



FULL-TIME CHILD CARE PROGRAM

PARENT HANDBOOK

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Mothercraft Overview

Mission (Why we exist): Helping families in Ottawa grow and thrive.

Values (How we exist):

Nurturing – Supporting each other with compassion

Inclusivity – Welcoming and encouraging diversity

Collaborative Relationships - Built on respect and communication

Creativity - Exploring possibilities

Integrity - Acting with honesty and reliability

Programs and services (What we do to realize our mission):

Mothercraft Ottawa, a leader in early learning and care since 1944, is a charitable non-profit organization that enriches the well-being of families with infants and young children through responsive, high quality programs and services.

Mothercraft Ottawa delivers child care for children aged 6 weeks to 12 years through licensed child care centres and home child care, before-and-after-school programs and part-time/casual care.

We support the evolving needs of families in Ottawa through our diverse child and family services, including comprehensive prenatal and parenting classes and workshops, perinatal support, programming for children with special needs, as well as an array of programs and services offered through our EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

1. Licensing: Standards, Legislation and Inspections

In Ontario, anyone who cares for six or more unrelated children under the age of 10 must be licensed by the Ministry of Education. This includes home-based child care and centre-based child care.

Licensed child care programs must meet and maintain specific provincial standards set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)*. These standards provide for the health, safety and developmental needs of the children.

At least once a year, staff of the Ministry of Education make unannounced inspections of all licensed child care programs to:

- make sure that provincial standards are being met
- issue and renew licenses
- investigate complaints
- monitor operators who are having difficulty meeting licensing standards.

Licensing reports for all home-based and centre based licensed child care programs are available on the [licensed child care finder](#).

Please refer to the Ministry of Education website for detailed licensing information: <http://www.earlyyears.edu.gov.on.ca/EYPortal/en/ChildCareLicensing/CCEYALicensingStandards/index.htm>

2. Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Program

Mothercraft Ottawa has enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Program. The implementation of this new program will take several years. The first reduction in fees was a reduction of fees by 25%, retroactive to April 1, 2022, until December 31, 2022.

The second stage of fee reductions became effective as of January 2023. **Childcare fees for eligible children have been reduced by 52.75% based on 2022 fees, but not less than a daily rate of \$12.00 per day.** Programs that were previously less than \$12.00 per day do not qualify for a fee reduction and remain unchanged.

The rates for eligible children, as of January 2023, will be:

Program	Daily Base Fee 2022	Daily Base Fee as of January 2023
Toddlers	72.35	34.19
Junior Preschool	54.85	25.92
Senior Preschool	54.85	25.92
Kinders	56.40	26.65

Eligibility for reduced fees

Eligible children are entitled to a childcare fee reduction retroactive to April 1, 2022, up to a minimum of \$12.00 per day. Children aged 0-5 are eligible. In addition, children are also eligible if they are six (6) years old, up until a cut-off date determined as follows:

- If the child's sixth (6th) birthday falls between January and June, the child remains eligible until June 30 of that calendar year;
- If the child's sixth (6th) year birthday falls between July and December, the child remains eligible until the end of the month of their sixth (6th) birthday.

Children receiving a municipal subsidy

If your childcare fees are fully or partially subsidized, for any amount you pay directly to the City of Ottawa, the subsidy office will notify you if your fees are eligible for the CWELCCS.

3. Philosophy

The goal of Canadian Mothercraft of Ottawa (hereinafter known as Mothercraft Ottawa) is to provide quality care for children in a child care environment. This care is a shared responsibility between Parents and the Agency. The program should promote and enhance all components of the child's development. It is the right of all children to have the opportunity to develop in a safe, secure and nurturing environment.

4. Program Statement

Established in conjunction with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

Mothercraft Ottawa (Mothercraft), believes that all children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Our Child Care Programs offer safe, secure and supportive environments within which children can grow and thrive. Mothercraft actively seeks out and supports collaboration with community partners for the benefit of all children, families and staff.

In alignment with the Minister of Education's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy, Mothercraft's Programs are guided by "How Does Learning Happen", Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years and by "Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT).

"How Does Learning Happen" is based on [four key foundations](#):

[Belonging: a sense of connectedness to others, an individual's experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world.](#)

Our Evered Avenue location is home to a variety of programs that support families in many ways. From the moment a family walks into the building, they are welcomed with a warm smile and a helping hand (and maybe some stickers on special occasions).

Mothercraft is a close-knit community and we are often the extended family. It is a partnership of two families raising a child together. We encourage everyone to share their special celebrations and events with us as we like to share ours. Our families get to know each other through the children's friendships and special events.

We believe that each family is unique and establishing strong partnerships with them enhances our ability to meet the needs of their children in our care. We welcome families into our environments and value their perspective, ensuring that communication is an important part of each day. Sharing information through posted program plans, message boards, learning stories, email, and daily conversations supports this critical partnership between families and Educators/Home Child Care Providers. We plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported and which is inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans. All strategies set out to meet individualized goals and activities as characterized above will be thoughtfully established, documented and their impact reviewed and communicated on a regular and ongoing basis with families.

What you might see....

