

Yellowhead Community Services Society



Licensed Child Care Programs Handbook



August 2021

Dear Parents and Care Givers,

Welcome to Yellowhead Community Services Society Licensed Child Care Programs;

Building Blocks Daycare

Riverside Child Care

Little Stars Child Care

Wells Gray After School Program

Eagle's Nest



We welcome all families and children regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity, religion or culture. We understand that all children learn differently and have different abilities. No person will be turned away from our program because they may have extra needs.

We provide services to families living in the North Thompson Valley and acknowledge that these lands are the ancestral, traditional and unceded territories of the Secwepemc Nation. We pay respects to the First People of this territory, the Simpcwúl'ecw People, and extend that acknowledgement and respect to all First Nations of Canada.

We are proud to work in community partnership with Raft River Elementary School (School District 73) to serve Clearwater school age children.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information about our programs. If you have any questions or need more information, please speak with a member of your child care staff team or contact the Early Childhood Services Manager.

Yours truly,

Yellowhead Community Services Licensed Child Care Team

Contact: 250.674.2600

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC OPERATIONS AND POLICY ADDITION

Please take time to read our COVID-19 operations policy, provided to you along with this handbook. It has been developed to ensure the health and wellbeing of everyone in our child care centers, particularly during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Your program manager will review the COVID-19 operations policy with you before you send your child to be cared for by us and you will be required to sign a statement acknowledging you understand and will comply with this policy. As the pandemic situation changes the policy will be adapted. Parents will be provided with a paper or electronic copy any time changes are made.

The COVID-19 Operations Policy supersedes any earlier policies.

Mission

It is the mission of Yellowhead Community Services Society Licensed Child Care Programs to work respectfully with all children and families. We are dedicated to providing a safe, fun, affordable and nurturing childcare environment while honoring each child's individuality.

Child Rights and Our Responsibility

In Canada the law says that parents or anyone responsible for taking care of a child must make sure that the child:

- is safe;
- has enough food to eat each day;
- has clothing, shelter, and health care;
- isn't abandoned or neglected;
- is protected from physical abuse and emotional harm;

We take this law very seriously and always have your child's health and welfare in the front of our mind.

All About YCS Child Care Programs

We believe that children learn through playing and exploring, through being cared for and guided by adults, through trying and experimenting in the world around them. We know that each child is an individual and will learn at their own pace and this happens best when they feel safe and happy. Our programs are set up to provide children with an environment that is supportive, kind, interesting and welcoming. We know children develop at their own rate and we welcome children with different abilities, we believe that inclusion is an integral part of a rich learning environment.

To ensure we are meeting and following best practice our staff refer to the Early Learning Framework, provided by the government of British Columbia. We are licensed through BC Interior Health Authority and have strict regulations to monitor the care we provide for your children. YCS supports staff professional development and we are keen to learn from and partner with our families to increase our cultural awareness and diversity in our programs.

If you have any questions, please feel free to chat with staff. We welcome your involvement whole heartedly.

Where and When

Building Blocks Daycare is located at 612 Park Drive, Clearwater, and is open Monday through Friday, 8.00am – 5.00pm.

Riverside Child Care is located at 209 Dutch Lake Road, Clearwater.

Preschool is open Monday through Friday, 8.45-11.45am, term time only.

Tweens clubs run full days during school closures and may provide some after school care if needed.

Wells Gray After School Program is located in Raft River Elementary School at 801 Clearwater Village Road, Clearwater and is open every day after school and most early closure days during term time.

Little Stars Child Care is located at 4936 Barriere Town Road, Barriere

Little Stars Multi-age Care and is open Monday through Friday, 8.00am – 5.00pm.

Little Stars Preschool is open Monday – Friday, 8.45-11.45am, term time only. Preschool is sometimes followed by occasional child care (playschool) and is for families who need child care for slightly longer hours. Playschool closes at 3.00pm.

Eagle’s Nest is part of Riverside Child Care Center and is open Monday through Friday 8.00am-5.00pm. For more information, please see the program specific handbook.

We are closed for all statutory holidays and for the first two full weeks in August and over Christmas. We may close for two days each year for staff training.

Contact us

Building Blocks Daycare

Telephone: 250-674-2600, ext. 257 Big Bear Room and 260 Little Bear Room. Cell: 778-208-9104

Riverside Child Care

Cell: 778-208-7027

Wells Gray After School Program

Cell: 778-208-7365

Eagle’s Nest

Telephone: 250-674-3530, ext. 103. Cell: 778-208-9185

Little Stars Child Care

Telephone: 250-672-9773, ext. 226 Multi-age Program and 230 Preschool. Cell: 778-694-9852

You can also phone the main office in Clearwater and we can pass on a message to any of our programs for you. Telephone: 250-674-2600. We can also be reached by email at: info@yellowheadcs.ca

Our Staff

Our staff love working with young children and are dedicated to providing a safe and enriching care environment. All of our staff are Early Childhood Educators or Educator Assistants, some have their post basic Infant and Toddler and Special Needs certification. Supporting staff are all Responsible Adults.

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 and other certificates related to child care.

Starting Child Care

Leaving your child for the first time in a child care center can be an emotional experience for you and your child. We ask you to visit with us for an orientation session so we can answer your questions and you can learn about the program. During this visit we will help you complete a registration package and discuss how your child will start the program.

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 care or custody 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
- manager's business card
- emergency evacuation and procedures
- wallet sized emergency card
- operational dates for the year
- registration form
- parent and caregiver agreement form
- Affordable Child Care Benefit forms

Before a child begins attending the parent must provide the manager;

- ✓ completed parent and caregiver agreement
- ✓ completed registration form
- ✓ registration and administration fee
- ✓ completed Affordable Child Care Benefit forms (if applicable)

Supporting your child at drop off and collection

Drop off and collection from a child care program are very important times of the day for a child. A positive drop off sets up a good feeling for the rest of the day. Planning and preparation really help children cope through the transition of parting from you and entering daycare. These are our suggestions to reduce anxiety and help your child feel settled and ready for their day:

- Allow between five and fifteen minutes to drop your child off. The more established your routine and the more familiar your child is with the program, the less time your child will need.
- Please do not use your cell phone in the program—your child needs your full attention at this time.
- Encourage your child to walk into the program rather than be carried (age appropriately of course). Take time to help your child remove their coat and shoes and help your child put away their lunch box. Allowing your child to be in control of these entry activities is empowering.
- Greet other children, parents and staff; show your child that you are happy to be with us.
- Let staff know if there is anything that may impact your child's day such as having had a sleepless night, no breakfast, friends arriving later etc.
- Help your child to choose an activity, then engage with them while they settle with it.
- Prepare your child for your leaving, say to them, "Two more minutes and I am going to work/home". Remind your child when you will be back, or who will be there to collect them and also let them know what you are looking forward to when you see them again at the end of the day. These steps help your child mentally prepare for you to leave but also gives them a reconnection focus for the end of the day.
- ALWAYS say goodbye - never sneak away when your child is playing. This creates more anxiety and mistrust. If your child becomes upset, staff will be there to comfort and reassure them. When you have said goodbye

– leave! Prolonging the separation, going back for one more cuddle, one more kiss, one more ‘quick’ story may cause more distress as you are responding to your child’s anxiety.

- If you would like staff to let you know your child has settled please ask us.

Don’t forget too, that sometimes crying is age appropriate and reflects a secure attachment between a parent and child, especially around the ages of 10-15 months. 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.

We know that it can be very difficult to hand the care of your child to another person. Our staff are always available to support parents and children through this time. Helping us understand the cause of the distress is very important and we are thankful to parents who let us know of any at home situations that may be impacting their child’s emotional health. If you are aware of something in the program that is causing your child to worry and be upset, please let us know. You will never offend us and we will gladly make changes that support your child to have a positive experience with us.

