

Every child is a different kind of flower, and all together, they make this world a beautiful garden.



**Little Giants Childcare Centre**

..... Beginning of greatness starts here. .... 

# PARENT HANDBOOK

50 FOREST MANOR ROAD, TORONTO ONTARIO, M2J 0E3

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## Welcome to Little Giants

It all started with the birth of my son when I decided to put my graphic design career on hold to spend time with him. As he got a little older, I started to look after other children in my neighbourhood so he would have playmates and it was then I felt in love with children. It reminds me of my childhood, growing up with 4 siblings in a small village in Hong Kong. Though everyday was chaotic for my parents, as a child, everyday was an adventure.



Realizing my knowledge in childcare was limited, I soon enrolled myself at Seneca college to study early childhood education, which I graduated with honours. As each year goes by, I fell more and more in love with this field. Not only was I able to see children grow but I was also able to help families and contribute back to my community. It is a blessing and honor to be with the children because they have taught me so much. They are the light of the world. We just need to get down to their levels, see the world through their eyes and help them shine as bright as they could. No one is too little to do great things in this world.

## Our Philosophy

At Little Giants, we believe children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential and they learn best when they are having fun. We understand early childhood sets the foundation for later years and we are committed in providing an inclusive environment to support the health and well-being of every child in our care. We follow a play-based philosophy (emergent) that reflects the Early Learning For Every Child Today (ELECT) and How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years. Our programs are also aligned with the six guiding principles in the ELECT document, the four Foundations of Learning and Development from How Does Learning Happen? and in compliance of Child Care and Early Year Act (CCEYA). All our programs are carefully planned to reflect and support each child's development, interests and needs.

\*To learn more about these philosophies, hard copies are available at the parents resources area in the lobby. Soft copies are also available at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/oelf/continuum/continuum.pdf> and <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf>.

## Program Statement (Our Goals and Approaches)

Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children

Our programs engage children through various learning opportunities in the importance of making healthy food choices. These learning opportunities include but not limited to planting and harvesting fruits and vegetables, cooking, and food preparation.

Aside from providing a wide variety of foods for the children to enjoy, we view meal times as unique opportunities to build relationships and appreciation for foods. It enables children to interact and socialize with other children and adults, learning about different foods and each other's food preferences while developing social and self-help skills. By eating and interacting with the children during meal times, educators also role model and promote an adequate intake of nutritious foods for the children.

**Supporting positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff**  
Our role is to support families by providing programs where their child can grow and develop in a healthy, safe and inclusive environment that supports both the child and family's well-being and sense of belonging.

We strongly believe that families are children's best teachers and we recognize that parental participation and involvement in their child's program is essential to their child's learning and success. Understanding this, we provide various opportunities for parents to express their ideas, feelings and concerns as partners in their child's program. We also provide parents in sights on their child's daily progress through daily written reports and verbal communication. In additional, parents are also welcomed and encouraged to spend time in their child's program.

**Encouraging the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate**

Self regulation is one of the most important skills children need for their future success. This includes the ability to wait for their turn, share materials, listen to others, demonstrate empathy and kindness and communicate emotions and thoughts to others in a positive and constructive manner. We believe most unwanted or negative behaviours demonstrated by children are due to the inability to self-regulate. Skills that the children have not yet developed, and are in need of support to develop and refine.

In Little Giants, we role model positive social skills and practice the use of developmentally appropriate strategies and techniques to support children in learning and demonstrating positive behaviours. We help them to recognize and learn how to cope with their upset feelings, manage their reactions to various situations and communicate their emotions with words or gestures rather than aggressive physical or verbal behaviours.

Our goal is to nurture and build up children's self image to ensure that they are not over inflated or deflated, and have the ability to self-reflect. With support from educators, children are encouraged to respond in a positive manner and learn to work together to resolve conflicts. We strongly believe children learn to feel and demonstrate empathy to others as they learn through their own experiences and observe adults around them.

**Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry**

Many research have concluded that children learn best when they are engaged in play. Through play, children learn and develop various skills: communication, language/literacy, numeracy, emotional and social skills, cognitive thinking, sensory needs and physical movement (small and large muscles). To nurture these, educators are in tune of children's development and milestones to provide age appropriate learning opportunities based on their interests while allowing for safe exploration and manipulation. As children engage in play they develop, refine and gain knowledge as they try to figure out how materials work and experience new things. These materials are not limited to dramatic/ pretend play, creative and sensory experiences, games, puzzles, physical play and small and large group times. Farther more, the children's play environments are set up in a child friendly manner that encourages free exploration and manipulation of materials that allows children to engage in play independently, with a peer or in a group.

### Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences

Educators are co-learners with children and we follow their lead. Through careful observations we select materials and initial learning opportunities that are age appropriate for children to satisfy their curiosity, creativity, and problem solving. Instead of taking the lead and give children directions, we allow freedom of expression and exploration of materials. Educators' role are to open new inquires, extend and expand their plays and to offer support and guidance in areas such as social and emotional development.

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

Little Giants understands the benefits of a planned program as well as spontaneous learning opportunities that follow the children's current interests. For these programs and opportunities, our educators follow The Continuum of Development, an excerpt from Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) which describes the predictable sequences of development for children. It assists educators on their observation and documentation of children's emerging skills and supports the development of a planned program that is responsive to the developmental needs and interests of each child. Our educators also reflect and assess the program regularly in how it support the Four Foundations of Learning and Development from How Does Learning Happen? (Well-Being, Expression, Belonging and Engagement). A weekly program plan that reflects their observation, documentation and collaboration is posted outside of each playroom. The Continuum of Development is also posted to identify the root skill and the learning experience that is being supported.

### 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

Our outdoor environments provide space and opportunities for all elements of learning, from physical activities, nature exploration to independent and cooperative games. Learning opportunities are also extended to the local community through local walks or off-site activities. Educators closely monitor the weather and the children's activity levels to ensure their health and well-being. Areas of shade as well as drinking water are provided throughout the year. When children are unable to play outdoors due to weather conditions, alternate indoor active learning experiences are provided in a space identified for this purpose.

Children's work is play and their day is very active so it is important that they have time to rest and re-energize. Our educators partner with parents to determine a daily schedule of rest and monitor for each child's needs throughout the day. As younger children require more frequent rests, our infant program allows them to rest according to their own individual schedules and in their own individual cribs. Their rest/sleep are monitored regularly to ensure their safety and well-being and infants under one year of age are put to sleep on their back. Children in toddler or preschool program are provided with a period of up-to-two hours of rest or sleep on their individual cot per day, depending on individual needs. Quiet learning experiences are provided for children not sleeping after one hour of resting on their cot and as they gradually awake.

Transition times, such as, to/from the playground or washroom are also carefully planned to provide a safe and positive experiences for children. We divide larger groups into small groups to allow educators to support children's physical and emotional well-being, facilitate individual learning, encourage trust and attachment, and support children's ability to manage routines and self-regulate effectively.

Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children. Educators and parents work in partnership to ensure children's physical, emotional and developmental needs are consistently met by engaging in open communication and share information regularly through verbal and written communication. Daily reports also provide parents insight on their children's daily food and liquid intake along with general care items, such as, diapering, and sleep times. Families are also encouraged to share any observations or changes as their child's needs arise.

Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff. Little Giants also works to partner with a wide range of community partners to support an integrated approach to early learning and care to help children connect to the world around them. These partners includes but not limited to Toronto Public Health, Toronto Public Libraries and Toronto Parks, Recreation & Forestry. We also support future early childhood educators by providing student placements and sharing our experience and knowledge with them as they prepare for their new career. This provides children with new learning experiences and enthusiastic interactions with the students.

### Continuous professional learning

Little Giants is committed to the ongoing professional development of all staff. Staff participate in position specific training both in-house and off site to support their professional learning and development, and to ensure they have a strong understanding of current policies, procedures and research materials. These trainings are not limited to Food Handling Certificate and Standard First Aid & CPR Certification. Registered Early Childhood Educators are also required to meet the Standards of Practice and Continuous Professional Learning requirements of the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE).

### Document and review the impact of the strategies

All staff at Little Giants work diligently to ensure we meet the Child Care & Early Years Act, 2014 regulations to provide the highest quality of child care to all families we serve. All policies and procedures are reviewed annually to ensure they continue to respond and reflect the best interests of children and families, and current research in the field of early learning and care. The program statement will be reviewed and signed off by all staff and placement students prior to commencing employment/placement with Little Giants and annually thereafter, and at any time, when a change is made. The review will be documented and a hard copy will be retained in the individual's file for a minimum of three (3) years. Our management team also monitor the centre regularly to ensure all policies and procedures are implemented. To ensure we are continuously meeting the needs of our families, we also conduct a Parent and Child Survey annually to gather information and feedbacks on the services we provide.