- Informative “Welcome to the Program” packages given out to parents as they inquire about the program or upon registration
- Integration to the program is planned with the parents to meet the needs of each child and family.
- Parents calling in to see how their child's day is going
- Educators welcome families and children with a personal greeting; seeking information about the child's health, mood, or special events in the child's life – supporting the child and family in this transition
- Educators ensuring that a child's favourite toy or activity is ready for the child upon arrival to help ease transition into the program.
- Every child has their own special place for their belongings
- Families are encouraged to come and participate in the program
- Walls proudly filled with the children's work (art, photographs, comments etc.)
- Celebrations of special holidays and traditions

[Well-being: the importance of physical and mental health and wellness incorporating capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation.](#)

Our curriculum is built from child generated ideas. We teach and model the acceptance of diversity in all aspects of daily life, thoughts, feelings, social skills and learning styles.

We encourage the children to interact with their peers and teachers in a positive and respectful manner. We offer an academic play-based learning environment for the children to retain new information and to explore. A positive learning environment is essential to the success of each child. We value every child as an individual and treat them with respect. Our environment and teaching tools help aid the children in their personal development, express their emotions, support autonomy and foster self-regulatory skills.

Our menus follow the Canada Food Guide and provide the children with nutritious meals and snacks which also contribute to their overall wellbeing. The menus within our Centre Based Group Care Programs are dietician approved.

What you might see....

- Lots of hugs, laughter and smiles
- Educators and children working together to accomplish daily tasks and activities- giving the children a sense of confidence and pride.
- Children using proper handwashing techniques
- Visual cues to help guide the children through a task or routine (step-by-step pictures)
- Children dressing and undressing independently.
- Children choosing the activities they want to explore
- Children making choices at meal times
- Children serving their own lunch or snack
- Children listening to the cues of their own bodies (deciding whether to eat snack or not)
- Children having flexible rest times
- Children practising deep breathing techniques and other self-regulating strategies
- Children playing outside twice a day – in the playground and neighbourhood parks and on community walks
- Daily schedules that are built to follow the children’s natural rhythm
- Time is allowed for unstructured play as well as teacher guided play
- Children are free to show their individuality
- Intrinsic rewards are encouraged
- Supporting the children in expressing their thoughts and feelings appropriately
- Teaching children to recognize feelings and emotions – their own and others
- Demonstrating and encouraging respect for others (bodies, possessions and ideas)
- Providing outlets to express needs (small quiet spaces, jumping jacks in the hall)
- Educators provide clear and consistent expectations

Engagement: suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking and innovating which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.

The Mothercraft Team is dedicated to creating an exciting learning environment and curriculum inspired by the children, their families and our community. This allows us to be supportive and responsive to each child’s individual journey along the developmental continuum socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically.

Our environment is designed to encourage and support the development of positive social interactions allowing children to develop problem solving and self-regulation skills as they learn about themselves and the world around them. Activities and experiences are children inspired and adult supported while our play based learning approach, programs, and schedules offer a balance of rest, active and quiet play both indoors and outside allowing the children to be active

and engaged learners. We believe children are capable of informed risk taking and increasing independence within appropriate environments.

What you might see....

- Activities that engage all the senses
- Small, individual and large group play
- Children interacting with their peers
- Parents and community partners sharing their knowledge
- Educators and children expressing their sense of wonder and excitement through inquiry
- Children helping children
- Educators and children using technology for learning and documentation
- Responsive curriculums based on the interests and needs of the children
- Real artifacts (dishes, glass jars, wasp nests etc.) for exploration
- Children learning beyond the doors of Mothercraft as we explore the parks, museums, forests, stores and the resources of our neighbourhood.

Expression: Communication (expressing and listening) takes many different forms. Children use their bodies, words and materials to develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language rich environments support growing communication skills which are foundation for literacy.

What you might see and hear.....

- Children identifying and expressing their feelings through the use of many different *materials* (books, felt boards, music and songs, costumes, dramatic play etc.)
- Educators modelling patience as they allow the children time to formulate their thoughts and responses
- Open-ended thought provoking questions
- Use of sign language
- Healthy physical expression such as dancing and yoga
- Educators modelling appropriate language and body language
- Children being offered choices and support as they work through the outcomes and consequences of their choice.
- Day-to-day conversation and chats about their interests, feelings and experiences
- Educators responding to the children's efforts to communicate through words, gestures or expression of emotions.
- Educators supporting the parents to share their stories, questions and concerns • Visual cues/pictograms and charts to help the children identify feelings.
- Walls filled with documentation of the children's work
- Introduction to new languages
- Educators learning key words/expression in the language used at home

Continuous professional learning is an integral part of Mothercraft Ottawa’s commitment to children and families and we seek out, encourage and support all of our staff and Home Child Care Providers to engage in opportunities as they arise.

This program statement is considered a living document and may change as we learn and grow with our children and our community. The Mothercraft Team will continue to contribute to the development of this statement. Mothercraft will support all employees (permanent and temporary) with the implementation of the statement through on-going discussion and critical reflection opportunities on-going during their career/placement with Mothercraft. All employees (permanent and temporary) formally review the statement annually and as changes arise.

5. Board Composition

Our Board is a team of volunteer directors and the Past-President, who is an ex-officio, nonvoting member. They are responsible for providing direction to the organization and are accountable for all affairs of the organization. The Executive Director is the staff person hired by and directly accountable to the Board.

We believe a diverse mix of skills, experience and interests strengthens the Board and benefits Mothercraft Ottawa. To that end, we seek to recruit board members from a range of disciplines and experience.

