

Eagles Nest and Yellowhead Community Services honour the people of the Simpcw First Nation and their ancestors. We thank them for allowing us to visit on their territory.

Eagles Nest Handbook



October 2018

Weyt – welcome to Eagles Nest

Eagles Nest has opened to provide a child care program that honours and celebrates the Indigenous People of our community who live and work on the traditional and unceded territories of the Simpcw First Nations. We want all children, families, staff and visitors at Eagles Nest to know that the Seven Sacred Teachings form the cultural foundation of our program.



Creation has gifted us with our beautiful children. We recognise that family is first and we are honoured to be part of your life. We hope that you will share your own knowledge and traditions with us so that we may continually learn and help our children have a diverse understanding of Indigenous ways of being.

We want our children to move from Eagles Nest feeling proud of their heritage, confident in their identity, strong in their sense of belonging and standing tall amongst their friends, ready to continue their journey of knowledge in school, the community and life.

If you have a question, please ask us. You can always speak with Georgina or one of our carers.

Kukstsemc,

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Thanks go to Cindy Wilgosh and Sheila Nyman for their support, wisdom and guidance in the writing of this handbook.

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Mission

Eagles Nest embraces the Seven Sacred Teachings: humility, honesty, bravery, respect, love, truth, and wisdom. Staff, Elders, Volunteers and Visitors and the Parent Council strive to make this a reality for our children.

Vision

At Eagles Nest we provide an environment where children take pride in their cultural identity. We honour all First Nations, Inuit and Metis children and families. Our holistic approach focuses on maintaining balance; physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.



Eagles Nest Commitment to Children

In Eagles Nest we take responsibility of caring for our children very seriously. We make sure our children

- Are safe
- Are connected
- Practise their cultural identity
- Are treated equally and with respect
- Have enough food to eat each day
- Are included and learn at their own pace

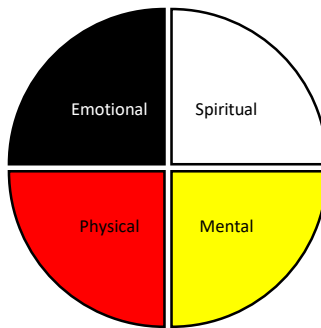
About Eagles Nest

Eagles Nest is a multi-age child care program licensed through BC Interior Health. We look after children aged birth to five years. 'Multi-age' means we can care for children aged 0-5 years in one room rather than splitting them into groups according to their age. Sibling and family groups can remain together and children of all ages benefit from the opportunity to learn from and share with children both older and younger than themselves.

At Eagles Nest we know that all children and families are made differently and we see the strengths and good things in each person. No child or family will be turned away because of challenges they may face.

Eagles Nest is a setting where we view the life and education of children in a holistic way. In order to bring meaningful content to our program we honor and respect cultural traditions and values and encourage the participation of family and Elders.

Curriculum



The medicine wheel forms the basis of our curriculum, influenced by the seasons. Much attention is given to spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual development. Relationship to the earth is our starting point and a great deal of our time is spent outside connecting to the land and our ancestors. Here are some daily cultural activities that our children take part in;

- smudging and other ceremonies
- language teaching/vocabulary
- storytelling
- crafts
- regalia
- drumming
- traditional songs
- cooking
- giving thanks
- fishing
- hunting
- trapping
- food gathering and preparing



In our Nest we want children to feel safe, happy and valued so they may play, explore and watch others so they grow and reach their full potential. Our program provides children with time, space, opportunity, attention and encouragement to develop their curiosity and skills. Our job is to support their learning, model positive behaviour, promote self-esteem and keep our little ones safe while providing an environment that is truly immersed in Indigenous culture.

When our children are tired they may rest and each child has their own sleep nest or crib, depending on their age, in our bedroom. When our children are hungry, they will eat. The younger a child, the more we are guided by their natural body rhythms. As the children grow and routines take on a social aspect the children develop their identity in our small family and we work towards a balance of group unity and self. It is important to know we never, ever deny a child rest or food.

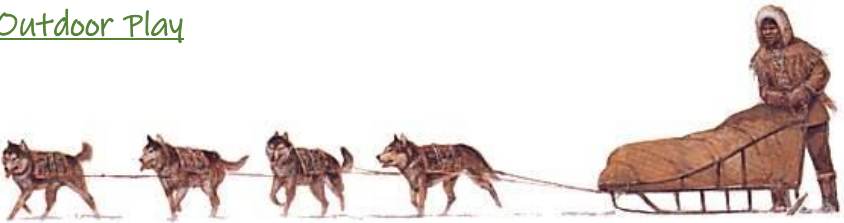
We use the BC Early Learning framework as part of our planning as this document recognises that early learning is the foundation for

lifelong learning. This fits well with our philosophy that learning begins in the womb and continues through all of life.