## Program Options and Fee Schedule

Our centre is currently enrolled in the CWELCC (Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care) Program. The monthly program fees listed below are base fees\* and they will receive a further deduction of 52.75%.

**Full Day: Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Toddler: \$1687.75/mth (\$797.46/mth w/CWELCC)    Preschooler: \$1222.80/mth (\$577.77/mth w/CWELCC)

**Half Day: Monday to Friday**

Toddler: AM (8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.): \$860/mth (\$406.35/mth w/CWELCC)

Preschool AM: (8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.): \$752.50/mth (\$355.56/mth w/CWELCC)

Preschool PM (1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.): \$698.75/mth (\$330.16/mth w/CWELCC)

\*Base Fee: any fee or part of a fee that is charged in respect of a child for child care, including anything a licensee is required to provide under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*, or anything a licensee requires the parent to purchase from the licensee. The also includes the \$40 non-refundable administration fee as well as a refundable family security deposit of \$200 upon the confirmation of enrolment. The family security deposit will be applied toward the base fee of first month's care.

## **Fees and Payment**

- Fees in the form of monthly pre-authorized payment via Lillio or etransfers shall be made on the 1<sup>st</sup> working day of the month. One payment is preferred. If two payments per month are negotiated, the debits will be made on the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Cash can be accepted as a payment fee.
- All payments returned from a financial institution will be subject to a processing fee of \$50\*. If the processing fee is not reimbursed within 20 business days, the child's care may be suspended.
- A receipt of payment will be issued after the year end for income tax purposes via Lillio.
- Refunds will not be made for statutory holidays or any absent days (including vacations or illness).
- A late payment fee of \$5.00\* per week will be charged if payment is not received according to the agreed upon schedule.

\*Non-base Fee: any fee charged for optional items or optional services (e.g. transportation) OR any fees charged where the parent fails to meet the terms of the agreement with the licensee (e.g., late fees). Non-base fees are not include anything that would impede a child's participation in the program should their family choose to opt-out of the service.

## **Admission**

### **Wait List Policy and Procedures**

The wait list will be maintained in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families on the list and therefore only the child's position on the waiting list will be provided to parents. Names of other children or families and/or their placement on the waiting list will not be shared with other individuals. *No fee will be charged to parents for placing a child on the waiting list.* Here are the procedures we follow:

### **Receiving a Request to Place a Child on the Waiting List**

1. The licensee or designate will receive parental requests to place children on a waiting list via phone, in-person meeting or online - after the completion and submission of the application.

### **Placing a child on the Waiting List**

1. The licensee or designate will place a child on the waiting list in chronological order, based on the date and time that the request was received.
2. Once a child has been placed on the waiting list, the licensee or designate will inform parents of their child's position on the list.

### **Determining Placement Priority when a Space Becomes Available**

1. When space becomes available in the program, priority will be given to 1) children who are currently enrolled and need to move to the next age grouping, 2) children who are currently enrolled and request to switch to another program, 3) siblings of children currently enrolled, 4) children of staff.
2. Once these children have been placed, other children on the waiting list will be prioritized based on program room availability and the chronology in which the child was placed on the waiting list.

### **Offering an Available Space**

1. Parents of children on the waiting list will be notified via telephone and/or an eMail that a space has become available in their requested program.
2. Parents will be provided a time frame of 3 working days in which a response is required before the next child on the waiting list will be offered the space.
3. Where a parent has not responded within the given time frame, the licensee or designate will contact the parent of the next child on the waiting list to offer them the space.
4. Once the child's enrolment is confirmed, an administration fee of \$40 (\$18.90 w/CWELCC) and a non-refundable family security deposit of \$200 are required. The Family security deposit will be applied toward the base fee for the first month of care.

## **Admission Procedures**

Once a child's admission and start date have been confirmed, our supervisor will schedule a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian prior to admission to the centre. During this meeting, the supervisor will review the Child Admission Package and gather information such as parent(s) contact information, emergency contact(s), and health related information, etc. The supervisor will provide an overview of our Program Statement and Policies and Procedures as well as an orientation of our centre, which also includes the evacuation procedures from our above ground playground. This meeting is a wonderful opportunity for parent(s) to share information about their child and ask questions. We encourage parent(s) to share as much information about their child and family as they feel comfortable to help us provide the best care and services.

