



CENTENNIAL INFANT AND CHILD CENTRE VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

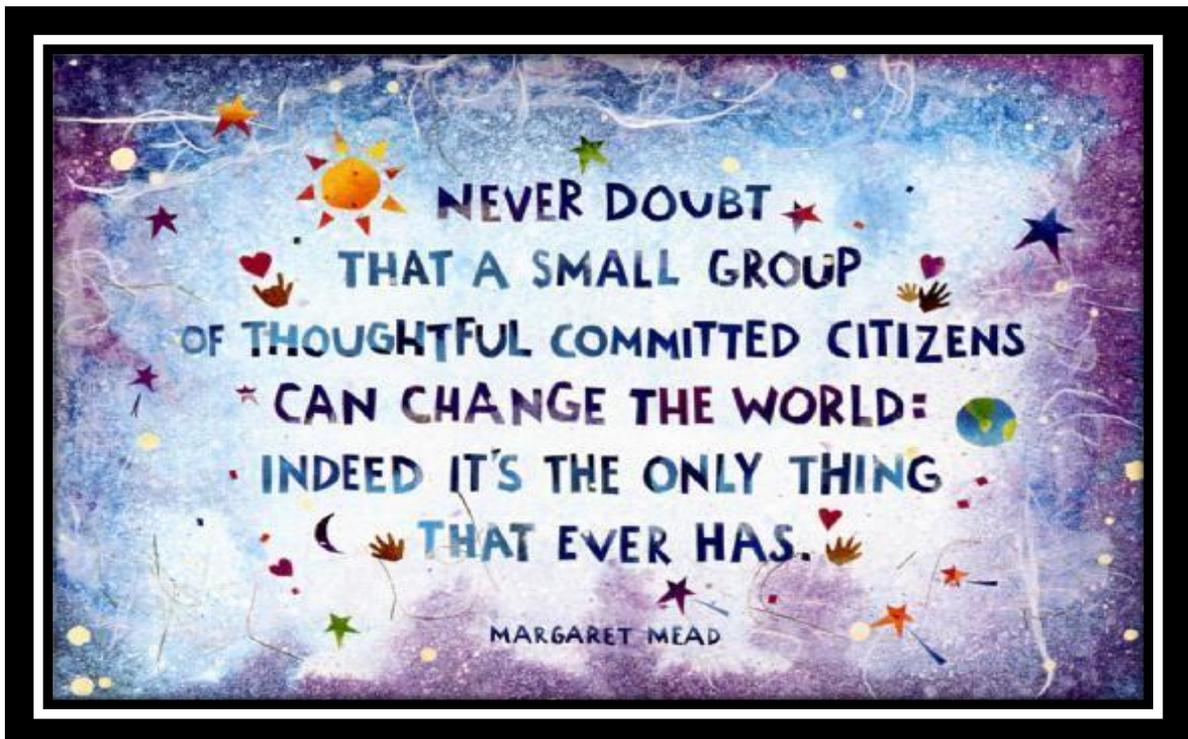


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MISSION STATEMENT

Centennial Infant and Child Centre strengthens families and their young children with special needs to develop the confidence and skills for the best start in life.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Centennial began in 1965, in the North Toronto home of **Pat Littlejohn** who was a teacher and the mother of a child with a severe disability. Pat's initiative attracted support from others in the community, some of whom also had children who had special needs. The preschool started with three children, one teacher and eight volunteers. In 1967, during Canada's "Centennial" year, the school was licensed as a nonprofit organization by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services. St George's United Church was an early and enthusiastic supporter and, from 1967 to 1997, the school was located in the church's basement. Currently located at 1580 Yonge Street, Centennial Infant and Child Centre has launched its' "Powering Potential" capital campaign to raise funds to purchase a new building that can accommodate our growing needs.

The preschool offers morning and afternoon programs and currently serves over 50 children, from two to five years of age. The majority of the children enrolled have special needs with delays in development resulting from genetic and chromosomal abnormalities, neurological, visual or auditory impairments, environmental deprivation, or any degree of physical or cognitive disability. Also attending the preschool are children who are developing in a typical manner.

