes at 6:00 PM. Children must be picked up before this time so staff can safely complete end-of-day responsibilities.

Our Late Pick-Up Strike System

Strike 1 – First Time Late	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will remind you of our Late Pick-Up Policy at pick-up.• You will receive a reminder email regarding our Late Pick-Up Policy.• No fee is charged.
Strike 2 – Second Time Late	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will speak with you to follow up.• You will receive a formal warning email.• A late fee will be applied according to our fee schedule.
Strike 3 – Third Time Late	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A meeting with the Program Supervisor may be required before your child can return to care.• We will work together to create a plan to prevent future late pick-ups.• Late fees apply.

Strike 4 and Beyond	If late pick-ups continue, families may receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A written notice of temporary suspension from the program.• Possible termination of child care services.• Late fees apply.
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We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe, predictable, and positive end-of-day experience for all children and staff. Please reach out anytime with questions or if you need support with planning pick-up routines.

Volunteer Fee

We are a not-for-profit organization, and we offer some of the lowest child care fees in Southwestern Ontario. The volunteer fee helps ensure we have enough support to make our community events possible.

Each year in February, families with children in Infant, Toddler, or Preschool programs will be charged \$150.00 for our volunteer fee. This fee is reimbursable if you:

- Volunteer for a minimum of 2 hours for our events throughout the year (e.g. Halloween Fun Night, Supporting Fundraising Efforts, Santa Claus Parade, Breakfast with Santa, etc.)

If you choose not to volunteer, your fee is used towards classroom program supplies and equipment, or to reimburse another volunteer in your place.

Children's Belongings

Please send your child in weather appropriate play clothing and provide a few changes of clothes in your child's cubby. In the summer months parents are asked to supply a hat and sunscreen. In the winter months your child will require boots, hats, mittens, a warm coat, and snowpants. It is the parent's responsibility to provide diapers/pullups, wipes, and diaper creams.

When so many children are sharing cubby areas, it is so easy for things to go missing. This is why it is imperative that you **please label your child(ren)'s items.** We have a fundraiser with Mabel's Labels to help with labeling your child(ren)'s belongings! Go to <https://mabelslabels.ca/en-CA/fundraising/support> and search for **Dutton Co-Operative Child Care Centre Inc.**

Weather Guidance

Sun Safety

Children in our care shall be protected from the sun with a hat and their skin should be covered with clothes or a broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen.

Each child must be provided with a sun hat, broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, and a refillable water bottle. In the case where a child is not equipped with these items, a supply will be maintained at the program for these events.

For the health and safety of all children and staff, **aerosol (spray) sunscreens are not permitted at the centre.** Spray sunscreens can pose respiratory risks, especially for children with asthma or other breathing sensitivities, as the particles may be inhaled during application. Additionally, the residue from aerosol sprays can make floors slippery, increasing the risk of falls and causing damage to the wax finish on tiled surfaces.

Heat Advisories & Warnings

Southwestern Public Health declares heat warnings when prolonged exposure to outdoor conditions could prove dangerous to public health. Heat warning is when forecast temperatures are expected to be at least 31°C and overnight temperatures are at or above 20°C for two days or the Humidex is

The graphic features a light grey background with colorful starburst icons in pink, blue, and yellow. The main text reads "We're Fundraising with Mabel's Labels!" in a teal font. Below this, it says "Personalized waterproof name labels for your kids' stuff!". A three-step process is shown with numbered icons: 1. A magnifying glass icon with the text "Visit campaigns.mabelslabels.com and search for our organization". 2. A shopping cart icon with the text "Purchase your labels". 3. A delivery truck icon with the text "Labels ship right to your door!". At the bottom, a dark grey banner contains the slogan "You get labels, we raise funds." and the "mabel's labels FUNDRAISING" logo.

forecasted to be at least 40°C for two days. If program changes take place due to these events, efforts will be made to inform families where possible.

Heat Advisory
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• During any heat event the Program Supervisor will inform staff and give direction.• Time spent outdoors is limited or suspended if necessary.• If going outdoors, modified programming shall take place and children will be encouraged to stay in shaded areas with low energy activities offered.• Where possible keep children in an air-conditioned place.• Children are checked frequently and monitor those in wheelchairs more closely.• Children are kept well hydrated by giving plenty of water.
Heat Warning
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow Heat Advisory Guidelines AND• Cancelling outdoor activity and keeping children indoors will be considered.• Where possible, children will stay in air-conditioned spaces.

Winter Safety

Children in our care shall be protected from frigid temperatures with dressing in appropriate layers.

Your child(ren) must be provided with warm coats, snow pants, insulated boots, hats, and mittens. We recommend providing multiple hats and mittens as they often get wet. Wet clothing chills the body rapidly. If a child becomes wet while outside during freezing temperatures, their clothing will be changed as soon as possible.