Language

In honour of the ancestors that walked this land before us we acknowledge the first language to be recognised at Eagles Nest is Secwepemctsin. We hope that we will be able to bring life to the language in our program with patience and guidance from community Elders who will share their knowledge of the language with us. We will also learn the traditional language of children attending our program, starting with frequently used words like, 'Please,' 'Thank you,' 'Hello' and "Goodbye". Again we look to our Elders and a language mentor to support our growth in this area.

Outdoor Play



At Eagles Nest, we believe that time spent outside is vitally important for children's health and development. Through being outside children gain strength physically, emotionally, spiritually and mentally. We know that when these four aspects of wellness are nurtured together our children will grow strong and feel well. The land and our health are closely intertwined and we spend as many hours outside as possible each day. Seasonally appropriate field trips will be planned whenever possible that reflect the values and culture of Indigenous Peoples. Our children will participate in food gathering, fishing and hunting activities and will spend at least one hour outside in the morning and in the afternoon. Weather depending this time will be increased to incorporate as much time outside as possible.

Field Trips

Our curriculum involves many field trips so we can truly immerse ourselves in our culture and explore in our Indigenous heritage. We go berry picking, mushroom picking, fishing, tanning, visit cultural centers and schools and take part in as many learning activities as possible. Field trips provide our children with the chance to begin weaving their place in the extended community, to be comfortable and proud of their identity and be an advocate for Indigenous Population.



All field trips will be planned in advance and you are welcome to review the field trip risk assessment. If you are satisfied with health and safety measures you are expected to sign a permission slip allowing your child to take part in these events. We

welcome families to participate in our field trips.

If there is an extra activity beyond our daily activities there may be a small fee attached.

Getting Settled at Eagles Nest

We want Eagles Nest to be a 'home away from home' for your child. To ease the initial steps of their journey and help prepare your child to separate from you we encourage you to spend time getting to know us. The more involved you are the happier your child is likely to be. Time spent in the Nest together will certainly help prepare you both for the emotional bumps of being apart.

During orientation to Eagles Nest you will meet staff, other children, Elders and volunteers and people who visit with us. Please ask any questions you think of. Together we will complete the registration forms and talk about how your child will start their time with us.

Some children do better with a gradual transition, attending for short periods, building up to a full day. Others are ready to jump right in! We work with families to find the best approach for everyone.

Saying goodbye to your child creates honesty and trust, even if it is hard. Remember, tears are often to be expected, especially in children aged about 10-15 months. We have learned that it is far better for a child to know that their person is leaving and to have the opportunity to say goodbye rather than a carer quietly slipping away while a child is distracted. Sneaking out creates anxiety and results in children clinging to their person, always afraid of being left.

Our staff will be there for your child throughout the day and comfort them when they miss you. You are welcome to phone and check on your child if you have any worries. If we can't answer your call you can leave a message and we will phone you back as soon as possible and please rest assured that we will never hesitate contact you if your child needs you. Crying at any age is a form of communication and we never dismiss a child's feelings. We want our children to be happy and feel safe in their program; staff are very responsive to children's emotions.

Families come in all different shapes and sizes. Please let us know what your family looks like as we talk about you lots with your child. We must also know if you have any court orders or legal documents around the care of your child and a copy should be attached to your child's file.

At orientation you will be given a registration package containing;

- this program handbook
- Georgina's business card
- emergency evacuation and procedures
- wallet sized emergency card
- operational dates for the year

- registration form
- parent and caregiver agreement form
- child care subsidy forms

Before your child begins attending you must provide Georgina with;

- ✓ completed parent and caregiver agreement
- ✓ completed registration form
- ✓ completed Child Care Subsidy forms (if applicable)

Part of our program culture is to embrace respectful sharing. Your child is welcome to bring a home toy to Eagles Nest but the expectation will be that if your child is playing with it, all children will be able to take turns. If this is difficult for your child or an item is too precious, please give it to our staff so they can supervise the sharing and support your child.

Please do not bring any electronic toys.

Program Policies and Procedures

Our handbook shares basic information with you about Eagles Nest. You can find a binder with our full policies and procedures in the cubby room. Please find time to look through them and if you would like to take one home just remove it from the plastic page protector. Please speak with staff if you have any questions.