Centennial's preschool is unique throughout the city of Toronto because of its one-to-one child/volunteer ratio. Approximately 250 volunteers are needed to attend the Centre at least once a week to offer these children their time, skill, and affection. Not to mention the 50+ Placement Students who are drawn to our program as it gives them the opportunity to gain firsthand experience with children with special needs.

Beyond the Preschool program, Centennial operates an Early Intervention Program (EI) which provides in-home support to over 400 children and their families every year. These children range in age from birth to six years. At two years of age, children in the EI Program may attend the Preschool. Centennial Infant and Child Centre also provides Special Needs Resource Consultants who provide consultation to 20 care centres in other parts of Toronto.

Centennial Infant and Child Centre provides an essential service to the community and we welcome you to become part of the legacy of CICC.

STAFF

Centennial is a non-profit corporation overseen by a Board of Directors and managed by an Executive Director who reports to the Board on business involving the Centre. The Board is responsible for the strategic direction of the Centre, monitors financial performance, and establishes operational policies and guidelines.

The preschool program has a Centre Manager and a staff of five Resource Educators. Also, on staff are a Physiotherapist, a Speech/Language Pathologist, an Occupational Therapist and a Volunteer Coordinator. The Early Intervention Program consists of one Manager and eight Early Interventionists and two Occupational Therapists who support children in-home throughout Toronto. The Child Care Consultation Program has two Special Needs Resource Consultants who support 20 child care centres in Toronto.

Commitment from Volunteers

Volunteers are encouraged to make a commitment for the duration of the school year. The role of the preschool volunteers, each of whom is assigned one child, is to ensure that each child's individual program plan is carried out with the support of the teachers and staff. This allows the child and volunteer to create a bond that builds trust, and self-confidence necessary for the child's growth and development. As a volunteer, you will give the children the opportunity to grow physically, socially, mentally, and emotionally. In this environment, the children will be well on the way to achieving the long-range goals of positive self-image and independence in basic skill areas.

Orientation

If you think you would be interested in working in the preschool, you will participate in an orientation session, which includes a chance to shadow an experienced volunteer for a full preschool morning or afternoon and ongoing classroom support from our qualified teachers. If you complete the orientation and wish to become a volunteer, you will be assigned a minimum of one shift per week based on your schedule. The Volunteer Coordinator will review with you all the necessary requirements to becoming a volunteer. For example, Centennial has specific Ministry of Education policies and procedures, and a Volunteer Agreement that must be reviewed and signed.

Training for Volunteers

Prior experience is not a prerequisite for volunteering. The teacher of the child you are assigned to will be your coach. At least one day observing another volunteer working with that child is advised. It will likely take two to four days of working with that child under the supervision of the teachers before you are feeling comfortable. Keep in mind that the staff are always nearby and encourage you to ask for advice and assistance. However, please don't talk about the problems of the children in front of them as you do not always know what the children understand. We encourage you to ask for immediate support at any time you require assistance or are concerned about a child. Feel free to speak with our teaching staff or volunteer coordinator at the beginning or end of shift if need be.

Volunteer Workshops

Training workshops for volunteers are informative, helpful and fun. Through in house mini-workshops presented during coffee break and hands-on experiences you will learn handling skills, teaching techniques, communication methods and safety for you and your child.

Confidentiality

Everyone has a right to privacy. Your role as a volunteer is of tremendous importance and some knowledge of the child and family is necessary. However, professional ethics require that confidentiality be maintained. Concerns about a child's behaviour, health, development etc. **should always be directed to the child's teacher.** For further info, please see CICC's Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement.

Medical

Medical clearance is required by the Department of Public Health. An up to date Immunization record is required to be completed by a doctor. The form is provided by CICC.