Collection of your child is as important, and can be as challenging, as drop off, particularly from a full day childcare program. Children are often busy and engaged in an activity when you arrive. Some of the things that we do to prepare children for the transition home are;

- Remind children that soon you will be here (or whoever will be collecting them)
- Talk about what your child will do when he sees you
- Talk about what your child will do with you when you get home
- Talk about our day in the program
- Reduce the number of toys available to play with
- Talk about what we will do tomorrow/the next day they come to the program

Some of the things you can do to support your child through the transition from care to home are;

- When you arrive, get down and greet your child at their level, open your arms offering a hug. Allow your child to keep their feet on the floor so they feel in control of their environment and body
- Give your full attention to your child. Ask about their day, look at what they show you, listen to what they say. Let them know how important they are to you – do not be distracted by your cell phone or other children/parents or staff.
- Give your child clear directions and prepare them for the transition out of the program. Say, “Two more minutes and we are going home,” rather than, “Would you like to go home?” When the two minutes is up, be clear and say, “OK, time to go!”
- Allow enough time to let your child put on their coat and shoes, retrieve their lunch box so that leaving is not rushed or chaotic.
- If you wish to speak with staff to discuss your child’s day in more detail, arrive a little early as greeting your child is more important and should take place first. If you would like a more private meeting, please ask and we can arrange this.
- Encourage your child to be independent, they’re often proud to collect and carry their own belongings, but be prepared to step into the role of parent as children are often tired and simple tasks may be overwhelming at the end of a day.

In our preschools the transition home is more formally organised as everyone leaves at the same time. The goodbye routine is part of typical programming.

You are welcome to phone us as often as you like to see how your child has settled, and please, rest assured, if your child is upset for more than a few minutes, we will be in contact with you. Remember though, if we are busy with the children we may not be able to answer the phone but will call you back as soon as possible.

Please keep your child's home toys at home unless it is for an agreed 'show and tell'.

Family Involvement (suspended during COVID -19)

Although our programs do not require parent participation we encourage parents to be involved. The more involved you are the happier your child is likely to be, you will know more about what your child is doing and more about the staff and program. You will also get to meet other parents! We expect you to be involved by sharing information about your child with us. Here are some other ways we invite you to be involved;

- Visit with us
- Attend special celebrations and events
- Join us for a field trip
- Attend your child's birthday celebration

WAIT LIST POLICY

Sometimes our child care programs have places available immediately, sometimes families have to wait. It is a good idea to look for child care before you need it and have your name added to the wait list. Wait lists help us allocate places fairly as they open up. This is how we manage our wait lists and prioritise spaces;

1. Children who are ready to transition to the next age group program (e.g.; Little Bear to Big Bear)
2. Children already enrolled and waitlisted to increase their attendance to a permanent, full time place
3. Children registered and on the wait list, registration and administration fees paid
4. Siblings of children currently enrolled in a program with YCS
5. Children of staff
6. A child returning after no more than 12 months due to a significant family event
7. Children from the community and area to which the above groups do not apply

- ❖ If MCFD requests care for a child as part of a child protection plan this is a priority placement
- ❖ Full time enrollment takes priority over part time attendance.

The program manager ultimately manages the wait list in the best interest of the program.

Registration and administration fee

There is a non-refundable \$10.00 administration fee to be paid during orientation.

In order for your child to be placed on the wait, or allocated a space, please complete a registration package and provide a \$40.00 registration. The registration fee will be deducted from your first invoice. If you decline a place when it is offered, the \$40.00 registration fee is non-refundable.

Wait times

It is difficult for us to be 100% certain when a space will become available. We will give you our best guess based on current attendance and other families already on the wait list, we encourage you to contact the program and check in every now and then. If your child care needs change, please let us know. When a place becomes available you will be contacted by program staff. Please make sure your contact information is up to date. If we cannot reach you we will move down the wait list.

SCHEDULING POLICY

The number of child care spaces available in each of YCS's licensed child care program is limited according to the size of the facility, staff availability and age of the children.

When you send your child to one of our programs, you choose the days that will best suit your own schedule. We try hard to make those days available, but sometimes we can't, so we work together to find a solution that suits both you and the program.

Full time care

Full time care means that you have agreed to send your child to the program for as many days as we are open.

Part time care

Part time care means you will send your child for two or more sessions on the same day each week, for example, every Monday and Wednesday. We do not accept one day a week registrations.

Drop in care

Drop in care is for part time children who need an extra day of care here or there. Of course, if our programs are full we may not always be able to accommodate requests. There is an additional \$5.25 charge per session on top of the usual program fee. We do not book drop in places more than one month in advance. Please fill in a drop in request form and pass it to staff. If we are able to we will provide care on the days you need. To hold the drop in days you must pay in advance. Once booked the days may not be changed and fees are not refundable if the place is not used. Children must be registered with the program, and registration fee apply.

Making changes to scheduling

You must give us two weeks' notice to make any changes to scheduling for your child, either to increase or decrease attendance or to withdraw your child.

SAFE RELEASE OF CHILDREN POLICY

Your child's safety is our top priority and knowing who and how many children are present allows us to account for the children on a regular basis throughout the day.

Signing in and out

During COVID-19 staff will sign your child in and out of the center. Staff will ask you daily if you have completed a health check on your child. Children may only attend our centers if they are fit and healthy. All external doors are kept locked and parents are asked to not approach the door if a child is already being dropped off or collected; this supports safe social distancing. All children must be signed in and out so that if there is an emergency, we can quickly check the sign in sheet and account for every child. Time would not be wasted tracking down children who may not have arrived or have already left for the day.

Other people allowed to collect your child

For safety reasons we only let children go home with adults listed on their registration form. Please keep your child's file up to date, you can add or remove people at any time. If you are not able to collect your child and you ask a friend who is not on the registration form, you must phone the program to let staff know. If your person is not known to staff we will ask for photo ID. We will always contact you if we are unsure about any arrangement regarding collection of your child.

Please let us know if a sibling or friend who is younger than 18 years will collect your child.

We ask that families are respectful of our opening and closing times. Families who are late to collect their child

must pay \$1.00 per child for each minute that they are late to the staff who stayed behind to care for the children before their child attends their next session.

If you are late for collection we will try and contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will contact the people you have listed on your child's registration form and arrange for one of your friend's/family members to collect your child. If we cannot reach any contact person after one hour of closing, we will notify the Ministry of Children and Family Development and also the RCMP to ensure everyone's safety and follow their directions on providing care for your child.

Continued and repeat late collections may result in a verbal notice, written warning and finally termination of care.

Safety concerns

If we believe or suspect that the person collecting your child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs we will;

1. chat with the person regarding our concerns
2. offer to phone or contact an alternate person on your child's registration form
3. offer to arrange alternate transportation

If the person leaves with the child staff will;

4. call the R.C.M.P. to ask for assistance
5. share concerns with the Ministry of Children and Family Development

Absenteeism

Please phone the center if you will be bringing your child for a late drop off as extra staff may be released for the day two hours after opening if they are not needed in the staff to child ratio. We ask you to contact the child care center if your child will not be attending that day.

DIAPERING POLICY

Feeling comfortable is a priority and staff will make sure that children remain clean and dry to promote healthy skin and comfort. Diapers will be changed at least after morning snack, after lunch, after afternoon snack and at any other time as necessary. Staff try to make diapering a positive experience for your child by connecting in a warm and friendly way by incorporating play and language throughout the diaper change.

Children do NOT need to be out of diapers to attend any of our programs. We ask that children wear clothing over diapers unless they are potty training.

Parents, you must provide

- Enough diapers for your child every day, at least five
- Enough wipes to clean your child daily
- Two 'wet bags' if using cloth diapers
- Diaper cream if it's needed
- Spare clothing in case of leakage

Preparing children for a diaper change

Staff let children know that soon their diaper will be changed by saying, "Five more minutes and then time for a clean diaper," and/or showing your child a diaper. Staff never comment negatively or make fun of children due to smells or messes associated with soiled diapers.

Children are encouraged to move to the diaper changing area by themselves so they are more included and

less resistant to the process. We never leave your child alone on the change table and always keep a hand on your child. Staff wear vinyl gloves for diaper changing, this does not replace the need for thorough hand washing procedures.