Journey book

Being part of your family is very important to us and one way we get to know you and share information between Eagles Nest and your home is to create a journey book for your child. We will begin this book during your orientation sessions and continually add to it while you are part of our program. Please feel free to look at your child's book whenever you are here and add information to it as we grow together. Every child's book will be a representation of their time with us and so each book will be unique. We hope that you will add photos, crafts and stories that are meaningful to you and your child.

When your child leaves the Nest the book is a gift for you and your child, so you can reflect on your time with us and remember our deep connection, shared responsibilities and united joy.

Who Will You Meet at Eagles Nest?

Our staff all have some level of Early Childhood Education and identify as Indigenous, bringing their own traditions and culture to our table. Most importantly though, our staff love children and feel a deep connection and commitment to our young generation.

All staff have a clear criminal record check, their Community Care First Aid certification and take part in annual professional development in order to keep their certification current. Many staff also hold their Food Safe level 1 ticket.

YCS is committed to staff growth and supports training.

Elders and Knowledge Keepers play a very important role in our program and are the heart of our cultural experience. We are thankful for their time and teachings and look to them for guidance on program development ensuring that stories, songs, teachings and wisdom are kept alive for many generations.

Family are very important to us and without them our program would be lacking the very foundation we strive to build. Family is welcome to spend as much time with us as possible. Some of the ways that you can be involved are:

- share your culture
- attend field trips
- attend birthday celebrations
- attend special events
- share your talents and skills
- join the program council

Visitors and Volunteers are always welcome. We ask that you check in with staff to make sure that our children will not be overwhelmed by

too many people in our program. Some children find it unsettling when too many people come and go in their space.

You may see other faces such as the physio therapist, occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist and supported child development consultant visiting with us too. All of these people are part of the support we provide through community partnerships to children with extra needs. All visitors will be asked to sign in and out as they arrive and leave so that parents can see who is visiting with us.

The Program Council meets together once every two months to discuss the child care curriculum and cultural content of the program, update policies and procedures and ensure that parents and carers are working together for the benefit of children attending Eagles Nest. All are welcome to participate in the Program Council.

Eating Together

We are very thankful to Mother Earth for providing all that we need to nourish our bodies. Food harvesting and preparation is a community responsibility and children in our program are encouraged to think of others and make healthy choices for themselves. Children will be involved with all aspects of food security from planting and harvesting to preparing food and eating and giving thanks as a group.

Eagles Nest will provide all meals for children in the program at no extra cost to families and menus will be prepared a month in advance for you to review. Please let us know if you will be bringing food for your child as an alternative choice. We are very grateful for any food donations that support traditional and healthy eating.

If your child is not hungry or refuses food offered to them we will encourage them to sit at the table and chat with us as a group. Infants and younger children will be fed according to their natural

biological rhythm. Children who can feed themselves are encouraged to.

Fresh water is available to the children all day. At meal times pitchers of fresh water and cups are placed on the tables so children may help themselves. Staff sit and eat with the children during all meals. **Please note that we are NOT nut free.

Birthdays and Celebrations

We love to celebrate our children's birthdays. We want them to feel special on their day and would like to invite you to join us and bring a special memory of your child to share with the group. If you can't be here with us a staff member can share for you. This is in place of gift giving.

Guiding Children's Behaviour

Staff are considerate in their approach to guiding children's behaviour and never use discipline that is humiliating, isolating or physical in nature.

We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication. Therefore, if a child is running and climbing on the furniture in the play room we might say to a child, "I see you have a lot of energy. Let's go outside to play where you can run fast and climb!" A child who is pulling at the fridge door may well be showing us that he is hungry and so we will ask, "Are you hungry? Would you like to have an early snack? Let's eat some fruit." A child who is snatching a toy or pushing another child and struggling to share may not have the words to express her emotions and our staff will provide them for her.



Of course, labelling emotions and finding alternatives may not always be effective but we will always model calm and kind behaviours and provide children a safe space to express themselves.

In short, we

- ✓ Provide clear rules and expectations
- ✓ Model appropriate behaviour
- ✓ Encourage self-control, self-discipline and self confidence
- ✓ Provide choices
- ✓ Redirect
- ✓ Encourage respectful communication
- ✓ Provide reflection time when the child is ready

Our program supports the "Guiding Children's Behaviour" booklet that is provided in connection with our licensing body. There is a copy in our information corner if you would like to read one

If staff at any time feel that an individual child's behaviour is risking the safety and well-being of the individual child, the other children, and/or child care staff, the staff will phone the parent or emergency contact in order for the child to be collected. This decision will be at the discretion of staff and will only occur after attempts to manage the child's behaviours have been unsuccessful.