Police Record Reports

The Ontario Ministry of Education requires that all people working or volunteering with children have a current Vulnerable Sector Police clearance from your local police department, dated within 6 months of your volunteer start date. The application form is provided by the school. Volunteers are responsible for the cost of processing the police check. All volunteers are required to renew their VS PC every 5 years and sign an Offence Declaration annually.

Communication

Communication with volunteers regarding outbreaks of infectious diseases in the preschool, school closures, updates etc. are often communicated via email. Please check your email regularly.

Duties of Volunteers

1. Please arrive by 9:00 am for the morning program and 1:00 pm for the afternoon program.
2. Upon arrival please make yourself a name tag and check the volunteer list at the front desk to determine which child you have been assigned.
3. Read your child's Individualized Program Plan (IPP) and check in with teaching staff for any new instructions.
4. Volunteers will meet their assigned child in the classroom. Please remain in the classroom for your child to arrive, unless otherwise instructed. Help when necessary with

children whose volunteers have not arrived.

5. Carry out your child's program as outlined in his/her individualized program plan.
6. **Never** leave your child unattended. If you need help, please ask the staff.
7. Please "hold on" to your child when he/she is on the change table. If you need help, call someone.
8. Remain with the child in the classroom until the staff member relieves you of duty.
9. If you are unable to attend, contact the volunteer co-ordinator at epoirier@cicc.on.ca or via voicemail at 416-935-0200, ext. 221, before 7:30 am.

What you can expect as a volunteer

- That you will be trained to work with the children under your care. This will happen both on the job and in occasional workshops.
- That you will not be expected to take on any task that you are unwilling or unprepared to tackle.
- That you will be recognized in appropriate ways as a vital and indispensable member of the teaching team.
- That you will be able to express your creativity and share your personality and skills.
- That you will be able to communicate with staff to confirm your effectiveness, receive suggestions and express your own concerns.
- That you will receive adequate supportive supervision.
- That you will be trusted with selected confidential information that will help in your assignment.
- That you will be kept informed through meetings, workshops and newsletters as to what is going on in the preschool.
- That you should be free to ask for a different assignment within the school when your present one is no longer challenging or satisfactory.

Program Statement

Centennial Infant and Child Centre believes all children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

CICC used the Ministry of Education's, *How Does Learning Happen?* document as a guide in developing our Program Statement.

Centennial's Specialized Preschool program will:

A) Promote the health, safety, nutrition and wellbeing of the children;

Goal: The Centre will promote children's overall health and well-being on a daily basis.

Centre's Approach: Staff, volunteers and students will interact with the children in ways that encourage positive self-esteem, independence and sense of security and happiness. Centre ensures children receive healthy snacks that take into account health issues and respect family requests/preferences. All snacks will meet recommendations set out in the Health Canada document, "Canada's Food Guide" and reviewed annually by a registered dietician. Staff will perform daily observations of children at drop off times and throughout the program in order to detect possible symptoms of ill health.

B) Support positive and responsive interactions amongst the children, parents, students, volunteers and staff;

Goal: Promote positive, respectful and meaningful interactions amongst all those involved in the preschool.

Centre's Approach: Staff, volunteers and student's interactions will be respectful & sensitive to family culture, values, language, composition & developmental abilities. Interactions will be modelled to reflect the value we place on inclusion. The centre will aim to foster each child's self-esteem, curiosity, exploration, play, individual strengths and areas of need.

C) Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate;

Goal: Support each child in the development of their communication and to develop strategies for self-control.

Centre's Approach: Staff will work collaboratively to ensure each child has a communication program that is appropriate for them which encourages both receptive and expressive language skills. Staff, volunteers and students will support children to develop healthy regulatory skills and social skills in a safe, positive and supportive setting.

D) Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry;

Goal: Staff will ensure all children are provided the tools and adaptations to explore, play and learn throughout all aspects of the preschool program.

Centre's Approach: Through group and individual program plans all children will be encouraged to explore, play and ask questions. Children will be provided an environment that supports them to work on all areas of their development and classroom skills that will encourage them to meet their full developmental potential and prepare them to enter the school system.

E) Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences;

Goal: The centre will provide children with the experiences that are reflective of both children and adult's interests and choices.

Centre's Approach: Through parent interview, observation and assessments, staff will develop a program that reflects the interests and developmental needs of the individual children. Staff will document daily observations of each child and plan for their play based learning opportunities which support each child's individual developmental goals and areas of interest. Observations and planning will be continuous and available to all families. Staff will expand the children's interests by adding materials, asking questions and scaffolding the children's learning by providing new challenges and ideas.

F) Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported;

Goal: The centre will provide an environment in which learning is rewarding and enjoyable and where each child's individual needs are met and they have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Centre's Approach: Staff will develop a program that fosters the individual developmental goals established for each child as well as the goals developed for their preschool grouping. Both programming goals for the individual child as well as their group will reflect the interests of the children as well as learning objectives established for them by the preschool staff. Programming will reflect goals established through observation, assessment and planning to ensure full inclusion and success for each child.

G) Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time into the day and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care.

Goal: Classroom schedules are developed to encourage play opportunities that incorporate active and quiet times throughout the daily program. Group and Individual Program Plans will promote the development of fine and gross motor skills, cognition, social and communication development for all children.

Centre's Approach: Children will be provided with learning opportunities that encourage them to explore different developmental domains and will be made available

to them throughout the daily program schedule. Programming will support each child's development, self-care skills and growing independence in the preschool setting. Daily group schedules allow for children to develop comfort and confidence in both small and large group settings. Particular emphasis will be on successful program transitions, and other classroom skills that will promote kindergarten readiness and a positive entry into the school system.

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

Goal: Ongoing and open communication with families is a priority of the centre.

Centre's Approach: Family involvement is welcomed as we believe that strong partnerships with families strengthens the children's opportunities for learning and development. This will be achieved through a team meeting prior to each child starting school, our "open door policy" welcoming parents to visit and observe their children during preschool hours, daily communication books, regular communication with staff via, email, telephone and in person conversations, monthly newsletters, parent workshops and annual team meetings to discuss each child's progress.

I) Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and program staff;

Goal: Promote the involvement of the local agencies and community organizations to further develop and support the learning of children, families and staff at the centre.

Centre's Approach: CICC's preschool will work collaboratively with local agencies to support the needs of the children, families and staff. Specialists will be encouraged to visit and work with staff and parents to support them in caring for the children in the preschool program. Consultation for individual as well as groups of children are encouraged. Information workshops will be offered to families and staff to support the growth and development of the children.

J) Support staff, home child care providers and others who interact with the children at a child care centre or home child care premises in relation to continuous professional learning

Goal: The Centre will provide and encourage professional development opportunities to all the staff, volunteers and students.

Centre's Approach: Professional development opportunities will be offered to the staff on an ongoing basis. Staff will be given opportunities to participate in individual as well as group workshops. Staff are required to attend a minimum of one professional development per school year. Volunteers and students are offered various training opportunities and individual support by staff on an on-going basis.

- K) Document and review the impact of strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and families;

Goals: Documentation to be used to review and assess program quality as it pertains to children, families and staff.

Centre's Approach: A variety of different types of modes of assessment will be used to ensure that the goals outlined in this Program Statement are reflective of the experiences of the children, families and staff. Feedback will be collected via surveys, documentation (daily communication books, email, telephone and in person discussions) and centre meetings.

This Program Statement will be included in the preschool parent handbook for review. The preschool parent handbook is available to all parents on CICC's website. A hard copy will be provided to parents without internet access.

All new staff, students and volunteers will review this program statement prior to starting work at CICC, whenever the program statement is modified and annually thereafter. Documentation may be found in each staff, volunteer and student's personnel file.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

The program is designed to reflect the major areas of development in the young child. These areas are: **gross motor, fine motor, cognitive, language, social/emotional, self-help skills.**

To provide opportunities for the children to develop skills in these areas, the program is divided into the following parts although not all children follow the program in the same order (see child's Individual Program Plan [IPP] binder located in the child's cubby).