Diapering Procedures:

1. Get organised and collect together;
 - a fresh diaper
 - a plastic bag for the soiled diaper and another for soiled clothing if needed
 - wipes or wash cloths
 - diaper cream if used
2. Remove the diaper. Fold it in on itself and place out of the child's reach in the plastic bag
3. Clean the child's diaper area with a baby wipe or single use cloth (depending on what individual families provide). Use soap only if it is needed to remove stool
4. Dry well, patting rather than rubbing. Use diaper cream only if there is redness or a rash. Remove cream from the container with a tissue or tongue depressor and apply with your finger.
5. Put a clean diaper on the child
6. Move the child to a safe place
7. Wash your hands well and wash the child's hands
8. Avoid handling the diaper whenever possible. Handling the diaper increases the risk of contamination. Don't rinse reusable diapers because this will spread germs to the toilet, floor and other surfaces.
9. Dispose of the dirty diaper. Seal disposables in a plastic bag before putting them in a secure, foot activated, plastic lined and covered garbage can. Place soiled and wet reusable diapers in a secure plastic bag without disturbing the contents and then place that inside the wet bag. Send them home for laundering at the end of each day.
10. Disinfect the diaper changing surface with a mild (1:100) bleach solution for a contact time of at least 2 minutes, then allow it to air dry
11. Wash your hands.

Bathroom requirements

- storage space for each child's diapers and spare clothing
- plastic bags to wrap soiled diapers and clothing
- metal, foot operated bin for storage of soiled wrapped diapers
- metal, foot operated bin for storage of soiled wrapped clothing
- hand sink within reach of the change area

TOILET READINESS POLICY

We are very happy to work with you to support your child through potty training. We ask that you always let us know when you begin training, especially when you first send your child in underwear. There is a short form for you to fill out which give us lots of information about how you have been approaching the experience so we can continue to use the same strategies (please note that we cannot use food/candy as a reward).

Please also send three changes of clothing and a large water proof bag to store soiled clothing in. You must check your child's back pack daily for wet or soiled items.

During potty training it is natural that children will, on occasion, not get to the toilet on time. We are happy to change children and support them through this learning process. However, if a child has multiple accidents during the day we will put on a diaper/pull up for hygiene purposes and reassess their readiness with you.

Visitors, Volunteers and Students

During the COVID-19 pandemic we are limiting the number of visitors to our programs. All visits must be scheduled in advance with staff. Staff will complete a verbal health check with each visitor to determine they are healthy prior to entering the program. Visitors must wash their hands on entry and wear a clean lab coat over the top of their clothing to reduce the possibility of cross contamination from other sources. All visitors are required to sign in and out of the visitor's book.

ACTIVE PLAY AND SCREEN TIME POLICY



We try to spend as much time outside as possible because we know it is really important for children's health and development. When children are outside they get stronger physically, emotionally, spiritually and mentally. Our facilities have large secure outdoor play spaces that provide a balance between safety and meeting each child's developmental needs to run and explore.

Please note that requests to keep children inside during outdoor play time cannot be accommodated – your child must be well enough to participate in all activities at our program (see the Health and Wellness Policy).

Our children in a day-care type program will spend at least one hour outside throughout the course of their day with us and children in a school type program will spend at least 30 minutes per day outside.

Health and development

We recognise that being outside;

- Gives children an opportunity to connect to the outdoors.
- Facilitates children's ability to discover and explore the natural world, using their senses.
- Has a positive effect on a child's sense of wellbeing.
- Supports children to connect with their peers by sharing and playing and working cooperatively.
- Contributes to children's development in all areas.
- Gives children an opportunity to access space and freedom, play and explore in a safe environment.
- Enables children to gain control of their body movements and embrace their limits.
- Enables children to use materials and resources in a different way e.g. on a big scale.
- Provides safe opportunities for risk and challenge with appropriate resources.
- Provides opportunity for reflection and calm.

Weather

During summer we will remain inside during the hottest part of the day, usually 11.30am-3.00pm. In winter, when there is a severe wind chill or an extremely cold spell, staff will determine if it is appropriate to play outside.

We recognise that active play is very important at all times and if we are not able to go outside space will be made inside by moving furniture to the edge of the room, allowing children the opportunity to run and play freely.

Ways we support outdoor play;

- When possible the program door will be open to allow free choice of indoor/outdoor play.
- Families bring appropriate winter clothing so we can go outside during wet and snowy periods.
- Families bring hats and sunscreen in hot weather.
- We use any shaded and covered areas to extend and develop our use of our outdoor spaces.

- Children may request to play outside as an extra activity.
- We organize our room so large motor skills can be used freely without risk of injury.

Planning for active play

Children need to move their bodies and explore their environment and we encourage and support this skill. We know that the opposite skills of sitting and listening are closely linked with free, large body movements such as running and jumping. One without the other creates an imbalance resulting in frustration. Our curriculum incorporates large periods of active play. These are some of the ways we create and plan for active play;

- We consider a range of experiences both in and out of doors which encourage gross motor movement. Our program room and outside play area may also provide opportunities to dig, grow plants, roll, jump, write, draw, read, crawl, run, skip, hop, role play, paint, pour, fill, empty and climb which all support children's speaking and listening skills.
- We ensure that children have opportunity to move their bodies as often as they need and we provide movement breaks in between more still activities.
- We expect staff to participate and engage the children in large body movement activities in between quieter more sedate activities.
- Staff spend a lot of their time on the floor engaged with the children, touch and connection are very important to the health and well-being of children.
- Staff engage with the children in safe, boisterous (rough and tumble) play and model strategies for regulating their body after the activity is done.
- Children who wish to play actively by themselves (un-facilitated play) are able to, in and outdoors.
- Provide opportunities in and out doors, for facilitated, staff led, play opportunities.
- Staff know there is a range of skills involved in children's gross motor movement: such as pulling/pushing; pedalling; steering; sliding; climbing; balancing; hanging by arms; swinging; jumping; hopping; using a jump rope; hula hooping; tossing things in containers; catching; throwing and kicking.
- We encourage children to be involved in tidying up the outdoor area at end of the day.
- Staff recognise that outdoors is a great environment to let children test their limits and will provide a sense of achievement.
- Enable children to experience the joy of being able to eat outside.

Screen time

Screen time will be limited to according to a child's age and the length of time children are in our programs. Children aged two years and under, and children in programs for three hours or less, will not be exposed to any screen time at all. In all other instances screen time will be limited to 30 minutes or less per day and only then if it is part of a spontaneous learning moment such as researching what a particular animal looks like.

Please note that the After School Program implements a group reward system where children are able to choose their activity once the group reward jar is full of marbles. Occasionally this reward choice is to watch a movie. All parents are consulted to ensure this is permissible and to confirm the movie title and will not occur more than four times each year.

Clothing

Children should come dressed in 'CLEAN ON THAT DAY', comfortable, season appropriate clothing, for both in and outdoor activities. Some of the activities we provide are quite messy so please make sure your child does not wear his 'best' outfit! Every child should bring at least one spare set of clothing, even children who are not expected to have toileting accidents. We have a limited supply of spare clothes if you forget. Please check your child's back pack daily and remove wet or soiled clothing and replace it with fresh items.

If your child uses some child care clothing, please launder and return it as soon as possible.

FOOD AND DRINK POLICY

Our centers provide one snack each day. The snack will consist of at least two foods from the Canada Healthy Food Guide. All other food is provided by you. All food is prepared, stored and served under sanitary conditions. All staff who prepare food are certified in Food Safe.

Heat up meals must be sent in a microwave safe container.

Children who are able to feed themselves are encouraged to. If a child is not hungry or refuses food offered to them, it will be packed away in their lunch bag for later. Children who eat all their food will be offered healthy top up items and parents will be encouraged to send extra.

Fresh water is available to the children all day. At meal times pitchers of fresh water and plastic cups are placed on the tables so children may help themselves. Staff sit and eat with the children during all meals.

Empowering children to make healthy choices

Eating together is a social experience and efforts to promote a child's autonomy include:

- Allowing children to decide if they are hungry and would like to eat
- Allowing children to decide what they will eat and in what order
- Ensuring children can comfortably rest their feet on the floor when sitting at the table
- Encouraging children to help each other
- Promoting participation in clean up after eating
- Trusting children to know their bodies and eat and drink until they are satisfied

Breastfeeding

YCS supports a mother's right to breastfeed her children and you are welcome to visits and nurture your baby whenever you wish. Steps taken to enable breastfeeding include:

- Proper handling and storage of bottled breast milk.
- Providing a comfortable space for mothers to breastfeed.
- Being responsive to infants needs and communicating with parents.