For more information on our Board of Directors and any volunteer opportunities, please see our website.

6. Hours of Service/Holidays

The Mothercraft Ottawa, Full-time Child Care Program is open year round from 7:30am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday with the exception of the following days:

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

When Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve fall on a working day, the center closes at 3:00pm.

The Full-Time Child Care Program will be closed the First Ottawa-Carleton District School Board PD Day after March Break (e.g. April 24th 2020).

The Kinder Program will be closed the Friday before Labour Day.

7. **Waiting List Policy**

Mothercraft Ottawa's Home Child Care and Centre based programs work with the City of Ottawa Child Care Registry and Waitlist (CCRAW).

Families looking to register a child in a Mothercraft Ottawa child care program must register on the CCRAW. Each of Mothercraft Ottawa's child care programs manages its own waiting list. Families can search for us using the following program titles:

Mothercraft Ottawa – Child Care Evered

Mothercraft Ottawa – Part time/Casual

Mothercraft Ottawa – Home Child Care

Canadian Mothercraft of Ottawa Carleton – Elmdale Kindergarten and School Age Program (subsidy only)

Mothercraft Ottawa – Waterbridge Program (for preschool and subsidy)

To register for the Elmdale and Waterbridge Before and After School Program please contact the program office for an application form elmdale@mothercraft.com or T27@mothercraft.com or waterbridge@mothercraft.com

We do have some priorities that we consider when inviting new families to join us. In order of priority:

- meet the needs of the children currently enrolled;
- children of Mothercraft Ottawa Staff
- siblings of children currently enrolled;
- children of staff at our partner schools;
- Mothercraft service users

Children registered on CCRAW will be offered a space based in order of application date wherever possible. Other factors the programs must consider for enrolment are the needs of the child, program capacity, and the age of the child.

Families inquiring about their position on the CCRAW can contact the specific Mothercraft program for details. In order to maintain the privacy of the registrants, access to the CCRAW is limited to administrators.

8. **Registration**

Wherever possible parents will complete all forms required by the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)* (included in your registration package) two weeks prior to the child's first

day in the program. These forms will be kept in the child's file. It is important that the parents keep the program informed of any changes to phone numbers, address, emergency contacts, immunizations, and child's state of health.

9. **Registration Procedure for The Kinder Program**

Children must be 4 or 5 years of age by the end of December to be eligible for the Kinder Program.

Registration for this program begins in January.

Our Junior Kinders automatically have the option of remaining in the program for their Senior Kinder year. These families confirm their intention to stay or not.

Priority for available spaces is given to Kinder Program eligible children with younger siblings in Mothercraft programs at the Evered location.

Upon registration parents will be required to complete the Parent Registration package. A nonrefundable deposit of one month's fee by current dated cheque, cash, credit or debit is required within 2 business days after acceptance of the offered space.

As long as your child remains in the Kinder Program, this deposit will be applied to September's fee.

Should you have any questions, please contact Janet Libbey at 613-728-1839, ext 241.

10. **Integration to Child Care**

It is very important that your child's early experiences at child care are positive. Some children settle in a couple of days, others need more time. With this in mind, we ask that parents follow this schedule for their child's first week at child care.

- | | |
|-------|---|
| DAY 1 | Parent and child visit all morning. |
| DAY 2 | Parent and child visit through lunchtime. Parent may leave room for a short break. |
| DAY 3 | Parent and child visit together for a little while but parent should leave for a couple of hours, coming back after lunch to take child home. |
| DAY 4 | Child spends morning and lunchtime at child care without parent. Educators will try to settle child for sleep time. |
| DAY 5 | Child spends a full day at child care without parent. |

The Educators will discuss your child's integration on a daily basis and will recommend any alterations that suit your child's individual needs.

11. **Base Fee and Non-Base Fee Payments Policy**

a) Registration:

- i. A one-time \$30.00 administration fee (per child) is payable upon registration with Mothercraft Ottawa.
- ii. To confirm your Child's space in the Toddler Program, Junior Preschool Program or Senior Preschool Program, a non-refundable deposit equal to 10 days of care is required. This deposit will be applied to the first 10 days of care in your child's program. Interest is not paid on this deposit.
- iii. To confirm your Child's space in the Kinder Program, a non-refundable deposit equal to the first full month of the program is required. This deposit will be applied to the first month of kinder program fees. Interest is not paid on this deposit.

b) Program Fees:

- i. The Parent will be charged from the first day the Child is in the Program, including any integration time.
- ii. Full charges will be levied regardless of absence, including but not limited to statutory holidays, holidays or illness.
- iii. There is no discount for siblings enrolled in other programs at Mothercraft Ottawa.
- iv. Fees are subject to change with a minimum of two (2) months' notice.

c) Accounts:

- i. An account will be established for each family, as per our Accounts Receivable Policy.
- ii. Invoices are processed monthly for the child care services provided in the previous month.
- iii. Monthly statements are issued to the primary email account on file. If you wish to receive paper copies of statement, please notify the Program Manager or Accounting Department.
- iv. Receipts for income tax purposes will be issued at year-end.

d) Payment:

- i. Payments can be made by Debit, VISA, MasterCard, online banking through most banks, cash or cheque.
 - ii. You can choose to authorize automatic monthly payment through Debit, VISA or MasterCard. Automatic payments are typically processed on the 5th business day of the *P* month.
 - iii. Cheques are payable to Mothercraft Ottawa and must be provided to the Program Manager or mailed to the Accounting Department, Mothercraft Ottawa, 475 Evered Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1Z 5K9.
 - iv. Cheques should include the name of your child, the program in which your child is enrolled and the period covered by that cheque.
- e) Late, Non-Payment, Dishonoured Cheques:
- i. There will be a \$25.00 charge for each cheque returned to us from the bank due to insufficient funds.
 - ii. An interest charge of 2% per month will be added to all overdue accounts with balance in arrears for more than 60 days.
 - iii. Non-payment, late payment and dishonoured cheques will, at the absolute discretion of the Program, be deemed to be a breach of this agreement by the Parent, giving rise to the termination of services and withdrawal of the Child from the Program.
 - iv. Mothercraft Ottawa reserves the right to discontinue child care when an account is 90 days overdue. However, Mothercraft Ottawa in special circumstances may, in its absolute discretion, agree to make alternative payment arrangements on a case by case basis. Mothercraft Ottawa shall be under no obligation to do so.

12. **Withdrawal and Discharge**

- a. Four (4) weeks (twenty (20) business days) written notice will be provided to Mothercraft Ottawa before the Child is withdrawn from the Program. If such notice period is not provided the parent agrees to provide Mothercraft Ottawa with payment in lieu of notice for this same period of time. The parent would forfeit any paid time and pay the remaining balance equal to four weeks.
- b. If a child is withdrawn temporarily, he/she will be put on the waiting list on the day of withdrawal. Every effort will be made to re-enter the child on the requested date, but no guarantee can be given.
- c. Mothercraft Ottawa reserves the right to discharge a child if:

- i) in the absolute discretion of the Director, the Child is not adjusting to the setting after a reasonable period of time;
- ii) after exhausting all teaching resources at Mothercraft Ottawa's disposal, Mothercraft Ottawa is unable to address the needs of the Child:
- iii) Child continues to display behaviour which endangers the health, safety and security of other children or staff; or
- iv) the policies, as outlined in this agreement are not being followed.

13. Late Policy

Canadian Mothercraft of Ottawa-Carleton (hereinafter Mothercraft Ottawa) Child Care Program is open from 7:30am to 5:30pm.

Mothercraft Ottawa understands that sometimes emergencies arise and lateness is unavoidable however it is Mothercraft Ottawa's policy that lateness is not acceptable.

The Parent will:

- Prior to commencing care, provide Mothercraft Ottawa with the names and telephone numbers of one emergency contact who may be called upon to pick up the child if the Parent is unable to pick up the child at the scheduled pick up time; and advise the Program Manager immediately when such telephone numbers or emergency contacts change.

Mothercraft Ottawa will:

- Ask parents to update and verify the contact information at least once a year and every time a child moves to a new program.

It is expected that parents will be ready to leave the child care centre building with their child(ren) no later than the end of scheduled hours of operation.

The first and second time that a Parent is late, the Educator in the program will speak with the Parent, clarify the reason for the lateness and review the policy with the Parent. The Parent will sign a Late Parent Record form to acknowledge the situation. The Educator will notify the Manager.

If the Parent is late a third time, the Educator will again speak to the Parent. The Parent will sign a form to acknowledge the situation. The Manager will contact the Parent by phone/or in writing to address the difficulties and to arrive at a solution and may result in termination of services.

Parents who are late more than 3 times will be considered to be in violation of their contract and termination of services may occur.

14. No Show Policy

A Parent is considered a no-show when she/he does not appear on-site at Mothercraft Ottawa thirty (30) minutes after her/his scheduled pick-up time without contact with family or any of the emergency contact people.

In the event of a no-show:

The Educator and child(ren) will remain on the premises. The Educator may not take a child(ren) off the premises.

The Educator will contact, in order, one of the following:

- a) Program Manager
- b) Director of Childcare
- c) Executive Director
- d) President of the Board of Directors or designated Board Member

In the event that this is necessary management will make alternative arrangements for the child.

If we have not heard from the parent/guardian/emergency contact 1½ hours after closing or scheduled pick up time, the CAS will be contacted and the child will be released to their custody.

15. Reporting Child Abuse is the Law

From time to time we are faced with some very difficult situations in the child care centre. We may see a mark on a child in an unusual place, witness an abusive situation or observe a type of behaviour or play that is not consistent with a child's normal range of experience. In these circumstances, we are legally bound to report these situations to the Children's Aid Society (CAS). We cannot judge or decide what child abuse is, we must leave that to a CAS worker. We are not allowed to contact parents first. We must emphasize that in our experience at Mothercraft Ottawa, we have rarely had reason to call CAS. When we have, the worker has always been a warm, caring person able to deal with the child at his/her own level. They are very willing to spend time, give explanations and to reassure the child, parents and Educators. A paramount objective of Ontario's Child and Family Services Act "is to promote the best interest, protection and well-being of children".

In the unlikely event a CAS worker calls you; we can assure you that the utmost confidentiality would be maintained by staff. Only those persons directly involved would know of the call and once CAS had investigated and closed the case, the matter would be ended as far as we are concerned. We would not refer to it again and we hope it would make no difference in the close, supportive relationship we have with all our parents.