In the case where a child is not equipped with these items, a supply will be maintained at the program and parents will be reminded to send adequate clothing for their children.

Cold Weather Advisories and Warnings

Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) issues extreme cold warnings when Environment Canada forecasts the temperature, with or without windchill, to reach -30°C for at least two hours. During any advisory or warning staff are given direction by their leadership teams. Children are not permitted to play outdoors in weather that is -26 °C or colder. If program changes take place due to these events, efforts will be made to inform families where possible.

Illness

For the health, safety and well-being of children and staff, the following guidelines are used to determine if a child should stay home or needs to be sent home due to illness. Reasonable precautions are taken to safeguard children against illness, and we follow the recommendations from Public Health. At this time, the following guidelines are in place:

Communicable Diseases:

The child infected must be isolated from the other children immediately and shall not attend the centre until the exclusion period has passed, or until cleared by a medical doctor.

Diarrhea:

If a child has one episode during program, parents will be notified. After the second episode during program the child must be taken home. The child can only return when they've been 24 hours since their last bout of diarrhea, or until a physician determines the diarrhea is not infectious. If the Centre or School Age Program is in active outbreak, the exclusion period is increased to 48 hours since their last bout of diarrhea.

Fever:

If a child has a fever that is 38.0 C or higher the child **should remain at home** or will be sent home. The child can only return when they've been fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication.

Rashes:

If a child displays an unidentified rash, the child shall be isolated from the other children where possible. The Program Supervisor shall be notified and at their discretion, the parents will be contacted to pick up the child. The rash must be diagnosed by a physician or be completely clear if not diagnosed prior to the child returning to the classroom.

Vomiting:

If your child has one episode of vomiting but otherwise feels well (no fever, diarrhea, pain), you will be notified, and the child will be monitored for signs of illness for the remainder of the day. If no more vomiting occurs and your child does not appear to be ill, they can remain in the program. If more vomiting occurs during the same day, you will be contacted and asked to take your child home as soon as possible. Your child must remain home until vomiting no longer occurs for 24 hours. During an outbreak, exclusion period increases to 48 hours after one episode of vomiting.

Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis):

If a child exhibits symptoms of Pink Eye, the Program Supervisor is notified, the parents are contacted to pick up the child and the child should be diagnosed by a physician.

- Bacterial pink eye: Exclude until 24 hours after the start of treatment.
- Viral pink eye: Return to school with the approval of a healthcare provider.

Head Lice:

If nits (head lice eggs) are found on your child, we will notify you. If live lice are present, treatment is required. Children do not need to be sent home but we ask that treatment has been completed before they return the following day.

Other Common Childhood Infections/Illnesses:

If there is a confirmed diagnosis of a common childhood infections/illnesses where exclusion is not required unless a child is too unwell to participate (for example, Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease), the Program Supervisor or designate will notify families in the affected program within a reasonable timeframe. This communication is only sent for **diagnosed infections/illnesses**, not for undiagnosed, isolated symptoms like a fever or runny nose.

For more information on Common Childhood Infections please visit:

<https://www.swpublichealth.ca/media/zrrbo4hy/guide-to-common-childhood-infections.pdf>

Immunizations

The Medical Officer of Health requires every child attending a licensed child care facility to have up-to-date immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and haemophiles influenza Type B (HIB). Children identified as not having been immunized must have a written objection in their records from either their parent/guardian on grounds that the immunization conflicts with the sincerely held convictions or conscience; or a legally qualified medical practitioner who has provided medical reasons in writing as to why the child should not be immunized.

As per the CCEYA, immunization records must be kept for all children who are attending licensed child care. Where a parent/guardian of the child objects to the immunization on the grounds that the immunization conflicts with the sincerely held convictions of the parent/guardian's religion or conscience or a legally qualified medical practitioner gives medical reasons to the licensee as to why the child should not be immunized, the objections and medical reasons shall be submitted in a form approved by the Minister (Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief or Statement of Medical Exemption).

Sick & Absent Days

If your child is sick or will be absent from their program, we ask that families connect with their child(ren)'s educator as soon as they become aware of the impending absence. If we do not hear from families regarding these absences, educators will follow the Safe Arrivals Policy outlined below. The daily fees for the day are still required. If there are repeated violations of our Safe Arrivals Policy, dismissal from our program may take place.

