



**CENTENNIAL INFANT AND CHILD CENTRE**

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM  
2011-2012**

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# **CENTENNIAL INFANT AND CHILD CENTRE**

## **PROFILE**

Centennial Infant and Child Centre's purpose is to provide programs and support for young children with special needs and their families. The programs are mainly funded by the city, province and parent fees. Our Centennial Foundation covers the remaining expenses. Centennial is a non-profit corporation run by a Board of Directors. The preschool and kindergarten programs come under the Provincial Day Nurseries Act.

Research shows that early intervention is beneficial for children with special needs to help them to develop their full potential. Centennial was started in 1965 by a parent of a child with special needs. It began with three children who were taught by one teacher and eight volunteers. Centennial now operates four different programs with over 30 staff and more than one hundred volunteers.

From 1967 to 1997, Centennial Infant and Child Centre operated out of the basement of St. George's United Church. In October of 1997, the Centre moved to a larger, self-contained space at 1580 Yonge Street, which accommodates its increased staff and its expanded programs.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Centennial Infant and Child Centre is committed to the development and education of young children with developmental challenges. Centennial focuses on the individual needs of each child and family through early intervention at home, in our integrated preschool and kindergarten programs, and through participation in community programs. Centennial values and builds on the unique abilities and strengths of children with special needs, and encourages all of them to develop the confidence and skills to find their place in the world.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Centennial Infant and Child Centre helps children with special needs begin to learn strategies which will help them to develop and function as independently as possible in society. Staff and families set goals through which these strategies will be achieved. All aspects of a child's development are considered. We believe the goals are best accomplished through an individualized program. In our preschool this is enhanced with a one-to-one adult/child ratio and with the inclusion of typically developing children.

We work directly with families to lend emotional support and to encourage the optimal development of each child. This is an on-going process in which the staff and the family learn from each other.

## **THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM**

Centennial's specialized afternoon Kindergarten program for children 4 - 5 years of age features an adapted curriculum designed to meet the individual needs of the children.

The program runs September to June, Monday through Thursday from 1:15 – 3:30pm. Unlike the Preschool program, the Kindergarten does not provide transportation or a one-to-one volunteer service.

Children blossom in our unique environment which understands their needs and celebrates their strengths. Our low teacher/child ratio (1:4) and a focus on enhancing individual development provides each child with the opportunity to explore important concepts in a supportive classroom setting.

### **STAFF**

The kindergarten staff members include five teachers with backgrounds in child development, early childhood education, elementary school education and special education. They have extensive experience, both personally and professionally, in working with children and their families. The preschool works in collaboration with a team of professionals, including physiotherapists, occupational therapists and speech and language pathologists. They help each family to network and coordinate the appropriate services for their children. They also assist the families in accessing the necessary services and funding to maximize their child's abilities. The teachers help parents explore future educational settings and work with them to assure a smooth transition into the school system. Centennial is committed to helping parents advocate on their child's behalf.

Centennial's Manager of Centre Operations is responsible for the management of the Preschool Program.

### **PROGRAM HOURS**

The program operates 4 afternoons per week, from 1:15 to 3:30 Monday through Thursday. We are open from September to June and follow the holidays of the TDSB.

### **ARRIVAL**

We are allowing a 15 minute drop off period between 1:15 – 1:30 p.m. Children are not permitted in the classroom before 1:15 P.M. Please bring your child into the classroom upon arrival and assist him/her in finding their cubby, hanging up their bag and undressing. Please ensure that the teacher knows your child is present before you leave. Do not leave your child in the care of our teaching assistant or student teachers.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND/OR PHONE NUMBER**

If there is a change in phone numbers, addresses or emails or any of the emergency contacts, please notify the Office Administrator immediately.

### **PICKING UP YOUR CHILD**

**If someone other than yourself is picking up your child, please make sure their name is on the form that lists the names of people who are authorized to transport your child.** Please phone the Office Administrator and let her know if there is a change in the usual pick up plan. We will allow your child to leave only with you or with people you have designated in writing. **The designated person needs to check in at the front desk upon arrival.**

### **PARKING AT CENTENNIAL**

Due to safety concerns brought to our attention we have had to limit onsite parking.