16. Guiding Child's Behaviour

Mothercraft staff, students, volunteers encourage and support the development of positive social interactions which allow children to develop self-regulation and problem solving skills as they learn about themselves and the world around them. By establishing positive adult-child relationships, Mothercraft Ottawa staff guide a child's behaviour in a positive and supportive manner.

The *Child Care and Early Years Act*, 2014, S.O. 2014, c. 11, Sched. 1 and specifically **Regulation 137/15** indicate the following prohibited practices:

- corporal punishment of the child;
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing children from hurting themselves or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- locking the exits of the child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of Mothercraft Ottawa's Emergency Management Policies and Procedures;
- use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

17. Immunization

The Ottawa Public Health Department encourages parents to update their children's immunization records online at www.ParentinginOttawa.ca/Immunization^{T27} [n 27T](#)

We are required by the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)* to have up-to-date records of immunization on file for the children in our care. Parents are required to provide the child care office with an up-to date copy of the child's immunization record. The child will not be accepted into the program until this record is provided. Please notify the Full-time Child Care office of any new immunization your child may receive.

If you choose not to immunize your child for any reason you will need to contact the Public Health Immunization Program at 613-580-6744, ext. 24108.

18. Children's Health

Health Conditions requiring Exclusion from the Full-time Child Care Program

When is a child too sick or contagious to attend the Full-time Child Care Program? This is a question which may present itself during your child's stay at the centre. In order to protect all of the children and staff, the following procedures must be followed. Your Child cannot attend the Full-time Child Care Program if he/she:

- a) Has a temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.4 degrees Centigrade) or over. *Children must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to the program.*
- b) Has not been fever free for 24 hours. *Children must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to the program.*
- c) Has vomited while at child care or within the last 24 hours (vomiting is more severe than an infant's "spit up"). Children cannot return to child care until they experience a full waking day after the last day with any episodes of vomiting. For example: Your child vomited at 9:00 Monday morning. There are no further episodes of vomiting. Your child will need to stay away from child care for all of Monday AND Tuesday (as the 1 full waking day after the last episode).
- d) Has diarrhea (abnormally loose, watery bowel movements that are much more frequent than usual). Children will be sent home from the program upon the third incident of diarrhea during the day (unless the child care is in Outbreak Mode). Children cannot return to child care until they experience a full waking day after the last day with any episodes of diarrhea. For example: Your child had a last bout of diarrhea on Sunday at 6:00 in the morning. Your child will only be able to return to child care on Tuesday at the earliest, assuming there are no episodes of diarrhea on Monday (Monday would be the one full waking day).
- e) Has been on a prescribed medication for less than 24 hours for a condition requiring exclusion from the Program according to the City of Ottawa *Guidelines for Communicable Diseases and Other Childhood Health Issues for Schools and Child Care Centres* (CCC) <http://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/professionals-and-partners/cd-guidelines-ccc^{27T}schools.aspx^{27T}>. Your child must be symptom free and able to cope with all aspects of the Program.
- f) Has a rash that has not been identified by parent or physician or that seems to be worsening.
- g) Has a severe cold with fever, sneezing and heavy nasal drainage.
- h) Seems really sick without any obvious symptoms. In this case, the child may act and look different; may be unusually tired, listless or irritable.
- i) Is requiring one-to-one attention from a staff member in order to allow the child to cope and be reasonably comfortable.

- j) Has any disease/illness/condition listed in the *City of Ottawa Guidelines for Schools and Child Care Facilities on Communicable diseases and Other Childhood Health issues* requiring exclusion. These guidelines are posted in every program.
- k) Is unable to participate in all activities – indoor and outdoor. If a child is too sick to go outside, then he/she cannot attend the program.
- l) Has chickenpox. Your child will be excluded from the onset of symptoms for 5 days until the majority of the pox are scabbed over. Your child must be able to fully participate in the program upon his/her return.

If at any time the staff feel that a child is too sick to be in the program, the child will not be allowed to attend. It is important to try to have alternate child care arrangements in case you cannot stay at home with your child.

If your child is going to be absent from the program at his/her regularly scheduled time or is going to be late, please notify the staff as soon as possible.

19. Medication Policy

There are strict procedures in place concerning the administration of medication to children at the child care. In order to ensure the health of your child, the steps listed below must be followed:

- a) Medications: prescription or over the counter must be in the original bottle and packaging. The child's name must be clearly labelled on the bottle and packaging.
- b) Medication will only be administered once the parent or guardian has completed a Medication Authorization Form. These forms must be filled out with specific instructions as to time and dosage. We are required to follow the guidelines on the medication packaging. We cannot administer medication under instructions such as "if you feel it is necessary". Exception: Medications to ease asthma and /or allergic reactions will be administered as necessary, once the parent or guardian has outlined clearly the conditions requiring medication.
- c) Medication to control pain or fever must be given at a specific time. If a low-grade fever persists for longer than 24 hours, your child will need to stay at home until they are fever free (without the use of fever reducing medications) or return to the program with a note from your doctor is provided. At no time can the children stay in the program with a fever of 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.4 degrees centigrade) or over.
- d) Medications will be stored in a locked container in the refrigerator or designated cupboard, as required. It is the parent's responsibility to take the medication home at night. Auto injectors and puffers will be kept close at hand, as required by the child's condition.
- e) Please do not leave any medication – Tylenol, decongestant, vitamins or any prescription medication in your child's personal belongings.