## **Withdrawal/Discharge Policy and Procedures**

We require a minimum of four weeks to one month of written notice if the family decides to withdraw the child from the centre for any reason. If the required notice is not received, you will be charged a penalty equivalent to the full cost of four weeks of care. Payment of this penalty along with any other outstanding fees must be made prior to your child's re-entry into the child care system.

The provision of our service is conditional upon compliance of both you and your child to our Code of Behaviour. Should the supervisor of the program determines that a child cannot adjust to the program, or if the parent has not upheld the contract, the child will be withdrawn and this agreement will be terminated. The process of termination for all children will include any or all of the following steps:

- Documentation of incidents
- Counselling and/or consultation with outside agencies
- Notification to the appropriate government bodies
- Referral to an outside agency
- Meeting with appropriate parties
- Suspension
- Removal from the program

## **Absence**

Parents must notify the centre when their child will be absent, which can be done via the Lillio communication system. Absent days include days when your child is sick, on vacation or absent for any other reason. Children may not be absent for 20 or more consecutive days without advance payment. Parents are required to fulfill their portion of the base fee during these extended absence.

In the case of extended illness and where the parents cannot maintain payment of fees, the supervisor will discuss the matter of reserving the space on a personal basis with the Licensee. If the child must be withdrawn, he/she will be given priority on the waiting list.

## **New Parents**

The degree of separation anxiety experienced by children varies, and manifests itself in many ways. Extra support is always given to a child new at the centre. Depending on your child's age, personality and stage of development, the transition period may take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. Parents and program staff are encouraged to work together to develop a transition plan that supports the child during this period.



To make the transition easier for your child, we suggest:

- 1) Speak to your child positively about the new routine at least two weeks prior to admission date. If the child is an infant, expose the infant to more people at different settings (Early Year Learning Centres, Parents and Infants programs, etc) and allow families members to hold and care for the infant for longer period of time.
- 2) If possible, arrange a visit with you and your child before his/her enrolment. During this time your child can meet the teachers and other children, and be familiar with the environment.
- 3) Allow your child to take a favourite toy, or object such as a teddy bear or blanket. These items may be of comfort to your child in a new environment.
- 4) Always have a pleasant departure no matter how hard. Affirm your child that “I will be back” and keep the separation brief and cheerful as your child can sense your feelings and will react to it.
- 5) Always pick up your child at the time you said you would. Some young children might not be able to tell time but they are aware of the daily routines and know when they usually get picked up. A child can experience stress when there is a sudden change of routine.
- 6) Understand your child maybe tearful or ignore you (upset) at the end of the day but always greet your child warmly. It is normal during transition period. It is also ideal to greet your child with, “I am back!”

### **Code of Behaviour**

The safety of all children is our primary concern. The following expectations are necessary to promote a happy, comfortable, safe atmosphere. The child and the parents at all times shall:

- Be courteous to others;
- Use acceptable language;
- Conduct themselves in a manner which allows others to feel safe from verbal and physical abuse;
- Resolve conflict in a peaceful manner;
- Respect the building and equipment as well as the personal property of others; and
- Show personal respect for all individuals through behaviour and language

### **Communication and Parents Involvement**

It is in the best interest of the child for the parent(s) and staff to communicate daily so we know how we can support your child. For example, it is important for us to know if your child had a restless night, moved to a new house, or relatives are in town, because sometimes small change in their daily routine will show up in a child's behaviour. This allows the staff to prepare for these changes.

An individual meeting can be arranged with your child's teacher(s) or supervisor if you have any question or concerns regarding your child. The teacher(s) may also request an individual meeting with you as the need arises. If the concerns about a child's behaviour or adjustment to the child care centre the staff will:

1. Observe and document the child's actions for a two week period.
2. The supervisor will observe the child in the program periodically.
3. The supervisor will arrange a meeting with the parents to discuss the situation and the possibility of referral to an appropriate assisting agency.
5. Referral to an appropriate agency is only made with parental consent.
6. Refusing to seek assistance may cause the child to be withdrawn from the centre if the supervisor feels that the program is not able to support the child's needs.