Formula feeding

Staff are very happy to find time to sit with your infant and snuggle while feeding them a bottle, you are also very welcome to join us through the day if you wish to feed your baby yourself. In order for staff to safely feed babies formula you must:

- Bring all bottles with pre made formula to the child care program.
- Label the bottles and store them in the refrigerator.
- Only fill the bottles with the amount of formula your child usually drinks. Once the bottle has been heated any formula your infant does not drink will be thrown away after half an hour or less of being at room temperature.

Food intolerances and allergies

Food intolerances are becoming more common. Reactions can range from mild skin rashes to severe, life-threatening allergic reactions with breathing difficulties. It's important to reduce the likelihood that these reactions will take place while your child is in our care.

The following procedures and practices will be implemented with respect to intolerances and allergies:

- PLEASE NOTE OUR PROGRAMS ARE NOT NUT FREE

When children register in our programs you must report any intolerances or allergies experienced by your child. You will then complete the 'Food Intolerance/Allergy Action Plan'. This action plan must be returned before the child begins.

Based on the child's Food Intolerance/Allergy Action Plan, staff will:

1. Prevent exposure to specific food(s) that trigger a reaction
 - Monitor food supplied in the program
 - Recognize the symptoms of an allergic reaction
 - Teach the children to respect and understand the intolerance/allergy
 - Support the child with the intolerance/allergy
2. Parents and staff will:
 - Ensure the child has the appropriate medication on site (if necessary), see medication policy
 - Ensure proper storage of medication
 - Ensure the proper equipment and training is in place.
3. Program staff will:
 - Promptly take steps outlined in the child's Action Plan if a reaction occurs.
 - Notify emergency medical personnel if warranted, or if epinephrine has been given.
 - Notify parents of any allergic reaction or possible contact with food that may cause an allergic reaction.

All Action Plans are posted on the fridge, in an envelope to ensure privacy laws are respected. Staff check the envelope at the beginning of the day to remind themselves of existing conditions and ensure no new reactions have been identified. A child's Intolerance/Allergy Action Plan and medication will be taken on field trips, including neighbourhood walks.

Communication with Families

We will:

- Post the upcoming menus in our information area.
- Ask families to let us know if they have any concerns for their child.

Banned and Avoided Foods

- Processed foods containing nitrates as additives, such as some sandwich meats, bacon, and hotdogs are avoided as much as possible but may still be served occasionally.
- No trans fats or burned food will be served.

Birthdays and Celebrations

We love to celebrate your child's birthday and for every family that wishes we light candles on a pretend cake and sing the 'happy birthday' song so the child feels special. You are welcome to join us for this celebration. If you would like to send in one or two pieces of fruit for your child to share that would be wonderful. Please do not send in cakes or candy. Staff will prepare the food on site to be shared at snack time.

INCLUSION POLICY

Yellowhead Community Services Society child care programs actively promote inclusive practice in order to best meet the needs of the children and families at our centers. All children are welcome to attend our child care programs regardless of their ability, need, background, culture, religion, gender, or economic circumstances. Through inclusive practice, we aim to reflect the wider community and promote positive attitudes to both similarities and differences in each other. The curriculum, activities, books, material and environment are used to reflect the diversity of all children, families, and the wider community. When necessary, we will provide modifications and adaptations to help all children achieve success in our program.

Parents know their children better than anyone and have a complete understanding of the child's history and family situation and will continue to be involved in the care of their child long after they have left our

programs! Our staff look to you, the family, for the in depth knowledge only you can bring to the table in regards to your child. Our staff work to support families

- ✓ In understanding children's growth and development
- ✓ By providing resources and information
- ✓ By engaging families to make informed choices
- ✓ By working with and advocating for families
- ✓ By encouraging the community to support children, youth and families.

We are happy to care for children who need extra support and work with families and professionals to design a care plan for their child that recognises the child's strengths and challenges, current stage of development and specific needs (including the needs of the whole family).

Some of the ways we ensure our programs are inclusive;

- ✓ All staff understand and agree to support inclusive practices
- ✓ All staff attend special needs-focused training on inclusive programming whenever possible
- ✓ As soon as a child is identified as having extra needs a care plan is created in partnership with parents, care providers and other service providers that supports inclusive practise
- ✓ Staff adapt the environment and routines as necessary to meet the needs of the children enrolled
- ✓ Staff are respect confidentiality
- ✓ Staff work collaboratively with parents and outside service providers to ensure that the needs of the children are met.
- ✓ Staff support parents to access outside service providers when a need is identified
- ✓ All families interested in registering their child are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner
- ✓ Children with special needs may require extra support when transitioning to a new age group or program
- ✓ Withdrawal: If the Centre is having difficulties meeting your child's needs, we will ensure that:
 - Families are involved in decision making throughout our process
 - Every effort to support a child with extra needs will be exhausted
 - Families asked to withdraw their child are dealt with in a fair and respectful manner
 - We will support families to find alternative care
 - The notice of withdrawal is consistent with the Scheduling Policy and is the same for all families.
 - Reasonable care has been taken in assessing the child's needs and the Program's ability to support those needs
 - Special needs resources and outside agency support have been exhausted prior to the Notice of Withdrawal
 - At no time is the child punished or to blame for behaviours that lead to withdrawal. We look to ourselves as not being skilled enough to be able to provide the resources the child needs.

Any concerns that are identified by the staff will be shared with parents immediately in confidence in an attempt to create a working plan of action to provide assistance or identify additional resources that may be available to help your child. We are happy to partner with parents in helping every child achieve success in our program.

Research shows that positive early experiences play a critical role in a child's development. These experiences begin during pregnancy and continue long after a baby is born. The connection between a parent and child is critical and not only forms the basis for all future relationships that children experience but also impact a child's ability to learn and grow. We know that during the early years of life a child's brain has the capacity to learn new skills so early intervention to form neural pathways that are flexible and malleable, meaning skills are easier to learn and intervention is most likely to have lasting impact. With this in mind we recognize that the first and most important relationships that a child experiences are with their family and thus it is our honour to work alongside families to best serve children within our communities.

Infant Development (IDP) and Supported Child Development (SCD)

IDP and SCD are both free programs that are funded by The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). Their staff support programs and individual families in the growth and development of children, both services are free. The IDP and SCD team often visit our programs to help us be as inclusive as possible and make sure that all our children are able to take part to the best of their ability.

It may be possible for SCD to provide an extra staff member to support children if it would benefit the individual child.

We are happy to welcome community professionals such as the Speech and Language Pathologist and Occupational or Physical Therapist to visit and provide us with suggestions that will benefit children. You will be asked to sign a form agreeing to them providing services for your child before they visit.

Transition into kindergarten

Before children move on to kindergarten the school teachers are invited to attend our programs, meet the children, read a story, chat with staff and spend some time getting to know your children. Of course, this does not replace any visits that you, as parents have with your child in the new school, it simply helps to create familiarity between your child and teacher, reducing stress in the upcoming transition.

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR POLICY

We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and for children who do not have the words to express what they want or how they feel, their behaviour is how they let us know how they feel, sometimes it can be challenging. Our staff always respond in a kind and respectful way to any behaviour exhibited by a child or adult. We know that when a child has big feelings it can be very difficult for them to stay calm. Often both adults and children act and speak before they have had the chance to process their emotions and find an appropriate way to respond. We provide our children with time and space, are considerate in our approach to guiding children's behaviour and never use discipline that is humiliating, isolating or physical in nature.



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, "I can see that you would like a turn with the ball Jenny. Johnny, when you are finished please can Jenny have a turn?" "Jenny, let's play with the hoop until Johnny is

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

We also take into account the fact that children are all learning at their own age and stage of development. Every person is different and no two people experience the same situation in exactly the same way. We know that just because we cannot see the reason for a behaviour, there is always a reason. It is our job to consider every option and angle and support children in every situation.

Our staff are very knowledgeable about child development and so we understand that many behaviours are age appropriate. Children aged two years are learning about independence and want to do everything for themselves. They begin to refuse to cooperate and say “No” frequently, they want to choose their own clothes and cannot yet share very well! These behaviours are very typical and staff provide options for a child so that they feel empowered yet the end result is in line with program direction. For example, at snack time a child may choose to sit on the blue chair or the yellow chair! Given a choice the child is likely to feel empowered, cooperate and join the group and eat snack. Just what we would like! If no choice is provided a child may refuse to sit on the assigned chair, be upset and unable to eat any snack, not at all what we want.