- f) We cannot keep Tylenol, etc. on the premises in case your child develops a fever unless we have a note from the doctor stating that it is medically necessary.
- g) If your child becomes ill while in care, you will be notified immediately. If we cannot reach a parent within a reasonable amount of time we may call the emergency contacts. You will be required to pick up your child from care within 1 hour of notification of illness. The staff will keep sick children isolated from the other children when required until the parent arrives.

20. Scent Free Policy

Mothercraft Ottawa is a scent-free environment. Scented products may cause adverse physical effects that threaten the ongoing health and safety of our staff, clients, visitors, and the public at large.

We ask for everyone's cooperation in our efforts to accommodate employee health concerns, and minimize unnecessary workplace health and safety hazards.

21. No Nut Policy

The Mothercraft Ottawa building and grounds have been designated as no nut zones due to children and staff having life threatening allergies to nuts. This means that no nuts and food containing nuts are allowed on the premises at any time. We cannot serve foods that are labelled as “may contain traces of nuts” and/or “Manufactured in a facility that processes nuts” so please check labels carefully if bringing food to the program.

22. Nutrition

Our program provides morning and afternoon snack and a main meal at lunch. The snacks and lunch are prepared by our child care cook. Menus are posted in the rooms. Changes to the daily menu will be noted on the menus posted in each room and on the kitchen door. The menus are prepared by the Program Manager and Cook and incorporate the recommendations set out in Health Canada’s Canada Food Guide. Our menus are reviewed by a dietician/nutritionist.

For unique circumstances, a child may require to bring their own food/meals from home (e.g. food allergies). After consultation with the Program Manager, an agreement may be made whereby a parent will provide their child’s food from home. Any food coming into the program from home must follow these guidelines:

- The lunch bag/box, all food and containers must be labelled with child's name.
- Food should be brought to school in an insulated lunch bag with a small ice pack. A frozen juice box or water bottle can substitute for an ice pack.
- Meals and snacks should provide nutritional value as well as refreshment.

- If a child arrives at the center without the proper nutritional requirements, the parent will be expected to bring the lunch and snacks back to the center in time for the child to eat.
- In an emergency a lunch may be provided by the child care center for a nominal cost
- All foods and beverages must not contain nuts or nut products. We cannot serve foods that are labelled as “may contain traces of nuts” and/or “Manufactured in a facility that processes nuts” so please check labels carefully if bringing food to the program. If we are in doubt that a food/beverage is not nut-free then we will err on the side of caution and not serve the food. An appropriate substitution will be found if necessary.
- The above information is taken from the Canada Food Guide and The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) (section 8.1.84-89).

23. Children with Allergies

Mothercraft Ottawa Child Care Programs will make every effort to enrol children with life-threatening allergies and create an environment that minimizes the risk of exposure to allergens. This policy recognizes that the risk of accidental exposure can be reduced, but not eliminated.

Prior to enrolment, program managers will discuss each child’s needs with the parent to determine if the centre can manage the allergy safely. The centre reserves the right to refuse registration if it is determined that the allergy is not safely manageable.

Each child with an anaphylactic allergy has an *Anaphylaxis Individual Treatment Plan* which includes emergency procedures and has been developed in collaboration with the child’s parent.

The parent will be able to meet and discuss the allergy with the centre’s cook.

Children will not be accepted for attendance without their medication and auto injector (e.g. EpiPen, Allerject, or other epinephrine auto injector devices approved by Health Canada for the use in children)”

Should the center be unable to safely provide food for the child, the Program Manager and the parent will discuss options to meet the nutritional needs of the child.

It is the parent’s responsibility to notify the Program Manager of any changes to the child’s allergy.

The parent will review the plan at least annually and anytime there is a change to the treatment plan.

The *Anaphylaxis Policy* and all *Anaphylaxis Individual Treatment Plans* are reviewed with all staff/students/volunteers who work with the children before commencing employment/placement, annually, and whenever there is a substantive change.

All Mothercraft staff/students/volunteers who work with the children are required to complete the outlined Life Threatening Allergy Training Program established by Mothercraft Ottawa. The objectives for this program are:

- 1) That all staff working with children are knowledgeable and able to identify:
 - a. Signs and symptoms of life threatening allergies
 - b. How to respond to life threatening allergies
 - c. How to prevent and reduce exposure for children with life threatening allergies
- 2) Can successfully demonstrate how to respond to a child presenting an anaphylactic reaction.

REDUCING THE RISK OF EXPOSURE

Young children are dependent on parents and child care staff for assistance with everything from food preparation, label reading, hygiene, both in day-to-day circumstances and during special events. The following strategies are intended to minimize the risk of exposure to the allergen for the anaphylactic child without depriving them of normal participation in the daily program.

1) Identification and Communication Practices

- Anaphylaxis Individual Treatment Plan and Food Allergy and Food Restriction posters are visibly posted (or readily available) in the areas where the children may be present and in food preparation areas.
- Letters will be sent home re: anaphylaxis and what foods should not be sent to the child care centre, (where applicable) etc.
- If a restricted food is discovered, the food will be isolated in a sealed bag and returned home with a note describing the problem. Staff will offer the child an appropriate replacement.