The driveway on the south side of our building and up to the pedestrian sidewalk closest to our building is a designated Fire Access Route and therefore parking is not allowed. Parking is no longer permitted on the front “parking pad” as it obstructs the view of drivers and this is a legitimate safety concern for pedestrians on the sidewalk. For the same reason, we can’t park parallel to the two cars that are parked on the “city” spots close to Yonge St.

We recognize that this may be an inconvenience. The four “city” spots near the road will still be available for parking as well as one space at the front corner of our building at the bottom of the front stairs. There is no parking in front of or behind this one designated space. The back of the building is reserved for staff only. There is parking on nearby streets such as Oriole Gdns., Heath St., Yonge St., Lawton etc.

For quick drop off and pick ups of your children, you are welcome to park in the front driveway, however if you will be staying longer than 5 minutes you will need to park off site on one of the side streets. Please also be aware that the driveway entrance must remain unobstructed at all times.

### **ABSENCE PROCEDURE**

**When your child is absent from school it is very important that the school be notified before noon.** We also need you to call us on the day your child is returning. This allows the teachers to plan for your child’s return.

**Please call us at 416-935-0200 and press ‘0’.**

**It is not necessary to call the school each day your child is away – just at the beginning of the absence and at the end of the absence.**

**If your child is being transported to and from Centennial by a bus company, the driver also needs to be notified before noon if your child will not be attending school that day.**

## **CLOTHING**

**All clothing should be clearly labeled with your child's name.** We like to return all lost clothing to the rightful owner. Clothing should be loose fitting and uncomplicated so that the children can dress and undress as independently as possible.

Please find a distinctive bag, which can be clearly labeled with the child's name. This bag should contain a set of extra clothes. It can also be used to carry communication notices between school and home. If your child is toilet training, please send extra underpants.

## **CONTACT WITH PARENTS**

Regular contact is encouraged either at pick-up time or by telephone. Parents are always welcomed to visit the classroom for the afternoon. We ask that you arrange your visit in advance with the classroom teacher.

## **FEES**

Centennial Infant and Child Centre is financed to a large extent from public funds but a portion of our budget comes from school fees. Fees are divided into 9 monthly installments. Please see the fee schedule for the current year. Fees are payable by postdated cheques. The first cheque is a combined cheque covering September and June (first and last month's tuition). The remaining 8 cheques cover the tuition for each month from October to May inclusively. A fee will be charged for N.S.F. cheques. **Parents must pay fees even if the child is away ill.**

If we do not receive fees for a period of more than a month and you have not requested financial assistance and filled in a request form, the Centre Manager may ask you to withdraw your child as there are always children on the waiting list needing a space.

### **Extended Absence**

**Should your child be absent for a length of time for medical reasons or due to a holiday**, we do require that fees continue to be paid since the school must still meet its expenses. **Parents who wish to withdraw their child from the school are asked to give one month's notice in writing.** Parents will be charged fees for a maximum one-month after notice of withdrawal has been given or until space is filled.

**If a child is withdrawn for more than one month**, his or her place in the school will be forfeited, although his or her name may be added to the beginning of the waiting list. Exceptions will be made for those children who require surgery or who develop a prolonged illness. However, during such absences, the payment of fees will still be required.

## **APPLYING FOR FUNDING**

Should you wish to apply for funding to assist you with the payment of fees, you can apply to the City of Toronto Children's Services 416-392-5437.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES**

Centennial Infant and Child Centre's goal is to help children develop the skills and independence that will enable them to develop to their full potential. We believe that children learn best in a cooperative and friendly atmosphere and we support a non-discriminatory environment. To the best of our ability, we at Centennial try to meet the individual needs of the children who attend our programs. We hope that we can work together with the families in a spirit of mutual respect.

Over the years, we have developed the following policies to help us to run the Centre effectively.

### **CLEANLINESS**

The children wash their hands before snack and after toileting.