Developmental challenges

There is often a hidden reason for behaviour challenges and we always want to explore this possibility. Please share with staff if you have concerns or if you know your child has a diagnosis or disability. This really helps us understand what your child needs and allows us to be better care providers. No child is ever refused care because of obstacles in their path. We celebrate individuality and thank parents for trusting us with their children.

Communication

We ask that families are honest with us and share information about their home setting. Often what children see and hear at home influences the way they cope in a social setting. If we have knowledge about your child’s experiences, we will be in a much better able to understand and support your child. For instance, a child whose parents separate may have anxiety and be tearful, a child who did not sleep well the previous night may be tired, grumpy and even unwell, a child whose parent starts a new job may wonder where their parent is going and fret, a child who welcomes a new baby may also show anger and aggression as well as pleasure. When our staff are aware of what is happening for a child we observe and provide proactive care rather than reactive care, this is a far happier and more positive experience.

In return, you can rest assured that you will never arrive to collect your child and hear only negative comments. We always recognise effort and individual successes and see many opportunities for positive interactions through the day. If your child should struggle (and every child does at some point as this is developmentally normal) through the day staff will consult with you so that we are providing collaborative care which reflects the way parents would like us to support their child.

Staff may ask you to participate in writing a plan that helps direct us on how we care for your child when behaviours become challenging. A care plan looks at reasons for behaviour, ways to manage behaviour and ways to prevent negative behaviours before they occur.

When children simply need their parents

Sometimes, when behaviour is so overwhelming for a child that their safety and well-being is at risk, or the safety and well-being of other children is at risk and we may phone you or your emergency contact and ask you to collect your child. We do not ‘blame’ your child at these times, rather, we recognise that our staff are not able to provide what your child wants and needs.

In short, staff

- Always communicate with parents
- Provide clear rules and expectations
- Model appropriate behaviour
- Encourage self-control, self-discipline and self confidence
- Provide choices
- Redirect
- Encourage respectful communication
- Provide supported 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. A copy of this booklet is available for you to review at any time.

CARE AND SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN POLICY

Yellowhead Community Services Society recognises that early childhood experiences are critical to a child’s health and well-being. We consider ourselves privileged to be in the position of offering child care in our local communities and are committed to providing quality care. Expectations on staff to deliver a professional and caring service to your children is very high.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated team of child care providers committed to working with your children. We hope that we will retain staff for a long period of time, allowing us to provide continuity of care for the children. We also know that raising children with many loving and caring adults around them is an optimum situation. It allows for deep and meaningful relationships to develop, multiple perspectives, shared knowledge and a sense of community.

Program planning

YCS is committed to its staff and families and we want every person to feel valued and passionate about their work so we

- encourage multi-cultural activities in our programs
- allow staff time to plan and prepare when they are not responsible for caring for the children
- provide opportunities for training and professional development
- provide frequent supervision
- are flexible in our working hours allowing staff to support their own families
- provide areas where staff can meet with parents and other professionals when necessary
- are thorough at our interview and selection process
- are proactive in providing extra support should it be required
- encourage involvement from the broader community
- work in harmony with families

Supervision of children

Staff at our facility practice active and positive supervision while maintaining a constant line of vision with the children at all times. Our indoor and outdoor areas have been designed to provide an interesting and educational safe play environment where children are able to move freely between activities with minimal hazards.

During outside play time if a child needs to use the washroom an ECE will remain with the largest group of children while either an ECE Assistant or Responsible Adult take the child or children needing to use the washroom, they will rejoin the group as soon as possible.

As we respect the natural rhythm of children's bodies we want our infants to nap according to their own schedules. This means that an infant may be tired and need to rest when the remaining group are outside or involved in another activity. At this time, the supporting staff will remain inside and be available to go to the sleeping child if they wake.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

Field trips are an exciting experience for children. They create an opportunity to connect with the broader community and explore the world outside of their child care program with their friends and care providers. Field trips occur when staffing levels, ages of children and the ability to safely travel to and from the event all line up. We encourage parents to actively participate in our field trips and welcome parents to accompany their child.

Prior to any field trip

- The lead staff will complete a Field Trip Risk Assessment, review it with their manager, then display it for parents to look over.
- All parent's/care providers must have completed, signed and returned a permission slip which outlines the details of the field trip. Your child cannot participate without the permission slip returned and stored in their file.

When planning a field trip away staff consider;

- The purpose of the field trip. Why the field trip has been chosen, who is going and is the trip suitable for all ages of children present in the program on the scheduled day?
- Who will accompany the children on the field trip, which staff are available and what qualifications and experience they have. Will any parents be going?

Staffing ratios

The minimum staff:child ratio for any field trip is two staff, regardless of how many children are attending. Staff consider the ages and stages of the children, their ability to follow instructions and any extra needs such as anxiety, learning challenges and travel sickness and increase the number of staff or adult volunteers as necessary to best ensure the safety of the children. Children who are supported to attend programs will have their support worker accompany them on the field trip and their staff will not be included in the staff:child ratio.

Typically staffing ratios are:

- One staff for every 2 children aged 2 and under
- One staff for every 4 children aged 3 – 5
- One staff for every 8 children aged 6-12

This may be adjusted according to the number of parents and volunteers attending the field trip, or the needs of the individual children. All accompanying volunteers must have a complete file in accordance with BC Interior Health licensing regulations. Parents who volunteers are responsible only for their own child are exempt from this requirement.

Departure and return times

Parents are notified of the planned departure and return time to the program. Thought is given to how long the group will be at the actual destination and how long will be spent travelling to and from the facility. Trips outside regular hours will require additional in depth planning on the Field Trip Risk Assessment Form.

Weather

Weather reports are reviewed during the planning stages and again on the morning of the field trip. Should

there be any concerns in regard to the weather such as extreme heat, storms or snow the field trip is thoroughly reviewed with the manager before going ahead and any accommodations made or the trip postponed. Children and staff must wear clothing and shoes that are both appropriate for the weather and the nature of the field trip.

Distance and travel

The distance to the field trip must be recorded in kilometers and plans for safe travel confirmed.

Walking

When walking to a field trip staff must have means to comfortably and safely transport tired or sleeping children, such as a stroller or cart that is equipped with safety harnesses. Children should be able to walk in a group, in pairs, understand and respond to the commands “Stop” and “Go”. Children under three years of age who prefer to walk rather than ride in a buggy usually wear a restraint or harness so that they can be quickly supported should they stumble or step away from the crocodile line. One staff leads the group and one staff takes up the rear so that children are always being watched. Road safety is taught in programs as a life skill and practised before and during the journey.

Vehicle transportation

Car; children travelling in cars must have BC safe car seats. A copy of each drivers BC driver’s license, a drivers abstract and proof of \$5,000,000 car insurance for every vehicle transporting children must be provided to the manager, copied and stored in the YCS main office. Parents must be informed if anyone other than a staff member will be driving their child. The driver of a vehicle cannot be responsible for more than four children.

Public transit; times and collection/drop off points must be ascertained and reviewed for safe access and dismount from the vehicle. There must be a seat, equipped with a seat belt, for each child and staff member/accompanying adult and room for safe transportation of extra items such as a stroller and back packs.

Destination facilities

It is expected that many field trips will not be in a building or structure but in play yards or even the bush and therefore, away from handwashing and toileting facilities. Consideration must be given to how staff will support children to maintain hygienic standards and safe hand washing practises and be respectful of the environment and keep it clean for other visitors.

Safety

Planning must involve understanding the environment and potential dangers. Every environment comes with its own unique challenges, urban areas are surrounded by traffic and multiple people, rural areas have little traffic but wild animals and poor cell service. When exploring in the bush children must wear bear bells and not be out of sight of their adult.

The lead ECE will carry an emergency pack containing a first aid kit and copies of each child’s registration forms with emergency information on it. All staff will be qualified first aiders, able to respond to medical emergencies and care for children present in the group. All medication will be stored in a small locked bag inside the emergency back pack along with the Allergy Action Plan or Medication Plan.