Communication is encouraged throughout the morning or afternoon in each part of the program. Some children talk, some use word approximations, some use gestures, some point to pictures, all smile. You will learn your child's way of communicating.

1. **Arrival and Departure Times:** self-help skills are stressed - (dressing and undressing). Toileting routines and skills are taught when the child is ready to be trained. *More details in next section 'Children's Arrivals and Departures'.*
2. **Gross motor time:** activities are presented which encourage physical development and the acquisition of skills such as coordination and balance. The activities are implemented with the use of preschool equipment, some of which are adapted for particular children. Some children have gross motor plans developed by our physiotherapist. These plans can be found in the child's IPP binder.
3. **Story time:** gives the children the opportunity to learn skills such as sitting in a circle, attending to the teacher, waiting for and taking turns, listening for instructions, recognizing their name in print, early numeracy skills and listening to and following a story.

4. **Sensory/Art time:** is a period of creative/sensory activities. Children should be given the opportunity to explore the media as independently of adult help as possible. Here 'the process, not the product' is most important.
5. **Quiet Time:** the children are concentrating on fine motor and cognitive tasks so it is especially important there be as few distractions as possible from noise or from visual interference. This is why each child has his/her own "little corner" and for our request that everyone keep voices as quiet as possible.

The toys and activities are chosen with the child's developmental level in mind. Some are "easy" because success builds self-esteem. Some are challenging to encourage the child to achieve more.
6. **Snack Time:** as well as providing nourishment and energy, this is also a time to work on communication and learn self-help skills. Volunteers enjoy a cup of coffee or tea while the staff supervise the children.
7. **Free play:** is a time for exploring many different activities and is also the time when the children are given the greatest freedom to choose for themselves. Social skills develop in the dramatic play centre by sharing toys and by being close to peers. Remember to think of yourself as a "play partner."
8. **Music Circle:** besides being "fun", this is a learning activity; the most important aspect emphasizes attending to and following the instructions of the teacher.

Children's Arrival and Departure Procedure

Arrival

1. School at Centennial officially begins at 9:10 am in the morning and 1:10 pm in the afternoon.
2. For reasons of safety and liability, children should not be in the classrooms unless a staff member is present. Parents can bring child into the classroom upon arrival but must remain with the child until the teacher(s) are present.

Departure

1. Volunteers **MUST** remain in the classroom with their assigned child under the supervision of the teacher(s) until the person picking up the child has arrived. Please ensure teaching staff are made aware when a parent/caregiver arrives to pick up the child. Centennial has a list of people authorized to pick up each child. If the person picking up your assigned child is late, the teacher(s) will assume responsibility for the child until the parent or caregiver arrives.

Centennial Diaper Requirements

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to supply diapers for their child. They may be found in the child's bag or cubby.

1. REMEMBER to **keep one hand on the child at all times.** If you feel you need assistance, do not hesitate to ask for help from another volunteer or teacher.
2. Report abnormal skin or stool conditions (rash, unusual fecal consistency, colour, odour or frequency) to a staff member so she can see it and please record in the daily notes.
3. Place soiled disposable diaper in diaper container.
4. Remove and dispose of gloves in garbage container.
5. Please follow Toronto Public Health instructions for handwashing, glove use, diaper changes, toilet and potty use that is posted in the washroom.

Diaper Routine

- Please note that gloves must be worn upon entry into the toileting area, especially when diapering a child.
- Diaper change areas may only happen in the washroom located in the classroom.