Safe Arrivals Policy

Purpose

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

Policy

General

- Dutton Co-operative Child Care Centre Inc. will ensure that any child receiving child care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written or verbal authorization the child care centre may release the child to.
- Dutton Co-operative Child Care Centre Inc. will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.
- On a case-by-case basis, a parent/guardian may request that a child who is 12 years old be released from child care without supervision. Parents/Guardians must provide written and signed authorization and instructions for the release of the child including the time of dismissal. Dutton Co-operative Child Care Centre Inc. reserves the right to decline such requests.
- Where a parent/guardian provides written instructions for the release of their child from care without supervision, the parent/guardian is aware that the child care is no longer responsible for that child upon their dismissal.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

1. Upon drop off at both child care centres and school age programs, parents/guardians/authorized individuals must make contact with the classroom educators to ensure the presence of the child(ren) is apparent. This is to ensure all children are adequately supervised. Failure to adhere to this expectation may result in dismissal from our programs.
2. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
 - greet the parent/guardian and child.
 - Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the emergency contacts or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up verbally, or in writing (e.g., note or email).
 - document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
 - sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up):

1. Child Care Centres

1.1 Staff shall inform all classroom educators and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian around 10:00 AM, or later dependent on the child's regular schedule through the Lillio App. If no response is received 2 hours after the initial contact, the child will be assumed absent and will be documented on the attendance record. A follow up message through Lillio or email will be left reminding of our Safe Arrivals Policy.

1.2 Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any relevant information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

2. School Age Programs

Before School

2.1 Staff shall inform the Team Leader when possible. Since the child would have had to arrive with an adult and they never entered our care, the Team Leader will message the parent/guardian, through text message or email, asking if the child will be present in the after school program, if applicable. If not applicable, the Team Leader will remind the parent/guardian of our Safe Arrivals policy.

After School

2.2 Staff shall inform the Team Leader immediately after taking attendance. The Team Leader should check in with the school office immediately to confirm if the child was in attendance at school that day. If the child was in attendance at school, a phone call

should be made immediately to the parent/guardian using the program phone. Direct contact with an adult of the absent child is required in this circumstance in order to ensure the child is safe. If the child was not in attendance during the school day, the Team Leader will reach out to the parent/guardian reminding them of our Safe Arrivals policy.

- 2.3 In some circumstances it may be appropriate to ask the child's school teacher if any messages were passed to them from the child's parent/guardian. Regardless of this information, the Team Leader will still contact the child's parent/guardian to remind them of our Safe Arrivals policy.
- 2.4 In some cases, school age children have extra curricular activities within the school during their before and/or after school program time (e.g. Helping teachers, Bible Club, sport practices, etc.) We require parents/guardians to sign an Authorization to Participate in Extracurriculars that specifically outlines the duration of the activity with specific dates and times and expected arrival to the before and/or after school program. This authorization clearly states that the child will be in the care of school staff/organizers until they arrive at their expected arrival time. It is the responsibility of the parent to communicate any changes to their authorization form to the educators to ensure the safe arrival of their child to our programs. Failure to follow the guidelines of the Authorization to Participate in Extracurriculars may result in removal from our programs. If a child does not arrive at their expected arrival time, staff will proceed to follow the steps in section 2.2
- 2.5 Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any relevant information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Full Day Programs (PD Days & Summer Camp)

- 2.6 Staff shall inform all classroom educators and must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian around 10:00 AM, or later dependent on the child's regular schedule through a means deemed appropriate. If no response is received 2 hours after the initial contact, the child will be assumed absent and will be documented on the attendance record. A follow up message through a means deemed appropriate will be left reminding of our Safe Arrivals Policy.
- 2.7 Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any relevant information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up at child care centres or school age programs shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or authorized individual. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),

- confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
- where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.
- school age children MUST be supervised by a parent or guardian upon pick up. Under no circumstance will school age children walk themselves to a parking lot where their parent/guardian are waiting in a vehicle.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected by an authorized individual (before centre and school age programs close)

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up by an authorized individual from care and the child has not been picked up [within 30 minutes, the program staff] shall contact the parent/guardian through phone or the Lillio App and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
 - Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, and where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
 - Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall wait until program closes and then refer to procedures under "where a child has not been picked up and program is closed".

Where a child has not been picked up and the centre and school age program is closed

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by [6:00 PM], staff shall ensure that the child is given an activity while they await their pick-up. If no contact has been made by 6:10 PM staff will offer the child a snack.
2. Staff will proceed with calling the parent/guardian at 6:00 PM to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall [contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian].
3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall contact emergency contacts on the child's file.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 7:00 PM the staff shall proceed with contacting Family and Children's Services St. Thomas-Elgin at (519) 631-1492. Staff shall follow the FACS's direction with respect to next steps.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision

On a case by case basis, DCCCCI may approve parent/guardian authorization for a child who is 12 years old to be released from care without supervision. Where a parent/guardian has provided written authorization for their child to be released from care without supervision, one staff in the program must be responsible for dismissing the child from care. Prior to dismissing the child from care, the staff shall review the written instructions for release provided by the parent/guardian and release the child at the time set out in the instructions. The staff shall document the time of departure from care and as well as their initials on the attendance record.