Parents are always welcomed to come join us on outings and in the childcare centre. If there is a specific event or day you wish to join us please feel free to speak to the supervisor and/or your child's teacher. Please note a criminal reference check is required with vulnerable sector screening will need to be submitted prior to the event.

### **Parent Issues and Concerns**

Parents are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child is experiencing with our program. As supported by our Program Statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved. All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by all the staff members at Little Giants. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 1-3 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process. The investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

## **Hours of Operation**

### **Holidays**

Full time care is provided from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, with the exception of the holidays listed below:

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

Please note that Little Giants closes at 12:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve when they fall on a weekday.

### **Safe Arrival**

Parents must drop their child off directly to the room in which they are enrolled. For the safety of your child, it is important that parents confirm that a staff member is in the room and knows that your child has arrived. Staff will document the arrival of your child via Lillio when they enter the room. If there are any issues of which staff should be aware regarding your child's health and/or change in the pick-up procedures, it should be shared with the teacher at the time of drop off. This is also a good time to share your observations with your child's teacher regarding your child's development or interests that will help the staff in planning activities for your child and the others in the room.

Where a child, who attends our full time program, does not arrive at the child care centre by 10 a.m. or a child, who attends our part time program does not arrive at the child care centre 45 minutes after the program starts, and the parent/guardian has not previously communicated a change in attendance (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up the day before) by 10 a.m., the staff

in the classroom will make an initial contact to the parent/guardian via Lillio. If there is no response in 30 minutes via Lillio from parent/guardian, the office will make a second contact and try to reach both parents by phone and leave a message. If unable to reach any party or failed to receive any confirmation regarding absence in Lillio, the office will make a third and final attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone again in an hour after the second contact before contacting legal authorities such as the police department.

### **Dismissal**

Children can be picked up anytime within the operating hours by a parent, guardian or a person who has received authorization from the child's parent to pick-up. It is important that you make sure that a staff in the classroom is aware that your child is leaving for the day as a staff needs to record your child's departure.

Many families have a support system of people who will also pick up their child at the end of the day. Please ensure that the staff are aware when alternate arrangements for pick-up have been made by providing us with the person's full name and contact information. Children will not be released to any person without authorization or confirmation from the parent. The authorized person will be required to provide identification upon pick-up. If staff are not aware of alternate arrangements, a confirmation is required with the parents by phone and verify identification before releasing the child. We encourage you to provide contact information in advance for anyone when the child may be released to other than yourself.

Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or time frame that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up within 15 minutes, the staff shall contact the parent/guardian or authorized individual via Lillio, text message or phone and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.

If our staff is unable to contact the parent/guardian and the authorized individual we will wait until the program close.

### **Late Pick-up**

Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by the time the program ends, the staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack or activity, while they await their pick up. During this time one of our staff will stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian or the authorized individual to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick up time.

- In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff will contact the authorized individual. If the staff is unable to reach the authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child within 10 minutes after the centre closed, the staff shall contact the parents on the child's file.
- If the staff is unable to reach parent/guardian, the staff shall contact the emergency contact listed on the child's file.
- If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, any other authorized individual or emergency contact listed on the child's file by 30 minutes after the centre closed, the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) 416.924.4646. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

## **Late Pick-up Fee**

A late pick-up fee, a non-base fee, will be charged for the time that a staff member is required to stay behind with a child after closing. This late pick-up fee shall be paid immediately to the staff member in charge at the time or toward your following month's payment. Parents should plan to leave enough time to pick up their child, communicate with the staff about their child's day and gather all belongings prior to the centre's closing time. However, if a situation arises where you will be arriving late to pick up your child, please notify the centre as soon as possible via Lillio. In these circumstances, we encourage you to have alternative pick-up arrangements in place.

Our late pick-up fee is \$10 flat for the first 5 mins and \$1 per minutes after the first 5 minutes\*. This fee is to be paid in cash immediately to the staff in duty upon pick up. We hope parents understand the cost involved for staff staying behind caring for the child and supporting their emotional needs. If repetitive late pick-ups occur, the supervisor or director will meet with the parent to discuss and determine whether the program hours meet the family's needs. If continued lateness is expected or continues, the supervisor or director will support the family to explore alternate child care arrangements that are more suitable to the family's needs. A notice of withdraw from care may be issued for unresolved patterns of lateness.