Follow these instructions:

1. Gather supplies for diaper change
2. Clean your hands and put on gloves*
3. Determine if diaper is being changed on the change table or with the child standing up on the washroom floor.
4. Remove diaper
5. Clean the child
6. Put on clean diaper and dress the child.
7. If the child is on the change table, take the child off and put safely on the floor or hand off to a staff member.
8. Remove gloves and wash your hands
9. Clean the child's hands with soap and water, take child to supervised area
10. Put on a new pair of gloves
11. Disinfect the diaper area**
12. Remove gloves clean your hands

Toileting Routine

This routine is in writing for children requiring assistance when toileting

1. Clean your hands and put on gloves
2. Assist the child on to the toilet if necessary
3. Help the child get dressed (or diapered)
4. Remove gloves and clean your hands
5. Wash your hands and assist the child to wash their hands
6. Return the child to a supervised area

Note: Follow steps 7-9 when cleaning a soiled toilet seat.

7. Put on gloves
8. Disinfect toilet seat as required
9. Remove gloves and clean your hands

Do NOT hesitate to ask teacher/staff for assistance!

Potty Routine

1. Clean your hands and put on gloves
2. Assist the child on to the potty if necessary
3. Help the child get dressed (or diapered)
4. Remove gloves and clean your hands
5. Clean the child's hands and return them to the supervised area
6. Put on gloves
7. Empty contents of potty into toilet carefully to avoid splashing
8. Clean and disinfect potty and utility sink with appropriate disinfectant**
9. Remove gloves and clean your hands

COMMON POSITIONS AND TERMS USED IN THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Front forward carrying position

- a secure position to carry the child from one area to another
- lift the child and hold him/her in front of you, facing forward, his/her back against your chest; one arm across his chest, the other under his/her bent knees.



This position is useful for all non-ambulatory children. Children with low muscle tone should keep their knees together - never carry them on your hip with legs around your waist.

Lying

- supine - on the back
- prone - on the tummy

Flexion

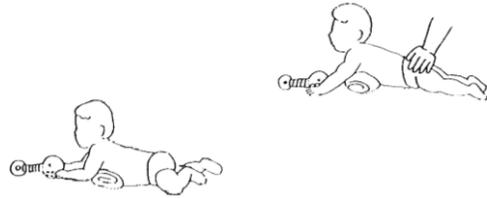
- a limb or the body is bent

Extension

- a limb or the body is straight out.

Propped on forearms

- Lying prone with the arms bent at the elbows and tucked under or alongside the rib cage. Often done over a roll or bolster or on a large ball - helps to promote better head control.



Sitting

- **long-legged sitting** - sitting up with legs straight out
- **side-sitting** - sitting with knees bent and to one side, feet turned to the opposite side.
- **tailor or cross-legged sitting** - knees are bent and facing outward, with ankles crossed.
- **diamond sitting** - legs form a diamond shape, soles of feet together.
- **“W” sitting** is never allowed – places tremendous strain on already-loose ligaments and if allowed to become a habit, can cause the bones to grow twisted in the legs and feet.



together.



Creeping

- travelling forward - tummy on the floor
- 'Commando' style creeping - the child pulls herself forward with her arms (usually, legs are straight out behind).

4-Point Position

- Weight on the hands and knees (tummy up off the floor).

Crawling

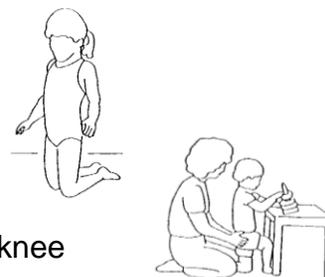
- travelling forward in the four-point position.

Pivoting

- turning the body in a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction, either sitting or flat on tummy.

Kneeling

- **tall kneeling** - child has weight on lower legs and vertical from the knees upward.
- **1/2 kneeling** - one leg is in kneeling position while the other is flexed at the hip with the weight on the flat foot – knee is also flexed.
- **up to standing**
child pulls him/herself up to standing from a position of 1/2 kneeling; usually on a piece of furniture to begin with.



Walking

- Please do NOT support the children by holding their arms and/or hands - it is more natural and therefore realistic to encourage them to pull to stand and move along or cruise on furniture, walls, equipment, etc.
- If your child requires support while walking, place hands cupped in front of shoulders for support to minimize the risk of joint dislocation or injury.
- If, while you are walking and holding a child's hand, she/he lowers to the floor, never pull him/her up by the hand. A slight twist could dislocate his/her shoulder. Always let go and then pick the child up under the arms or encourage him/her to stand up independently.
- Toy carts, chairs, etc. are used for support in walking until the child is able to walk holding one hand.