Access to natural cooling places or electronic fridges must be ascertained to ensure the food and drink remains safe to consume.

Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic double lined back pack and carried by the staff.

You can review the field trip risk assessment which will be available in advance of the field trip. You must sign a permission slip for your child to be able to participate in the trip.

We try to keep extra costs to a minimum but sometimes there is a small fee attached to a field trip. If this is difficult for you please speak with staff as we may be able to assist with covering the cost.

MISSING CHILD POLICY

Children's safety is our top priority and while your children are in our care they will never be left alone or unsupervised.

In the event of a child going missing staff follow these procedures;

1. Check with other staff in case they know where the child is.
2. Calmly but quickly check the number of children present against the sign in and out sheet to make sure the child has not been collected without staff knowledge.
3. Alert other staff to the child's absence quietly and clearly without alarming the remaining children. Under no circumstances should staff cause panic.
4. Immediately search all areas inside and outside the building. If only one member of staff is present, phone the manager or another staff from Yellowhead Community Services to watch the remaining children while you search for the missing child. Do not compromise the safety of anyone else in the program.
5. If the child is located return to the group. If the child is unwell or unable to return to the group consult with the manager or senior staff, call an ambulance and notify parents.
6. If the child is not located after a quick but thorough search staff must immediately phone the police on 911 and notify the child's parents.

The police will want to know

- The program address
- Telephone number
- Name and details of child
- Detailed description of child including clothing being worn
- Details of what happened in the lead up to the child going missing
- Who is looking for child and where they have searched
- Emergency contact information

7. Follow directions from the Police Officers.
8. Notify the Executive Director immediately.
9. Report the incident to Licensing Direct within the next 24 hours.

SUSPECTED ABUSE POLICY

In Canada, if an adult thinks that a child is being abused or neglected they have a legal duty to report their concern to a child welfare worker. A report can be made at any time, by phoning; 1-800-663-9122.

You can find two Ministry of Children and Families Services booklets called 'The BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect' and 'Responding to Welfare Concerns' in our programs. Staff are expected to be familiar with both. In short a decision to make a report will be based on the following information;

- Observation of the child's behaviour and other indicators as outlined in the service provider booklet
- The child's disclosure, whether purposeful or accidental
- Other information available to the staff, and
- Consultation with others

Any staff / student or volunteer who suspects that a child may have been, or is at risk, of abuse must not contact the parent or care giver of the child but keep the child safe and relaxed until a social worker provides direction.

Staff must immediately seek adult support from other YCS staff so that the conversation and report can be made confidentially and out of the child's ear shot, then;

1. Notify the supervisor or manager and contact The Ministry of Children and Family Development together.
2. If a manager or supervisor is not available, staff continue to report their concerns to the Ministry of Children and Family Development Social Worker
3. The staff / student or volunteer must document in detail their concerns and store the information in a secure, locked filing cabinet.
4. The supervisor will provide support for the staff / student or volunteer and will inform the Executive Director and Board of Directors as soon as possible after the report has been made.

How staff document potential indicators of child abuse

When documenting any indicators of child abuse staff:

- Record the information as soon as possible, including dates and times
- Document the facts **without** personal judgments, opinions, conclusions, medical or emotional diagnosis
- Give a clear description of the situation, what was **actually** seen or heard and **NOT** what they think happened
- Include what they did or said and why
- Record the words used by a child / parent, even if they are "slang" (especially terms for body parts or sexual behavior)
- Include anything that someone else has said that might be important
- Describe the size, colour, shape of any injury (for example, bruises, marks, burns)
- Hand write their own documentation in their own words, using pen
- Cross out and initial any mistakes and continue documenting- **DO NOT** use white out
- Document suspicions of abuse in a separate record
- Make sure the entry is complete, then sign and date it
- Start a new entry if, at a later date there is new information or further suspicions of abuse.

** The first recording of the facts is the actual documentation – staff will NOT make a rough copy and then write over it in good, and will NOT go back and change any of their original notes.

VEHICLE AND TRANSPORTATION POLICY

We know that you trust us to care for your child when you can't be with them. As part of our trusting relationship we will never transport your child without your agreement (unless it is in an emergency situation). You will always be asked to sign a form that details any transport arrangements before we go anywhere so that you are confident of where your child is, what they are doing and who is caring for them. There will always be at least two staff present on any field trip.

Requirements

Any staff who will be responsible for transporting children are required to provide

- A valid BC driver's license (class 5 minimum)
- A current drivers abstract from ICBC
- Copy of personal vehicle insurance. *Please note that YCS carries 5 million special excess third party liability insurance that is applicable to the staff position.

A **vehicle safety check list** will be completed once a month on any vehicle that is used to transport children, or prior to a field trip. Staff will complete the check if using their own vehicle and the form will be stored in the field trip risk assessment binder, YCS vehicles check lists are stored in the main office and are completed by the transport manager.

Staff will make sure that any vehicles used to transport children will be equipped with

- Legal child car seats with manufacturer's instructions (if applicable)
 - Program staff will try to provide a car seat for the child to be able to be transported.
 - It is the responsibility of the program staff to ensure that the child seat being used for each child is installed correctly and meets both the height and weight requirements for the child.
 - Car seats must be less than five years old.
 - Child car seats are not required when travelling by public transit.
- Complete first aid kit
- Complete road side assistance emergency kit
- Copy of roadside emergency procedures
- Fully charged cell phone

Transportation details

- A signed permission form* from a parent / guardian must be completed before a child is able to be transported in a personal vehicle or by public transit while under the care of Yellowhead Community Service staff. *Unless during an emergency situation.
- Transportation will be identified on the field trip risk assessment form and all precautions and policies followed.

Emergency transportation

On the registration form there is a space for you to initial giving permission for your child to be transported in either a public transit vehicle or personal vehicle if there is a real emergency. Please note that car seats may not be available for all children but the need to evacuate will over-ride this requirement. Emergency evacuation is the only time this type of transport will ever be implemented.

Health and Safety

Your child's health and safety are top priorities for us. All our facilities are licensed with BC Interior Health Authority ensuring we achieve and maintain high programming and safety standards. You can visit their web site at

<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/ChildCareFacilities/Pages/default.aspx>

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

Our staffing ratio is guided by Interior Health licensing regulations and varies from facility to facility. YCS always tries to make sure that we exceed these ratios as we know that children really benefit from frequent, spontaneous interactions with adults.

- Building Blocks Daycare has one staff for every eight children in the group care 30 months plus age category and one staff for every four children aged under 36 months
- Riverside Child Care has one staff for every 10 children in Preschool and one for every 12 children in the Out of School Program
- Little Stars Child Care has one staff for every 8 children in the multi-age program, one staff for every 10 in preschool and 1 staff for every 8 children in occasional child care

- Wells Grey After School Program has one staff for every 12 children
- Eagle's Nest has one staff for every 8 children

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 usually exceed the required number of staff
- Children are provided with the opportunity to rest or nap
- 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 drills regularly
- All staff, volunteers and practicum students have a clear criminal record check
- Relief staff cover 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 scented products
- Children and staff all wash their hands after using the toilet, diapering and before eating
- Smoking is not allowed on YCS property
- Children are supervised at ALL times
- We let you know by a phone call or on the radio if we are closed unexpectedly

How we keep your children protected from viral and bacterial infections

It is commonly thought that children attending a child care program are exposed to significantly more germs than children who stay at home. However, we know that daily activities bring many opportunities for exposure to germs, such as a trip to the supermarket, a ride on a bus or cross contamination from an older sibling, or friend, who attends school.

PLEASE READ THE COVID-19 OPERATIONS POLICY ATTACHED TO THIS HANDBOOK.