Additional Procedures

Where a child has not attended their program for 3 consecutive days without communication with the parent/guardian and/or authorized individuals:

1. After three consecutive days where a child has not attended care as regularly scheduled and without receiving any communication from the parent/guardian staff will call the parent/guardian. If no response occurs, staff will then call all other authorized individuals and emergency contacts for the child. If no response occurs from any of the above-named individuals after the 3rd consecutive day, staff will call Family and Children's Services St. Thomas-Elgin to express concern for the family's welfare.

Changes to Family Information

It is very important that our child care centre and school age program staff are able to contact you or your designated individual in an emergency. If any of the information you provided us for you or your designated individuals has changed, please notify us immediately. These could be changes in your home address, employment address, and phone numbers. If for any reason you will not be at your regular place of employment, we ask that you ensure that we are able to contact you should the need arise.

Custody

We understand that separation and divorce is a very difficult time in a family's life. In the unfortunate event of a difficult custody situation where a court order is in place, please ensure you contact the Program Supervisor to arrange guidelines regarding the release of your child. We must have a copy of any court documents regarding the restriction of release of the children in our care.

Medication

If your child requires medication while at the centre, you will be asked to complete a Drug Administration Form giving consent for us to administer the specified medication to your child.

If your child requires an “**over the counter**” medication (e.g. Tylenol, Benadryl, etc.), the centre will require written authorization from your family physician or nurse practitioner in the form of a doctor’s note complete with dosage.

Medication must not be left in a child’s cubby. All medications (including inhalers) must be handed to a staff member and stored in a locked container unless otherwise directed on the child’s emergency plan (e.g. storing EpiPen on the staff, or in a fanny pack on the child).

Only medication with a **current date, not expired, prescribed by a doctor, in the original container, with dosage** will be administered to your child.

Responsive Behaviour Guidance Policy

Our organization recognizes that a deep understanding of early childhood development provides a body of knowledge that can help us to recognize and articulate children’s observed behaviours and discuss their emerging skills with families and others. This is why each child in our care is supported individually and no behavioural situation is approached the same way. We strive to create indoor and outdoor spaces that invite the children in our care to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems, and make meaning from their experiences. This approach encourages their growing autonomy and independence which helps alleviate challenging behaviours.

When supporting children in behaviour guidance we use the following strategies:

Redirection	Guiding a child away from an emotionally charged situation and refocusing their attention to an activity of interest.
Logical and Natural Consequences	Endeavour to make children aware of the results of their actions in a manner that makes sense for the event.
Boundaries	The educator can set limits for certain situations in collaboration with the child according to each situation.
Demonstration	Educators are constantly modelling the appropriate ways of interacting, supporting children in expressing their feelings and recognizing their peers’ feelings.
Options	Educators provide opportunities for the children to problem solve for themselves and make decisions that support a solution to the behaviour exhibited.

Anticipation	Educators are especially good at anticipating potential triggers and are always aware of situations and environments that could trigger behavioural responses.
Ignoring	Some inappropriate behaviour may be ignored with more emphasis given to appropriate behaviour.
Positive Reinforcement	Educators will always encourage the children in their program and make a strong effort to outwardly acknowledge the appropriate behaviours they witness.

We believe through open communication, and collaboration with educators and families, there is usually a way to navigate difficult behaviours. In addition to our guidance practices, we have a strong relationship with All Kids Belong (AKB) – Merrymount. Resource Consultants from AKB provide case management for families using an integrated service model. They enhance and support skills development, overall program capacity and strengthen the relationship between the family and the program, while promoting inclusivity, communication, and family-centred practice. They provide referrals to other community supports and share community information. They deliver training, facilitate transitions, support developmental screening, and support the overall integrated system of services. Educators in collaboration with the Program Supervisor may suggest this as an option to explore for further support in the classrooms.

In very rare circumstances and as a last resort, if the child is an extreme danger to the safety and well-being of themselves, their peers, or their educators, they may be removed from the environment and given an alternative space or activity to keep all involved safe.

If your child shows **intentional aggressive behaviour**, you may be called to pick them up. All strategies and resources will be used before this step is taken, and a phone call will only be made where the safety and well-being of all involved is in jeopardy. When you receive this phone call, parents are expected to pick up their child (or arrange pick up from authorized individuals) **as soon as possible**. If reasonable attempts to pick up a child being sent home are not made, re-entry to our programs may be prohibited. In the case where a parent cannot be reached within 30 minutes, an emergency contact will be called. Children who are sent home are welcome to return the next day at the discretion of the School Age Team Leader and/or Program Supervisor. If ongoing concerns are present, we expect families to have a backup plan if their child requires being sent home. If families are unable or unwilling to respond to a required pick-up, we may need to pause the child’s participation in the program until a plan can be established. A meeting will be arranged between you, the educators involved and the Program Supervisor and/or Executive Director if there are ongoing concerns.

In **extreme situations**, children who display chronic aggressive behaviour, upsetting the emotional or physical well-being of children and staff, may be dismissed indefinitely from our programs.