2) Meal Time Practices

- Children and staff wash their hands before and after eating.
- Tables are disinfected before and after eating.
- Children are not allowed to share food, utensils or containers.
- Infant, Toddler and Preschool children with allergies, where possible, will sit with a regular staff member when eating at the child care program.
- Parents may choose to provide safe snacks for unplanned special occasions and will discuss options with the Program Manager at time of registration or upon notification of the allergy.

- Children with anaphylactic allergies will only eat food prepared/provided by the child care centre, or by their own parents, unless there is written consent from the child's parent(s).

3) Other Practices

- Avoid allergens in activities and materials such as play dough, stuffed toys and art.
- Mothercraft staff are not allowed to eat food containing nuts on the premises. Proper steps should be taken to wash hands, brush teeth, etc. if it should happen.
- Staff will be aware that nuts can be buried in the play yard by squirrels, etc. and will look for evidence of such when doing the daily yard check, during outdoor play, and while out on field trips.

24. **Children's Activities**

Developmentally appropriate, safe and fun activities are provided for all children based on their interests and developmental needs. The Mothercraft Educators use resources such as the ELECT document and Ontario's Full Day Learning curriculum for planning activities. Children are encouraged to participate in all activities and may get very messy so please don't send your child to child care in clothes that can't get dirty! Information on the children's daily activities is posted outside your child's program.

25. **Outdoor Play**

Outdoor play is very important for the children and is a big part of our program. The children will enjoy our lovely, secure play yards twice a day as long as the weather allows and our outdoor ratios can be maintained. (The Ministry of Education requires that 100% ratio is maintained while in the playgrounds.)

When determining the suitability of outdoor activities, humidity, wind chill and base temperatures are to be considered and as such Educators will check Environment Canada postings prior to going outside.

Children will remain inside if summer temperatures and/or humidex is 33°C or higher and if winter temperatures and/or wind chill is -25°C or lower. When a heat or cold warning is issued by Environment Canada, children will remain indoors.

On warm days, water bottles will be filled prior to going outside and Educators will ensure that the children are drinking regularly, and that the play is appropriate for the temperature. On cold days prior to going outside Educators will ensure that the children are dressed appropriately for the weather.

For days when a field trip has been planned and a heat or wind chill warning has been issued, Educators will consult with the Program Manager, or her designate who will determine if the

field trip will proceed or be cancelled. The nature of the trip, the venue and mode of transportation will be considered when making this decision.

Under certain circumstances permission may be granted by the Program Manager and/or the Executive Director (or their designates) for brief periods of outdoor play outside of the above parameters which may include water play in the summer and/or other mitigating factors.

Parents are required to ensure that their child is properly dressed for the weather. Children are allowed to play in puddles and dig in the sand and the mud. Neighbourhood walks may occur spontaneously.

26. Clothing and Footwear

Children should have an extra set of clothing on site. We encourage the use of separate footwear for indoors and out wherever possible.

For the health and safety of your child appropriate closed toe footwear should be worn to keep them safe and reduce the risk of loss of balance/slipping/tripping. Footwear should be appropriate for the setting and not be at risk of falling off.

27. Field Trips

Field trips and walks are a regular and carefully supervised part of our program. Walks in the neighbourhood are often taken without previous planning. You will be notified before each field trip beyond the immediate neighbourhood.

28. Rest Times

While not all children need a mid-day nap, young children benefit from periods of quiet relaxation to balance their active play.

The need for rest and sleep varies greatly at different ages, and even among children of the same age; however, rest is an important part of the day for all children.

The Educators work with the families to prevent the disruption of normal sleep patterns at home.

Infants under the age of 18 months will sleep according to their developmental needs and as outlined by the parents.

Children over 18 months who attend the program for more than 6 hours per day, will have a rest period after the mid-day meal. Children are not required to sleep but are encouraged to rest quietly. Comfort toys from home are welcome. The rest period will not exceed 2 hours in length. The children are permitted to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on the child's needs.

29. Accident Reports

If your child has an accident while in our care, the Educators will fill out an accident report for you to read and sign when you arrive to pick up your child. The accident report will be scanned and sent to you via email. Parents may request a hard copy of the accident report. The original reports are kept in the child's file.

30. Emergency Closures

Due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. fire, flood, loss of electricity, and/or property damage, building closure or lockout) the Centre may be deemed unsafe and the Mothercraft Ottawa Board of Directors may make the decision to temporarily close the Centre and the programs. Parents will be notified of the closure and required to make alternative arrangements until official notice is given of the Centre reopening.

The centre will also close if the City of Ottawa declares a "State of Emergency".

No fee rebate will be given due to emergency closures, unless such closure is longer than 10 consecutive days.

31. Emergency Management

We have an Emergency Management Policy that provides clear direction for staff and Mothercraft Ottawa to follow and deal with emergency situations. Each of our child care locations have designated evacuation sites. In the event of an emergency situation parents will be notified as soon as possible by one or more of the following methods: phone, email, radio announcements, the Mothercraft Voice Mail System.

32. Fire Drills

Fire evacuation plans are posted in each room and at every exit. Fire drills are practised monthly. The children are only expected to leave the building for a fire drill if the weather is good. If you arrive with your child during a fire drill, please stay with your child until the drill is completed and the children return to their programs.