### **SNACK**

The daily snack is healthy and provides a variety of choices each day.

### **FEEDING ISSUES**

If there is a concern about your child's eating abilities being unsafe, a strategy will be developed and carried out by the classroom teachers. It is our goal to work together in order to ensure safe and successful feeding skills.

### **ILLNESS**

If a child arrives at school with, or develops symptoms of a contagious disease, such as chicken pox or an intestinal upset such as vomiting, diarrhea or fever, the parents will be telephoned and asked to come to pick up the child. The child may not return to school until fully recovered. A child with an upper respiratory condition such as a runny nose or slight cough, without fever, may attend school.

**No child should be sent to school with a fever or diarrhea. The fever must be gone for 24 hours before the child returns to school.**

### **HIV AND HEPATITIS**

We require that you inform the Centre Manager if your child is HIV positive or is a carrier of HEPATITIS. This information will be kept confidential.

## **MEDICATION**

If a child requires medication, while at Centennial, a medication form needs to be completed. We can administer the following:

- Epipen
- Seizure medication
- Antibiotics, as needed

Please complete a 'Request to Administer Medication' form, which you can obtain from your child's teacher. Centennial Infant and Child Centre will administer medication prescribed by a physician and within the bounds of our policy only. The school program staff will take all reasonable precautions in the storage, maintenance and administration of medication. All medications will be provided by the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) and be readily available at all times.

## **ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK**

Anaphylactic shock is a serious state of shock brought about by hypersensitivity to an allergen such as drugs, foreign protein or toxin, bee or wasp sting. There is no time to waste therefore a quick response is necessary. If your child has an anaphylactic allergy, please contact the office administrator at the school for the appropriate form.

## **IMMUNIZATION**

The Ministry of Health requires that records of your child's immunization be kept up to date. We strongly suggest that your child be immunized against HEPATITIS B. When your child receives additional immunization, please forward to the school a signed statement by the doctor containing the new information. A child is not permitted to attend school if immunization is not up to date. If for personal reasons you choose not to have your child immunized, you will need to call Toronto Public Health at 416-392-1250 to obtain a 'Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief Affidavit'. You will be notified if there is an outbreak or immediate risk of an outbreak of a designated disease in the Kindergarten.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

From time to time field trips may be planned to enhance a learning theme. Parents are notified at least a week before a field trip takes place and details are given regarding clothing, seating and transportation. We also send home a permission form which needs to be signed and returned to us prior to the trip.

## **ADMISSION FORM**

A child will be admitted to the school only after we have received all forms properly filled out and signed by the parent/guardian along with the post-dated tuition cheques.

### **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT**

The staff adheres to a behaviour management policy. They redirect children and encourage positive social emotional interaction. A copy of this policy is included in the admissions package.

### **INCLUSION/ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICY**

A copy of this policy is included in the admissions package.

### **SMOKE-FREE CENTRE**

No person is permitted to smoke or hold a lighted cigarette anywhere on the property of Centennial Infant and Child Centre. Every staff, student, volunteer, parent and visitor will be informed that smoking is prohibited. 'No Smoking' signs are posted throughout the workplace as well as in all washrooms.

### **SERIOUS OCCURENCES**

The Ministry of Community and Social Services requires under the Day Nurseries Act that all Serious Occurrences be reported to the Ministry and Toronto Children's Services.

A Serious Occurrence is defined as:

1. Death of a child
2. Any serious injury to a client, which occurs while participating in a service.  
This includes:
  - Any injury caused by the service provider;
  - A serious accidental injury received while in attendance at the centre
  - An injury to a child, which is non-accidental, including self-inflicted, or unexplained, and which requires treatment by a medical practitioner, including a nurse or dentist
3. Any alleged abuse or mistreatment of a child while in service
4. Any situation where a child is missing
5. Any disaster, such as a fire, on the premises where a service is provided
6. Any complaint concerning the operational, physical or safety standards of the service that is considered by the service provider to be of a serious nature

## 7. Other – complaint made by or about a child, or any other serious occurrence

Effective November 1, 2011 when a Serious Occurrence is filed with the Ministry, a Serious Occurrence Notification Form must be completed and posted in the front office at the centre. This form will ensure that all parents and visitors to the centre are aware of the Serious Occurrence. This form will be posted for 10 business days. If the form is updated and additional information such as actions taken by CICC, the form will remain posted for 10 business days from the date of the update.