We work very hard to reduce the likelihood of illness in our programs and our health and wellness policy supports us in ensuring the three following steps are complied with;

1. **Good hygiene**, we ask that everyone entering our programs wash their hands. Staff model this and wash their hands frequently through the day, always before and after preparing food and using the toilet or assisting children with a diaper change or toilet use, catching coughs or sneezes or wiping noses. Staff support children to wash their hands frequently too for the same reasons.
2. **Being physically well**, please DO NOT send children if they are unwell. We understand this is very challenging for parents as families often have commitments that require them to use child care. However, if we care for children who are sick, illness is very quickly spread from one child to another in a cycle that can only be broken by the unwell child remaining at home. Staff MAY NOT work if they are ill as exposure is the same and the cycle continues. In extreme circumstances we may be forced to close our program if we do not have enough staff to facilitate care or multiple children become infected with a bug allowing staff time to completely sanitize the program. Parents must complete a daily health check as follows:
 - Daily health check;** Please use the questionnaire below and follow the directions to determine if your child is well enough to attend our programs. If you have any questions or concerns, contact the program before bringing your child to the center. When you arrive at the center you must sign your child in. By signing your child in you are confirming that you have completed a daily health check and your child is well enough to attend our center. Please keep your child at home if they are ill.

3. **Sanitation**, our programs exceed the recommended hygiene standards of cleaning toys and equipment. We use a cleaning solution of 10mls chlorine bleach to 90mls water. Any toy that is mouthed by a child is removed and cleaned as soon as the individual child is finished using it (oral exploration is a vital part of development and we cannot prevent this). Surfaces are cleaned throughout the day and always before the staff go home for the evening.

Daily Health Check			
	Does your child have any of the following key symptoms?	Circle one	
1. Key symptoms of illness	Fever	Yes	No
	Chills	Yes	No
	Cough or worsening cough (breathing fast or working hard to breathe)	Yes	No
	Loss of sense of smell/taste	Yes	No
	Diarrhea	Yes	No
	Nausea or vomiting	Yes	No
2. International travel	Have you returned from travel outside of Canada in the last 14 days?	Yes	No
3. Confirmed contact	Are you a confirmed contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?	Yes	No

Step 1. Complete the daily health care check above

Step 2. Two or more “YES”. If you answered “Yes” to two or more of the key symptoms of illness or your child has a fever or difficulty breathing, seek a health assessment. A health assessment can be completed by phoning 8-1-1 or contacting a primary care provider like your physician or nurse practitioner. You should not return your child to their center until COVID-19 has been excluded through the health assessment and symptoms have improved.

One “YES”. If you answered “YES” to only one of the key symptoms of illness (excluding fever and difficulty breathing) your child should stay at home for at least 24 hours from when the symptoms started. If the symptoms improve your child may return to their program if they feel well enough. If the symptoms persist or get worse seek a health care assessment, as above.

To return to our centers, in accordance with our Health and Wellness Policy, please note that in instances of; **vomiting your child must be symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours and be eating properly**
diarrhea your child must be symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours, be eating properly and have normal bowel movements
fever / chills your child must be fever free without the use of fever reducing medications for at least 12 hours

“YES” to questions 2 and/or 3. If you answered yes to questions 2 or 3, use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool found at <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en> to determine if you should seek testing for COVID-19.

If a COVID-19 test is recommended as a result of the health assessment, you must isolate your child while waiting for results.

- **If the COVID-19 test is positive**, self isolate and follow the directions of public health.
- **If the COVID-19 test is negative**, return to child care once your child is well enough to participate in normal activities.
- **If a COVID-19 test is recommended but not done**, the child must isolate for 10 days after the onset of symptoms. The child may return when he is well enough to participate in normal activities.
- **If a COVID-19 test is not recommended**, children may return when they are well enough to participate in normal activities.

A child may still attend their program if a person living with them has symptoms of cold, influenza or COVID-19 or respiratory disease as long as they do not have symptoms themselves.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICY

When a child is not feeling well they require a higher level of care than we are able to provide, and in our experience, the only person a child wants when they are under the weather is their mom/dad or main care provider. We love your child but our cuddles will be nothing compared to yours from your child's perspective

Our COVID-19 Operational Policy provides specific guidelines in regards to COVID-19 symptoms. Of course, children may be unwell with other infectious diseases or viruses and should be kept at home until they are fully recovered and well enough to participate in all activities at child care. These conditions will require you to keep your child at home:

- Any type of pain – undiagnosed or diagnosed
- Infected skin or eyes or any undiagnosed rash
- Runny nose with green discharge
- Sore throat (please do not medicate your child to mask their sore throat)
- Severe body or scalp itching
- Children with a known or suspected communicable disease such as Chicken Pox, Measles, Hand Foot and Mouth, amongst others
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea; to return to their center children must be symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours and eating/passing normal bowel movements. For example; if your child vomits on Monday they must stay at home that day. If the last time they vomit is 6.00pm that Monday, they must remain at home on Tuesday. If they eat well and sleep normally on Tuesday they can return to the center on Wednesday. However, if they vomit again on Tuesday, the earliest they could return would be Thursday. The same process applies with diarrhea.
- Fever or chills (children must be fever free for a minimum of 12 hours without the use of fever reducing medication to return to our centers)
- Just not feeling well – low energy, tearful, unable to participate in the program

If your child is infected with a communicable disease like COVID-19, measles, mumps, strep throat, head lice or impetigo you will need to follow instructions for treatment and 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 find them a comfortable place to rest, separate from the other children and you will be contacted 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 medicine through the day, please fill in a 'medication' form. Remember though, your child must be well enough to participate in the general activities of the program. We can only give medicine that has been issued by a doctor, is in the original container and is clearly labelled with your child's name and provides directions for administration.

We cannot give children vitamin tablets or any other type of medicine unless a doctor has prescribed it.

Continued medication for life threatening illnesses

Children requiring medication for an allergy or illness such as asthma, may not attend unless they have their medication with them. Medication must either be signed in and out each day, or parents may leave medication at the child care program. Parents are responsible to ensure that the medication remains within its use by date and is replaced before it expires.

Storage of medicines

Staff will store all medicines in a locked cabinet, either in the fridge or in a high cupboard, according to the instructions on the label.

Administration of medication

When staff administer medication to your child they will do so in a quieter area of the child care program. Two staff will be present whenever possible; staff one will read the label and measure the dose, staff two will check the label, dose and time prior to the medication being given to the child. Both staff will watch to make sure the child swallows the medication. Staff one will record the administration on the medication form and both staff will initial and/or sign. Staff may administer medication alone if they are working by themselves.

Accidents and Injuries

Our staff 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.

Please let us know if your child arrives at the program with an existing injury. It is very important for us to be aware so that we can provide the right care for your child.

PAYMENT AND REFUND POLICY

We are honoured and privileged to care for your children and hope that one-day child care will be free to all families. Until that time, we try to keep our fees as low as possible so that many families can access our programs.

Invoice and receipting

Invoices and receipts are sent electronically, via e mail. If you prefer to receive a paper copy please let your

program staff know. You will receive an invoice about one week before the new month begins. The invoice will reflect the number of contracted days that we are expecting to provide care for your child that month. You will receive an electronic receipt when you pay cash or by cheque. Families paying by E transfer will not receive a receipt.

We do not provide year end receipts and there is an administration charge of \$40.00 to provide copies of receipts at any time, once issued.

Fee reduction initiative

Building Blocks Daycare, Eagles Nest, Little Stars Child Care Multi-age Group, Riverside Child Care Out of School and Wells Gray After School Program are eligible to participate in this government initiative which reduces fees according to the age of each child. The amount of fee reduction you receive is based on 20 days per month and is pro rata for part time children. Your total amount of fee reduction initiative will show on your invoice.

Affordable Child Care Benefit

We encourage all families to apply for the BC Governments Affordable Child Care Benefit. This is not a subsidy but a benefit that all families earning less than \$111 000.00 are entitled to. You can apply on line at; <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care-funding/child-care-benefit>

You can also find paper forms for this benefit in our program. Please help yourself and ask a staff member to complete the form called, 'child care arrangement'. We are happy to fax the forms to the government for processing if you like.

You can also phone the ACCB office at 1-888-338-6622

Payment Terms

- Fees must be paid before the month begins.
- Children may not attend if fees are not paid unless you have an agreement with the manager.
- We do not charge for statutory holidays.
- Fees are due even if you are away on holiday or away for any reason such as illness.
- We cannot accommodate make up days due to absence.
- Children who do not attend regularly may forfeit their place if the program has a wait list.
- We ask parents to pay the full cost of care until the Affordable Child Care Benefit has been approved. Any fees paid in advance will be refunded once the Affordable Child Care Benefit plan has been shared with us.