We **do not** support the following prohibited practices:

- corporal punishment of the child, such as, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, hitting, pinching;
- physical restraint of the child, such as, but not limited to, 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;
- locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding; or
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Snacks and Lunches

We believe that creating enjoyable mealtimes and snacks in our programs will help children learn healthy eating habits and develop positive attitudes toward food. All educators participate and share the same meal as the children while they show enthusiasm for healthy foods, provide the children with self-serve opportunities, and encourage conversations to support social development.

The Child Care Centres provide morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack that all are nutritious and adhere to Canada's Food Guide.

Parents are asked to supply infants requiring formula or other specialized food outside of our menus.

Our School Age Programs provide morning and afternoon snack that are nutritious and adhere to Canada's Food Guide. For full day School Age Programs (PD Days & Day Camp), a nut free bagged lunch from home is required. We recommend using "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide" as a guide for planning lunches. Their lunch bag should be insulated with an ice pack to keep food at a safe temperature (hot foods should be stored in an insulated thermos). Please label your child's lunch bag. We will have back up procedures if a bagged lunch is forgotten.

Our menus are posted by the Kitchen areas of the child care centres, are posted on our website and Lillio (previously HiMama) App.

Anaphylactic Allergies

Dutton Child Care Centre has implemented a policy to:

- minimize the risk of an anaphylactic reaction to children while in care with us
- ensure that all staff, volunteers and students have adequate knowledge of causative agents, immediate responses are taken by all and appropriate treatment is initiated immediately including competently administering an EpiPen if necessary
- raise the awareness of anaphylaxis and how to manage this through education and policy implementation

If your child has an anaphylactic allergy, you will be asked to prepare in conjunction with the child care centre an “Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan.” This form will contain information about the child’s causative allergy, his/her symptoms, what emergency precautions will be taken if a reaction occurs and a list of Emergency contacts.

All staff, students and volunteers will review this plan prior to employment or placements.

Outdoor Play

Children thrive in programs where they can engage in vigorous physical play in natural outdoor spaces and playgrounds that present manageable levels of challenge. While these environments need to be safe, it is also important that children are provided with opportunities for a reasonable degree of risk taking.

Program adaptations and physical accommodations can be made to allow every child to participate and be challenged in meaningful ways. In addition to providing physical benefits, active play outdoors strengthens functioning in cognitive areas such as perception, attention, creative problem solving, and complex thinking.

Through active play and physical exploration, children gain increasing levels of independence, learn to persevere, and practice self-control, and develop a sense of physical, emotional, and intellectual mastery and competence. Our programs include the required amount of daily outdoor time, weather permitting, as designated by the Child Care and Early Years Act.

We ask that you send your child(ren) in clothing that you don’t mind getting a little messy.

Sleep Time

Ontario Regulation 137/15 states that: Every licensee shall ensure that the program in the child care centre it operates is arranged so that,

- (a) each child in a licensed toddler or preschool group who receives child care for six hours or more in a day has a rest period each day not exceeding two hours in length; and

- (b) a child in a licensed toddler, preschool or kindergarten group is permitted to sleep, rest, or engage in quiet activities based on the child's needs.
- (c) all infant children rest, sleep and engage in quiet activities as needed based on their own individual schedules.

While not all children need a mid-day nap, young children benefit from periods of quiet relaxation to balance their active play. Some children who are tired may take a relatively long time to relax and sleep, while others only require a short rest period. Children's needs may also change from day to day or week to week.

Important Note: Instructions given from parents regarding their children's sleep and rest period will be taken into consideration. These instructions will be followed as closely as possible, but educators also need to take into consideration the need of the individual child. For example, if a parent has provided instructions for the child to not sleep during the day but the child is falling asleep during program time, the educator should provide a rest period for this child. The educator can explain to the parents that the child required a nap that day because the child was unable to stay awake.

Children under 12 months old are placed for sleep in a manner consistent with the recommendations set out in Health Canada's document entitled "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Death in Canada." If other sleep instructions are provided, in writing, by your child's physician, you will be advised of the obligation that Dutton Child Care Centre has to place children to sleep on their backs.

If your child is between 12 – 18 months of age, they will be assigned to an individual crib or cot in accordance with any written instructions provided by you.

A child-sized blanket from home, labeled with your child's name, is required. Children may also bring a soft comfort item from home for rest time.

Transitions

When your child is ready to make the transition from their room to the next one, you will be informed by the staff and introduced to the educators in the next classroom. Your child's educators will connect with their new educators and pass along any relevant information to create a positive transition. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask a staff member.

Emergency Closures

School Based Programs:

Where the school boards have made the decision to close due to inclement weather, strikes, or other circumstances beyond control, our School Age and Child Care Centres are unable to run. If the school is closed, our school based programs are closed.

Dutton Child Care Centre (3 Lions Rd., Dutton):

The decision to close our programs will be made by the Executive Director in collaboration with the Program Supervisors.