Keeping in Touch

Good communication between parents and program is very important to a successful experience for your child in our program. Here are some ways we keep in touch with you:

- Families are given a monthly newsletter
- 'My day' sheets for children under three share daily activities
- You may ask to meet with us
- We chat with you at drop off and pick up times
- You are always welcome to visit
- You are welcome to phone or email us

Where and When

Eagles Nest is open every weekday from 8.00am to 5.00pm. You can find us at 627 Park Drive in Clearwater, BC.

We are closed for all statutory holidays, National Indigenous Peoples Day and over Christmas and the New Year. We may close for two days each year for staff training.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Our program opens at 8.00am and closes at 5.00pm. You are welcome to bring and collect your child during any of these hours. Please let us know if you will not be attending as we may be able to share your space with another family.

Please sign your child in and out each day.

We ask that families are respectful of our opening and closing times. All our staff have their own families and need to be available to them after 5.00pm. Families who are late to collect their child from Eagles Nest will be asked to provide some reciprocal service to Eagles Nest to compensate for their time.

Children will only be released to their parents or people listed on the child's registration form.

Clothing

Children should come dressed in comfortable, season appropriate clothing that can get dirty since many of the activities we do on a daily basis are quite messy! Please send a spare change of clothes for your child and check your child's back pack every day for soiled or wet clothing.

We have a small supply of spare indoor/outdoor clothing that we are happy to loan to children who forget their own.

Health and Safety

Your child's health and safety are top priorities for us. Eagles Nest is licensed with BC Interior Health Authority. You can visit their web site at

http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/free_side/12_332_2007

or contact a Licensing Officer by telephone on 1-250-851-7340.

Our indoor and outdoor areas are all designed with safety in mind. Here are some of the ways we ensure your child is healthy and safe with us;

- We have regular inspections from the Licensing Authority and fire department
- Our staffing ratio is guided by licensing regulations and we usually exceed the required number of staff
- Children are provided with the opportunity to rest or nap if they choose
- We clean and maintain inside and outside areas daily
- All staff are first aid and CPR trained and know how to respond to emergencies
- Children practise emergency fire and evacuation procedures regularly
- All staff and volunteers have a clear criminal record check
- Relief staff are available so regular staff do not work when they are sick
- Individual care plans address children's extra needs
- We do not wear perfumes or use chemically scented products
- Children and staff all wash their hands after using the toilet, diapering and before eating
- Smoking cigarettes or e cigarettes is not allowed
- Children are supervised at ALL times
- We let you know by a phone or radio if we are closed unexpectedly:
CBC 104.1FM Barriere and CBC 860 AM Clearwater

Sickness

When children feel unwell we know the best place for them is their home, resting. Keeping children at home when they are unwell supports the speedy recovery of the sick child and also reduces the spread of any illness. Please keep your child at home if they are sick or have any of the following symptoms;

- Pain – any undiagnosed pain
- Difficulty in breathing – wheezing or persistent cough
- Fever (38.8C or higher). A child must be fever free without medications for 24 hours before returning to child care
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Infected skin or eyes or any undiagnosed rash
- Severe body or scalp itching
- Children with a known or suspected communicable disease
- Vomiting – a child may return after 24 hours of not vomiting provided they are eating well
- Diarrhea – child may return after 24 hours of no diarrhea provided they are eating normally
- Just not feeling well – low energy, tearful, unable to participate in the program

If your child is infected with a communicable disease like measles, mumps, strep throat, flu, head lice or impetigo you will need to follow instructions for treatment and/or isolation times before your child can return to the program. In some cases, a doctor's note may be required.

We will let you know if your child has been exposed to an illness by posting a note which will explain what symptoms to look for. A page from the Interior Health "Guide to Childhood Diseases" will be available for you to read. All family information will be kept confidential.

If your child becomes ill during their day with us, to the point where they are not able to take part in normal activities, we will provide them with a comfortable place to rest and we will contact you to collect them as soon as possible. If we cannot reach you, we will phone your child's emergency contacts.

Medication

If your child needs to take medicine during the day, it must be handed to a staff member every morning. We cannot give children over the counter medicine (including vitamin tablets), unless a Doctor has prescribed it and all medicine must be in its original container with the dose and your child's name clearly visible. Medicine will be stored in a locked box at the appropriate temperature. You must also fill in a medication form.

Children who need to take pain reducing medication before attending their program to relieve sore throats, teething pain or general aches, are not well enough to be present.

Children requiring medication for an allergy or illness such as asthma, may not attend unless they have their medication with them.