33. Medical Treatment

In case of emergency, every effort will be made to contact the parents or their alternates. Sometimes this is not possible, and immediate treatment is necessary. If your child is hurt or becomes seriously ill while in care at Mothercraft Ottawa, he/she may be treated at the emergency room of the hospital as required.

34. Parent Issues and Concerns

A. Intent

Mothercraft Ottawa is committed to providing a transparent process for parents/guardians, Mothercraft Ottawa, and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

B. Policy

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in the Mothercraft Ottawa Programs and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, and staff. We foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Mothercraft Ottawa. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns in a timely fashion.

C. Guidelines

1. Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

2. Conduct

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

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

3. Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children’s Aid Society (CAS) directly.

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

For more information, visit

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

D. Procedure

Issues and/or concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing to Mothercraft Ottawa staff. We believe in most instances the best, and most appropriate person to address a concern related to program issues is the staff person for the program for which the parent/guardian has a concern. Other concerns related to the organization, or general operations are better addressed with a Program Manager.

Further detail on the most appropriate staff to whom to report an issue or concern is outlined below.

Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. Throughout the resolution process we will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two business day(s). All parties involved with the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:
<p>Program Room-Related E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the program staff directly, namely the Educator or Lead Educator as appropriate; or - the Program Manager.

<p>General, Centre- or Operations-Related E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to - the Program Manager.</p>
<p>Staff or Agency Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly or - the Program Manager. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>
<p>Student / Volunteer-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or - the Program Manager. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Program Manager as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>

<p>Steps for Mothercraft Ottawa Staff in responding to issue/concern:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or - Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within two business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral. <p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person to address the matter. Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within two business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

Documentation will be stored in the appropriate secure location as it relates to the issue (e.g. staff issue stored in locked personnel files).

E. Escalation of Issues or Concerns

If the parent/guardian continues to feel there has not been a satisfactory response or resolution, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing as follows:

- 1) Program Educator or staff person
- 2) Lead Educator (if applicable)
- 3) Program Manager
- 4) Executive Director
- 5) Board President

The Board President will respond to issues/concerns only after all preceding individuals in this list have had opportunity to respond, and the parent/guardian feels the issue still has not been sufficiently addressed.

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

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

35. Serious Occurrence Posting

On November 1, 2011, the Ontario government introduced a new policy that requires licensed child care centres and private-home child care agencies to post information about serious occurrences that happen at a centre or a home location. To support increased transparency and access to information, when a serious occurrence happens, a "Serious Occurrence Notification Form" must be posted at the centre or home location in a visible area for ten days

A serious occurrence could include:

- Serious injury to a child;
- Fire or other disaster on site;

Many factors may lead to a serious occurrence report. A serious occurrence does not necessarily mean that an operator is out of compliance with licensing requirements or that children are at risk in the child care program.

Child care licensing inspection findings may be accessed through the Licensed Child Care Website which is available

at

<http://www.earlyyears.edu.gov.on.ca/EYPortal/en/ChildCareLicensing/CCEYALicensingStandards/index.htm>.T27

36. Photography

Photos and movies are sometimes taken for use within the child care centre with the children. Occasionally these, or other pictures, may be used in the media or for educational purposes. Whenever possible, this will be cleared with parents, but this is sometimes difficult or impossible in cases where pictures contain large groups of children or are used several years after they are taken. Names of the children are never used with their photos. (If you do not wish your child's picture to be used for publications or newspaper/television stories about the child care centre or for educational purposes, please notify the office staff at the time of registration.) We will then ensure that your child's picture is not taken.

37. Volunteers

Anyone (including parents and family members of children registered in a Mothercraft Program and who is over the age of 16 years) who wishes to volunteer in a Mothercraft Ottawa program is required to submit a Police Records Check - Vulnerable Sector prior to volunteering. Only volunteers with a clear Police Records Check will be permitted to volunteer. A volunteer letter may be obtained by the Program Manager in order to have the Police Records Check processed by the Ottawa Police Department, at no cost. A clear Police Records Check must be provided to Mothercraft Ottawa on an annual basis. Direct unsupervised access (i.e., when the adult is alone with a child) is not permitted for persons who are not employees of Mothercraft. Volunteers may not be counted in the staffing ratios.

38. Students

In cooperation with high schools, community colleges and universities in the area, the child care centre is frequently used as a source of practical experience for students in early childhood education. These students enhance the staffing and permit individualized care and special activities which might otherwise not be possible. These students work under the direct supervision of the staff at all times. Students may not be counted in ratios.

39. Supervision

Child staff ratios will be maintained according to the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)* at all times. The children are never left unsupervised.

Ratios

	Indoors	Outdoors
Toddlers	1:5 between 9 am and 4:30 pm 1:8 before 9 am and after 4:30 pm	1:5
Preschoolers	1:8 between 9 am and 4:30 pm 1:12 before 9 am and after 4:30 pm	1:8
Kinders	1:10 between 9 am and 4:30 pm 1:15 before 9 am and after 4:30 pm	1:10

Parents are responsible for their children during arrival and departure times.

40. Proof of Identity

The staff may not release the children in care to anyone other than the parent/legal guardian without the parent/legal guardian's written authorization. In the event that someone else is picking up the child then the staff must be notified by the parent prior to the child leaving the program. Anyone picking up the child may be asked to provide photographic identification if the staff is not familiar with the individual; this includes parents, please come prepared with identification.