We hope these explanations are helpful. If you have any questions or comments, please speak to the Physiotherapist.

PRECAUTIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH DOWN SYNDROME

- All children with Down Syndrome are born with low muscle tone and lax ligaments around the joints. There is a possibility of instability between the first two vertebrae in the neck region which could affect the spinal cord, this is called Atlanto-axial instability (AAI). An X-ray will determine whether the instability is present. If a child is diagnosed with AAI instability, it will be noted in their IPP. However, it is best for children with Down syndrome not to do somersaults or place their head on the floor as if they were going to do a somersault, or do any activity that causes weight bearing on the head.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

The volunteers adhere to a behaviour management policy. Please note that CICC's Behaviour Management Policy prohibits the use of the following practices.

The following actions will not be allowed under any circumstances:

1. Any form of CORPORAL PUNISHMENT including but not limited to hitting, spanking, kicking, heavy pushing, shaking, shoving, grabbing, squeezing arms, ears, etc.
2. Physical restraint of children, including but not limited to confining to a chair etc. for discipline or in lieu of supervision unless for the purposes described in the regulation (to prevent self-harm, harm to others and only until risk of harm/injury is no longer imminent) as outlined in the Child Care and Early Years Act 2014.
3. Locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency
4. Use of harsh, degrading, measures or threats or derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, scare or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
5. Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use or clothing
6. Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Volunteers are expected to comply with the above-mentioned policies and procedures and any failure to comply with same could result in a verbal warning, followed by a written warning and finally, dismissal. All volunteers should keep a copy of these guidelines in mind and practice.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To maintain the privacy of the children and families accessing services at CICC, no conversations or relaying of messages related to the child or operation of CICC will take place between the volunteer and a parent or associated professional without the approval and supervision of a CICC staff member. All volunteers are expected to adhere to CICC's Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement.

AFTER HOURS CHILDCARE

Please be advised Parents are not to ask our staff or volunteers to provide child care services. Please help us all respect boundaries. Should you be approached by a parent with a request for child care, politely decline and refer them back to the teachers for suggestions on where they can obtain after hours care.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A VOLUNTEER DURING FIRE DRILL

We are legally required to hold Fire Drills once a month. Our license depends on our compliance. Occasionally the Fire Marshall will observe the Drill and test our system. Following are the responsibilities of volunteers:

1. When bell sounds, immediately go to your child, **pick him/her up and carry to the exit.** If you have difficulty carrying your child, request help from the staff.
2. If you are on the **first floor**, exit via the front door.
3. If you are on the **second floor**, exit via the side door.
4. If you are in the **gym**, exit via the side door.
5. Gather on the steps in front of the church next door. Listen for your child's name to be called and answer "*Here*"; then take your child back into the school. In the event of a real fire the church doors will be opened, and we will take shelter in the church building.

NOTE: Do not take time to dress child or pick up clothes, etc. In the event of a real fire, taking that time could make the difference between everyone getting out safely and suffering injury. If your child is medically fragile, staff will instruct you before the fire drill begins. Fire Drills may occur at any time. We may warn you on the day of the drill, but we will not necessarily tell you what time it will occur.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Centennial Infant and Child Centre
1580 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON M4T 1Z8

Phone: 416-935-0200
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THE CENTENNIAL INFANT AND CHILD CENTRE FOUNDATION

The Foundation helps to enhance our existing programs that are not funded by municipal and provincial governments such as therapy services and specialized equipment for the children. The Foundation is the owner of the building we use at 1580 Yonge St.

Foundation Office: 416-935-1200 Ext: 233

To make a donation, please contact our Foundation Office at 416-935-0200 x 241 or visit our website at: www.cicc.ca