Payment Methods

Cash; place the **correct amount** in a named envelope and put it in the fee box.

Cheques; are payable to "YCS". Please put them in the fee box. Please note there is a \$40.00 charge for non sufficient funds.

E-transfer; **THIS IS YCS's PREFERRED METHOD OF PAYMENT**

- ❖ Add or select the name of your child care program
- ❖ Use the email address of your program manager
- ❖ **Send the correct amount**
- ❖ In the memo section please identify your child's name

Families with children attending more than one YCS child care program may combine payments into one electronic transfer. Please identify in the memo which programs and exact amounts.

Refund of Prepaid Payments Policy

- You must give us two weeks' notice to withdraw your child from the program.
- Any unused portion of pre-paid fees, outside the required two-week withdrawal notice period, will be refunded at the end of the month.
- If, for any reason, we are unable to operate our child care program as agreed at the time of invoicing, fees paid for days of no service will be refunded by cheque on the 15th or last day of the month, whichever is soonest, or if you prefer, deducted from the following month invoice.

Our Fees

Our fees are based on the number of contracted days a 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.

Fees after the FRI has been deducted are shown in brackets below. When there are more than 20 operational days in the month parents pay the full cost of child care for the extra days.

Building Blocks Daycare, Little Stars Multi-age Care and Eagle's Nest;

Over 3 years' full day	\$38.25 per day (\$33.25)
Over 3 years half day	\$21.25 per session (\$18.75)
Under 3 years' full day	\$47.00 per day (\$29.50)
Under 3 years half day	\$26.50 per session (\$17.75)

Riverside Preschool and Little Stars Preschool; \$17.50 per session

Little Stars Occasional Child Care; \$19.25 per session

Wells Gray After School and Riverside Out of School;

Kindergarten aged children

2.30-5.30 pm	\$10.00 per session (\$7.50)
12.00-5.30pm	\$21.25 per session (\$16.25)
8.30am-5.30pm	\$36.50 per day (\$31.50)

Grades 1+

2.30-5.30 pm	\$10.00 per session
12.00-5.30pm	\$21.25 per session
8.30am-5.30pm	\$36.50 per day

Drop in fees are an extra \$5.25 plus regular fees and must be paid for on the day of attendance.

Fee increases occur approximately every three years. Our last increase was in September 2018.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Once you accept a space for your child in our programs 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 encouraged 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 or you move home. We must be able to get in contact with you in an emergency.

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 before being shredded.

Parents and visitors may not share any photos or videos of children, other than their own, on any social media sites, such as Facebook or Instagram.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES POLICY

Parents are responsible for signing their child into and out of the program each day when they arrive and leave the center. Staff must know how many children are present and where each child is at all times and children are never left alone in our programs.

We have detailed and planned emergency procedures for every type of situation imaginable including fire, lock down, shelter in place and medical emergencies. Parents are provided with the emergency procedures and wallet sized emergency card for their child care program during orientation.

We practise emergency procedures at least once a month so they are familiar to all staff and children. We also teach children about the meaning of a hot door, how to crawl under smoke and about 'stop, drop and roll'. We also check our fire extinguishers and test smoke alarms on a monthly basis at minimum and complete a full emergency evacuation annually.

Please remember that you also have a duty to ensure the emergency contacts listed in your child's file are up to date and your chosen contacts are aware they are listed. Please make sure they know if you are expecting them to cover for you when you are unavailable, for example if you are out of town and the distance is greater than half an hour away from the child care program.

Most likely emergencies

As we live in a semi-rural area surrounded by forest and rivers/lakes our primary emergency situations are likely to be fire and flood. We have one main highway that connects Barriere and Clearwater north and south and should this road become unpassable there is a possibility that we could potentially be cut off for a period of time from outside ground support.

Emergency destinations

Our emergency evacuation destinations have been chosen as they are easily accessible by foot and road, they have plenty of parking allowing for high traffic volume, are central to the town centers, yet are not an area where emergency services will gather for coordination. Both are large enough to provide safe shelter for an extended period of time and the motel owners agree that we can use their facilities until children are collected by their parents.

Emergency provisions

At our facilities we keep an emergency box that contains enough food, water, warm blankets, emergency supplies such as flash lights, shovels, hard hats, high visibility vests, and toiletries to keep our children and staff nourished and safe for up to 72 hours.

Emergency procedures

Emergency procedures are displayed on the program wall and parents receive a copy during orientation. Our emergency back pack, which is located next to the main exit, contains all children's registration/emergency contact details, a first aid kit, tissues and display notes for doors which alert parents to their children's whereabouts in a true emergency.

After an Emergency

It is Yellowhead Community Services policy to be transparent in our operational services. We put the health and welfare of our children, families, Elders, volunteers and staff at the fore. Part of providing a healthy and happy environment is understanding the impact that any kind of traumatic experience may have on a person's mental health and physical well-being. After an emergency situation staff will be alert to children's, parents and each other's behaviours and actions. Care will be taken to respect and react to emotions and concerns in an appropriate and considerate manner. Counselling will be made available through YCS programs if parents wish. Staff understand they have a duty to report to their manager if they are too impacted to provide effective, quality care as part of the child care team, or if they observe behaviours from a colleague that suggests extra support may be needed.

If at any time services are suspended or an evacuation of the facility is necessary, services will not resume until all repairs have been made and the facility is in compliance with licensing regulations and deemed safe. Emergency supplies used will be replenished and any necessary amendments in policy will be made. At this time all persons involved with the emergency situation will be contacted by the program manager, either in person or via a letter, to explain the nature of the emergency and report on the evacuation process. Parents and staff will be encouraged to give feedback regarding their experience and confidence in protocols during the evacuation.

Keeping in Touch

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

- A monthly newsletter is sent out to parents, usually by email
- Parent & ECE meetings may happen at a parents request
- We are available at drop off and pick up times to chat with you about how your child's day went
- We have an 'open-door' policy – please make an appointment to share concerns or compliments
- You are welcome to phone or email the center supervisor at any time

TRANSITIONING OUT OF PROGRAMS POLICY

We hope that when your child leaves one of our child care programs it will be for happy reasons, such as going to preschool, kindergarten or even on to high school, and that they will feel confident and ready for their next steps. Whatever the reason, we are here to support both you and your child through the process; we know that leaving can be as daunting as starting something new. Understanding the steps involved with change really help children process what is happening to them.

Here are some of the ways we can help;

Creating memories

Throughout your child's time with us we will share experiences and stories with you by chatting and sending home photos of your child and their friends and activities at the center. We hope that these memories will provide happy and positive feelings that last a long time and will reflect how much your child has meant to us.

Reading books and talking

Hearing about similar experiences from another child's perspective makes children feel less alone, helps them explore situations before they are a reality and allows them to ask questions that may be worrying them. Just being able to express what they feel is a powerful way to relieve stress and organise thoughts around change.

The last day

We will acknowledge your child's last day with a small celebration. We will share stories, give hugs and good wishes. You are very welcome to participate in some small way if you are able, you can discuss this with the program manager.

To withdraw a child

We ask that parents give us two weeks' notice before they leave. This can either be written in a letter, email or text or you can speak with a staff member.

Suspension of care

YCS may terminate child care if our policies are not respected or parents/caregivers behave in a way that frightens or intimidates any participant or staff member in a YCS program. Foul language and aggressive or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated.

Complaints or Compliments

We want to be better! If you have a concern please, please share it with us. You will never have services restricted because you have a question or worry. You can;

- speak with the staff at the centre
- speak with the Program Manager
- speak with the Licensed Child Care Programs Supervisor
- speak with the Chief Operations Officer
- fill in the form in this handbook and drop it off at a YCS office



If you fill in the form (on the last page), a manager will be in touch with you within ten working days. If your concerns are not addressed in a way that you are satisfied with you may withdraw your child immediately, there is no need to provide two weeks' notice. Any fees you have pre paid will be refunded immediately and the situation will be investigated.

If you have good news to share about your experience, we would love to hear that too.

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 nutritious lunch and snack, no candy, pop or juice (daycare and occasional child care)
- A small, light blanket (daycare and occasional child care)
- 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).

Complaints or Compliments Form

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