Guidelines that will help inform the decision to close programs are as follows:

- Travel on the road has been deemed unsafe
- Schools have been closed
- School strikes
- Other circumstances beyond our control

Any program closures will be reported as soon as possible on our Dutton Co-operative Child Care Centre Inc. Facebook page, on our website: www.duttonchildcare.ca, through email communication where possible, and as a last resort a notice will be posted on our door.

If a decision to close our programs early is made, parents will be responsible to make arrangements to have any children picked up from their program within 2 hours of notification.

Power Outages

In the case where there is a power outage before child care programs commence, the program will remain closed until power has been restored. If power has not been restored by 9:30 AM, child care programs will remain closed for the day.

School Age Programs will run if the school remains open. If the school is closed, our programs will also close. This information will be communicated to you through the Program Cell Phone or Email.

In the case where power goes out during the child care day, child care centres will continue for 2 hours before a decision is made to close the program. After more than 2 hours of no power, program closures will take place.

Emergency Management and Evacuations

DCCCCI has Emergency Management Policies and Procedures for all programs. In the event that an evacuation happens, parents will be notified by phone that this has happened and will receive

information about where to pick up your child. These are the following locations we would be relocating to:

- Dutton Child Care Centre will evacuate to **Bobier Villa** if there is an emergency.
- Dutton-Dunwich Public School Programs will evacuate to **Dutton Community Centre** if there is an emergency.
- Aldborough Child Care Centre & School Age Programs will evacuate to the **Rodney Community Centre**.
- St. Mary's Child Care Centre & School Age Programs will evacuate to the **West Lorne Community Complex**

Serious Occurrence Notification

In the event that a serious occurrence was to take place in one of the programs of the Dutton Child Care, a notification form will be posted for parents to view. The notification will provide a brief overview of the serious occurrence that occurred and will remain up for 10 business days. This form will not include the names of those involved and will provide extremely vague information on the event to protect the identity of those involved. Should you have any questions regarding a serious occurrence, please direct them to the Executive Director.

Examples of a serious occurrence might include:

- The death of a child who received child care at a child care centre, whether it occurs on or off the premises;
- Abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at the child care centre;
- A life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a child care centre;
- Any incident where a child who is receiving child care at the child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised;
- Any unplanned disruption of the normal operations in the child care centre or adjacent school that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving care at the child care centre.

Students/Volunteers

All employees of Dutton Child Care must maintain Ministry approved ratios at times when children are in their care. Volunteers and students on placement with us must not have unsupervised access to the children. No child is to be supervised by anyone under the age of eighteen. All employees must obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check before commencing employment working with children; if one has not been received, special considerations are in place until it is received. A clear Vulnerable Sector Check must be maintained while employed. All eligible volunteers and students must have a current Vulnerable

Sector Check before commencing duties with our organization. Vulnerable Sector Checks must not be older than 6 months, prior to the first day of employment or placement.

Field Trips & Off-Site Activities

From time to time, field trips will be planned for the children. There will always be a minimum of two adults on a field trip, and parent volunteers are strongly encouraged. Parents are requested to sign a permission form at least 1 week prior to the trip date. Additional costs may apply.

Off-site activities are generally walks in the neighbourhood (e.g. to the bog in Dutton, a visit to the library, visit to the splash pad). These off-site activities will usually be spontaneous unless prior arrangements were made. A permission form is signed in the registration package. The Educators will make every attempt to wait until all of the children are in program before leaving the centre.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use at DCCCCI

At DCCCCI, we see our programs as spaces for creativity, inquiry, and meaningful reflection. Grounded in children's natural curiosity and educators' professional insight, we view the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) as both an opportunity to enhance learning and a prompt for critical reflection. As we thoughtfully explore how AI can support our programs, we also remain attentive to its risks and limitations, ensuring our choices align with our organizational values and commitment to child well-being.

What Parents Should Know:

Educators remain the primary decision-makers in all child-related matters. AI is used only as a tool to support, not replace, their professional insight.

We never input identifiable child information (names, images, etc.) into AI tools, and only use platforms with clear privacy policies.

AI may assist with:

- Drafting program documentation
- Generating activity ideas
- Translating communication for multilingual families
- Reducing administrative workload

AI will never be used to:

- Diagnose, assess, or make decisions about your child
- Replace human connection or educator judgment
- Use facial recognition or collect sensitive data

We are committed to transparency and will let families know when AI has supported a piece of communication or documentation. Educators are trained to use AI ethically and are encouraged to reflect on whether its use aligns with our values and your child's needs.

Your Voice Matters

We welcome parent input on our approach to AI. A full copy of our policy is available upon request, and we invite families to be part of ongoing conversations about technology use in our programs.

Parent Issues and Concerns

Purpose

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

You are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what your 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 the Executive Director, Program Supervisor or designate 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 5 business days. 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).