### **SUPERVISION POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS**

Centennial Infant and Child Centre (CICC) is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children. It is the responsibility of the agency to ensure that every child is supervised by a CICC employee at all times. CICC will ensure that all non-staff members such as volunteers and students adhere to the policies, screening and supervision that is expected of CICC employees. CICC will ensure that:

- No child is supervised by a person under 18 years of age
- Only CICC employees will have direct unsupervised access to children
- Volunteers and students may not be counted in the staffing ratios unless Ministry Director approval has been given.

CICC volunteers and students are required to review Ministry required centre policies and to provide Ministry required documentation before working at the centre.

### **OTHER CENTENNIAL PROGRAMS**

#### **PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

Children with special needs benefit from the routines and skills taught in a preschool program. Centennial's Preschool Program is an integrated program that emphasizes individual programming in an enriched, structured and nurturing atmosphere. Children with special needs and those who are typically developing come together in an educational setting and benefit from the opportunity to learn from one another.

About 20% of the children who attend the preschool program are children who do not have special needs. The "typically developing" children benefit from a curriculum which prepares them for Kindergarten in a nurturing and educational environment. They develop an appreciation for people's differences and act as role models to the children who have special needs.

Children entering the program are between the ages of 2 ½ and 4 years. The program runs weekday mornings from September to June and follows the holidays designated by the public school system. The preschool serves 32 children.

Children with special needs attending the preschool benefit from a one-to-one adult/child ratio. Each child has an individual program plan developed by their primary teacher and their parents in consultation with a physiotherapist, occupational therapist and speech/language pathologist. The program covers the developmental areas of cognition, communication, self help skills, social, and motor skills. Individual programs are updated regularly, and the goals are implemented every day by the classroom teachers and the child's volunteer (an individual that works one-to-one with the child).

### **EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

The Early Intervention Program at Centennial primarily provides in-home service to children from birth to five years. There is no fee for this program. The Early Intervention Program is designed for infants and children who have a delay in two or more areas of development. A diagnosis is not required to make a referral; referrals can be made by parents and caregivers, health-care providers and those working with the children. Parents must give consent if others refer on their behalf.

The program is home-based or community-based, depending on the needs of the child. If a child attends an Early Years Centre, our Interventionists can consult to the staff.

The Early Intervention Program provides a family-centred service encouraging positive parent/caregiver-child interactions while promoting the child's optimal development. Parent/Infant groups may be available in certain parts of the city.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION PROGRAM**

Centennial has two Resource Consultants who support a group of childcare centres in Toronto. They consult to the Early Childhood Educators in these centres, and help to ensure that all children, no matter what their needs, can participate in the program. Resource Consultation includes:

- Regular visits to childcare programs
- Early identification and intervention
- Individual and program consultation
- Staff training
- Program adaptations and environmental assessment
- Service coordination and referral

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **THE CENTENNIAL INFANT AND CHILD CENTRE BOARD**

The Board of Directors of Centennial Infant and Child Centre is made up of 10 individuals from the community plus a parent representative. The Board meets approximately 10 times a year with the Executive Director who reports to the Board on the operations of the Centennial. The Board, with the E.D, also helps establish long term objectives and strategic plans for the Centre. As well, the Board monitors and ensures the financial stability of the organization.

### **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 transportation, therapy services and specialized equipment for the children. The Foundation is the owner of the building we use at 1580 Yonge St. If you wish to make a donation, please contact our Foundation Office at 416-935-0200 x 241 or visit our website at: [www.cicc.ca](http://www.cicc.ca)

### **STUDENT PLACEMENT**

We have many students doing placements in the Kindergarten Program. These include university students, community college students and high school co-op students.