Accidents and Injuries

Children learn to manage their bodies and develop new skills through experimenting and exploring. Our staff are always watching and children are never left unattended, but every now and then as part of the learning process, a child may incur a small injury. We take our cue from the child and provide comfort, first aid, curious questions as to how the incident could have been more successful and acknowledgment of effort and outcome. We do not want our children to be afraid to make mistakes and stop trying, keep to themselves or hold back on learning. We know that it is through these childhood experiences, encompassed by supportive and caring adult arms that children will grow their physical, social, emotional and intellectual being.

We keep a record of any bumps, bruises and incidents that happen during the day and this is shared with you when you collect your child at pick up time. If an accident is more serious and your child needs medical attention you will be contacted immediately. We may also phone for a doctor or ambulance depending on the severity of the injury.

Our Fees

Our fees are based on the number of contracted days your child will attend each month. Fees are due before the month begins unless we work out a different payment schedule with you. Fees must be paid for children to be allowed to attend programs. Details of how you can pay fees are on the back of your invoice or you can find the policy in the policy binder in the information corner.

We issue monthly receipts that will be attached to each month's newsletter with the next month invoice. We do not issue yearend tax receipts, there is a \$40.00 administration fee to provide copies of any receipts.

We ask for two weeks' notice to withdraw a child from Eagles Nest. Families who remove their child before the end of the month will be refunded any fees they have prepaid and not used, outside the notice period.

Fees are due for all days that your child is scheduled to attend, even if you are away or your child is sick. There are no makeup days but you may trade days with other families attending as long as the manager is consulted – we must consider staffing to child ratios and the ages of children attending. Each family is responsible for paying their contracted fees, trading days is an agreement that takes place outside of Eagles Nest policies.

Children who do not attend regularly may forfeit their place if the program has a wait list.

Eagles Nest is taking part in the BC Provincial Government Fee Reduction Initiative. The initiative reduces the cost of child care fees for parents up to 20 days each month. When there are more than 20 operational days in the month parents pay the full cost of child care for the extra days (in brackets below).

Over 3 years' full day	\$39.25 per day (\$44.25)
Over 3 years half day	\$22.75 per session (\$25.25)
Under 3 years' full day	\$35.50 per day (\$53.00)
Under 3 years half day	\$21.75 per session (\$30.50)

Affordable Child Care subsidies are available on an income tested scale to families through the Ministry of Children and Family Development. We can provide forms and help with completion and faxing of forms. We encourage all families to consider applying.

Here is the link to the government web site:

<http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/subsidy/index.htm?WT.svl=LeftNav>

You may also phone the subsidy office at 1-888-338-6622

Sometimes parents need an extra day of child care outside of scheduled days. If you have spoken with a staff member and there is space available your child may attend. Drop in fees are an extra \$3.25 on top of regular part day fees and \$5.25 plus full day fees. Drop in days have to be paid for on the day of attendance and cannot be booked more than two weeks in advance.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Once you accept a space for your child in Eagles Nest we begin a file for your child which contains their registration form, emergency details, court agreements and support plans if there are any in place. You are welcome to check your child's file and we ask that you remember to keep all your information up to date. Please let us know if your cell number changes, you move home or add or remove persons able to collect your child. We must be able to get in contact with you.

We will not share any information about your child unless you request that we do.

All information is stored in a locked filing cabinet. When your child leaves the center the file is kept in a locked file room for two years and then shredded.

We ask that parents and visitors do not share any photos or videos of children, other than your own, on any social media sites, such as Facebook or Instagram.

Concerns or Compliments

Your opinion matters to us. Collaboration and acceptance are critical ingredients to our program. If you are worried about something in the program or have a concern, please tell us. If you have good news to share about your experience, we would love to hear that too. You can;



- speak with the staff at the centre
- speak with the Center Manager
- speak with the Early Childhood Programs Manager
- speak with the Executive Director
- fill in the form in this handbook and drop it off in the fee box or at a YCS office

The form is on the last page of this handbook. If you would like to speak with someone in confidence, please write your name on the form and hand it in to a YCS office. A manger will be in touch with you within two weeks.

Family Check List

To help your child have the best experience possible, please take a minute to go through this check list and make sure your child's back pack has all their belongings in it;

- A small, light blanket

- Inside shoes or slippers
- A full change of clothing including underwear and socks
- Diapers and wipes
- Water bottle
- Appropriate outdoor clothing

Children under three and years will also need

- Something to help them rest, like a teddy or soother.
- Any bottles and formula (formula must be pre made by you at home).

Concerns or Compliments Form

Your name:
How can we contact you?
Child care program name:
Concern or compliment (please provide as much information as possible – staff name, day, time, what happened):