We recognize that personal connections between staff and families may exist outside of our programs. However, our staff are expected to uphold strict professional boundaries and maintain confidentiality in their roles. Families should refrain from contacting staff after hours, through personal means (such as social media), or discussing centre-related concerns with individuals who are not in a position to support or resolve them. We kindly ask for your support in respecting these expectations and avoiding situations that could place staff in uncomfortable or compromising positions.

Failure to adhere to our confidentiality expectations may result in the removal from our programs.

If you have any concerns, please direct them to the appropriate individuals who are equipped to respond outlined clearly below. This collaborative effort will ensure we respect the confidentiality of all involved.

Conduct

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

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Program Supervisor and/or the Executive Director.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child:

Everyone, **including yourself**, 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 Family & Children's Services of St. Thomas & Elgin, 410 Sunset Dr. St. Thomas, 519-631-1492.

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

For more information, visit: <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidd/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in Responding to all Natures of Issue/Concern:
<p>Program Room-Related Eg: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the classroom staff directly <p>If you are unhappy with the result of the conversation, then raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Supervisor <p>If you are unhappy with the result of the conversation, then raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director 	<p>Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised where possible</p> <p>or</p> <p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>and</p> <p>arrange a follow up with the parent/guardian within 5 business days.</p>
<p>General, Centre-, or Operations-Related Eg: child care fees, menus, hours of operation, wait lists, staffing, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Supervisor, • and escalate to the Executive Director where appropriate. 	<p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p> <p>Where Issues/Concerns involve a prohibited practice, document the Issues/Concerns in detail.</p>
<p>Staff, Parent, Supervisor-, and/or Executive Director-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the individual directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Supervisor, • and escalate to the Executive Director where appropriate. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the date and time the issue/concern was received; • the name of the person who received the issue/concern; • the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; • the details of the issue/concern; and • any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral. <p>Ensure the investigation of the</p>

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 <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Supervisor and/or Executive Director where appropriate. <p>Note: All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 5 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Follow Serious Occurrence Policy where appropriate.</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 in writing to the Chair of the Board of Directors. Please request from the Executive Director the link to this form.

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern from the Board of Directors they may escalate the issue or concern in writing to the Program Advisor through the childcare_ontario@ontario.ca or call 1-877-510-5333.

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

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

Contacts:

Executive Director: 519-762-2399 ext. 101

Program Supervisor: 519-762-2399 (Dutton) 519-914-2399 (Rodney) 519-916-2399 (West Lorne)
Elgin St. Thomas Public Health: 519-631-9900

Family & Children’s Services of St. Thomas & Elgin: 519-631-1492

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

Accessible Customer Service Policy

Dutton Co-operative Child Care Centre Inc. is committed to meeting its obligations under Ontario's Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), by providing accessible environments and services that respect the rights of every individual. The purpose of the Accessible Customer Service Policy is to ensure that all children, families, staff, and visitors, are treated with dignity and to ensure that DCCCCI consistently creates a safe, inclusive environment, where each individual is able to fully participate. To review the full policy please contact the Executive Director at courtney@duttonchildcare.ca to request a copy. Accessible formats will be available upon request.

Use of Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own personal assistive devices while accessing our programs or services in any premise owned, leased, or operated by DCCCCI. Possible barriers to the use of assistive devices will be removed where they can be.

Use of Service Animals

Service animals are permitted to accompany any person with a disability while accessing our programs or services in any premise owned, leased, or operated by DCCCCI, except where animals are excluded by law.

Where an animal is excluded by law from the premises or may affect the health and safety of other customers, other measures will be explored in order to provide service to the person with a disability.

Where it is not readily apparent that an animal is a service animal, DCCCCI may request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability.

Support Person

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by their support person will be permitted to access our programs or services with his or her support person. In some cases, a Vulnerable Sector Check may be required. There are no applicable fees to be considered for support persons.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of our programs, a notice will be posted as soon as possible which will provide information about the reason for the disruption, the anticipated length of the disruption and alternate access to the building or facilities within the building. If the entire building is affected, an alternate location with access information will be indicated.

The notice indicating disruption will be posted at the entrance of DCCCCI or at the immediate location of the disruption and a phone call to those who require it will be made.

Please see Emergency Closures in our Parent Handbook for more information.

Feedback

Feedback mechanisms provide us with opportunities to learn and improve. Clients and visitors to DCCCCI who wish to provide feedback on the way that we provide support and services to people with disabilities can speak to any of the supervisory staff in person, by phone or by email. Contact information is available in the Parent Handbook.

Please read through the Parent Issues and Concerns policy that is available by request or in the Parent Handbook for complaints about accessibility at DCCCCI.

Available Resources

All DCCCCI policies, practices and procedures related to the AODA are available to the public upon request. Where a request is made for a document by a person with a disability, DCCCCI shall provide the information contained in the document in a format that takes into account the person's disability. In addition, the following are sources for information about Accessibility Standards in Ontario:

- To view the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, visit <https://www.aoda.ca/>
- To review our Accessibility Compliance Report please visit our website at www.duttonchildcare.ca
- To review our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan please visit our website at www.duttonchildcare.ca

Summary

The Parent Handbook is reviewed many times throughout the year and changes are made at the discretion of the Executive Director with guidance from the Board of Directors in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Ministry of Education, Public Health, or other relevant bodies and their regulations. Families will be notified of any changes within a reasonable amount of time through email communication and will have access to the parent handbook at our programs or through our website.

Glossary

Active Play – Physical movement that supports children’s physical development, coordination, and overall well-being, both indoors and outdoors.

Anaphylaxis – A severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that requires immediate medical attention, often treated with an EpiPen.

Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan – A written plan for a child at risk of a severe allergic reaction due to anaphylaxis.

Authorized Pick-Up / Individual Authorized to Pick-Up – An individual approved by a parent/guardian to pick up a child from the program, listed on the child’s authorized or emergency list, or advised in writing or verbally to child care staff.

Base Fee (under CWELCC) – The standard child care fee a family is required to pay per child, as set under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system.

CCEYA (Child Care and Early Years Act) – Ontario legislation that governs the licensing, operation, and oversight of child care and early years programs. The Act sets out requirements related to health and safety, staffing, programming, and the protection and well-being of children.

Centre-Based Programs – Programs offered at a child care centre that provide care for infants, toddlers, preschool-aged children, or in family age groupings.

Co-Learners – Educators, children, and families learning together through shared experiences and relationships.

CWELCC (Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care) – A federal and provincial funding agreement designed to improve affordability, accessibility, quality, and inclusivity in child care.

Daily Written Record – Records completed by educators to track attendance, learning experiences, significant events, or required observations.

Emergency Contacts – Individuals listed by a parent/guardian who may be contacted if parents cannot be reached in an emergency.

Family Age Grouping – A child care grouping approach where children of different ages are cared for together in the same classroom or program.

Family-Centred Practice – An approach that recognizes families as experts on their children and values collaboration between families and educators.

Formally Withdraw – Written notice given to the Program Supervisor at least 10 business days before leaving a program. Shorter notice may still incur fees.

Full-Time Care – Child care provided for the full five days per week, or five straight before-school, after-school, or before-and-after-school sessions.

Inclusive Care – Practices that ensure all children can fully participate in programs regardless of ability, culture, language, or background.

Individual Support Plan (ISP) – A written plan developed for a child who requires additional support to fully participate in a child care program.

Instructional Days – Days when school is in session and children attend regular classes with their teachers.

Intentional Aggressive Behaviour (School-Age Program) – Actions by a child that are deliberate and meant to cause harm or distress to others. This may include hitting, kicking, biting, pushing, or using threatening language or gestures.

Licensee – The individual or corporation named on the licence issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the child care centre and home child agency.

Lillio App – A mobile application used by families and child care programs to manage communication, attendance, and program updates. Currently, only centre-based programs use this app.

Non-Base Fee – Any additional fee charged by the child care program that is not part of the CWELCC base fee. This may include extra costs for materials, field trips, special activities, or optional services.

Non-Instructional Days – Days when school is not holding regular classes, such as PA days or breaks (Winter, March Break, Summer Break).

Non-Refundable Base Fee Deposit – A deposit required at registration to hold a child's space in school-age programs, such as March Break or Summer Camp. This deposit is applied to the program fees but is non-refundable if the space is cancelled or the child does not attend.

Part-Time Care – Child care provided for fewer than five full days per week, or for fewer than five straight before-school, after-school, or before-and-after-school sessions.

Parent/Guardian – A person having lawful custody of a child.

Pedagogical Documentation – A reflective process educators use to observe, record, interpret, and make children’s learning visible to children and families.

Program Statement – A Ministry-required document outlining how the centre supports children’s learning, development, health, and well-being.

Prohibited Practice – Any action or behaviour by staff that is not allowed under Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA). This may include practices that are harmful, unsafe, or disrespectful to children.

Ratios – The required number of educators per number of children, as regulated under provincial legislation.

Safe Arrivals – Policies and procedures that ensure children arrive safely to care and are released only to authorized individuals.

School-Age Programs – Programs for children attending kindergarten through Grade 6.

School Based Programs – Programs that operate within a school building and may include centre-based programs for younger children as well as school-age programs for children in kindergarten through Grade 6.

Serious Occurrence – An incident that must be reported to the Ministry, such as injury, illness, or situations that pose a risk to children’s safety.

Self-Regulation – A child’s ability to manage emotions, attention, behaviour, and responses to their environment.

Transition – The process of a child moving between rooms, programs, or routines, supported gradually to promote comfort and belonging.

Waitlist – A centralized system used to manage requests for child care spaces when programs are full.