\*Non-base Fee: any fee charged for optional items or optional services (e.g. transportation) OR any fees charged where the parent fails to meet the terms of the agreement with the licensee (e.g., late fees). Non-base fees are not include anything that would impede a child's participation in the program should their family choose to opt-out of the service.

## **Inclement Weather Closure**

On occasion, we see some severe weather conditions during the winter season in southern Ontario; which makes it necessary for early closures and/or complete closures of the centre. The decision is never taken without consideration, and always in the safety interest of the children, their families and our staff. On such occasion, we will notify all parents via Lillio, eMail or phone and on our website [www.LittleGiants-ChildServices.com](http://www.LittleGiants-ChildServices.com).

## **Food Nutrition**

Our programs offer a variety of nutritious foods for lunch, morning and afternoon snacks. Foods selected promote good health and give each child the opportunity to enjoy new foods as good eating habits are established. Menus incorporate the healthy eating guidelines of Canada's Food Guide and are posted in advance for your information. Our four week rotation menu is included in your Parent Handbook Package.

Meal times for all children are viewed as an opportunity for positive and social interaction as well as self-help skills. Infants are fed according to their individual needs. If your infant is on expressed breast milk or formula, you will need to provide a prepared bottle for each feeding.

If your child has a health related special diet or food related allergies, please let the centre know immediately so arrangements can be made to provide an alternate food item. Parents must also provide written instructions from a medical practitioner explaining the details of the health related food restriction or allergy. This information will be kept in the child's file and updated when as necessary.

Parents who choose to provide food for their child must ensure that the food is clearly labeled with the child's name. The centre will ensure the food is stored safely and served to your child at the appropriate meal time. Parents may only provide food for their own children.

## **Allergy Awareness**

If your child has an allergy that requires the administration of an EpiPen, please notify the supervisor immediately to ensure that the necessary documentation and actions are taken to ensure your child's health and safety. You will be required to provide written and specific details of your child's allergy and symptoms of an allergy reaction from a medical practitioner including a prescribed EpiPen. All allergies will be listed in each of the programs to ensure all staff are aware and can respond appropriately to any potential reactions.

To ensure the well-being of children who have anaphylactic allergies, it is imperative that an EpiPen is available at the Centre at all times. A child who requires an EpiPen due to a severe allergy will not be accepted into care without their prescribed and current EpiPen. If a child no longer requires an EpiPen, a note from a medical practitioner confirming this information will be required.

Parents who serve foods containing allergens at home are to ensure their child has been rid of the allergens prior to attending the childcare centre (e.g. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)

## **Birthday and Special Celebration**

It is always exciting to see children reaching different milestones and Little Giants loves to share and celebrate these milestones with you! At Little Giants, we are committed to educate our children on healthy eating habits and will be supplying small cupcakes for the children. As a centre that values inclusion, we also ask our parents not to provide extra food/treats and tote bags for their child's classmates due to safety and allergy concerns.

## **Health**

### **Daily Observation**

Upon arrival, before a child begins to interact with the other children, a quick observation for any symptoms of ill health will be performed. Any changes in behaviour will be communicated to the child's parent immediately.

### **Immunization Records**

Please ensure that you provide current and up to date immunization information to the centre. If your child has not been immunized the parent must provide one of the following: Written medical exemption by a qualified medical practitioner, which clearly states the medical reasons why a child cannot be immunized or complete the Immunization Exemption Form identifying that you have chosen not to immunize your child on the grounds that the immunization conflicts with your conscience or religious beliefs.

Please note that if an outbreak of a communicable disease occurs, any child who is not adequately immunized will not be able to attend care unless the child receives the required vaccine or until the outbreak is over.

### **Accident Reporting**

While at the centre, the children are supervised at all times. Despite close supervision, some accidents may occur as your child explores and develops new skills and abilities. If your child is injured at the centre, the staff will provide immediate first aid, as needed. If the situation requires

attention beyond basic first aid, we will contact you or the emergency contact person(s) on file. If required, we will call 911 or transport your child to the nearest hospital or medical facility.

The staff will provide an accident report documenting the accident or injury. A parent or guardian's signature is required at the bottom of the form to verify that you were informed of the accident/injury and a copy of the signed report will be provided to you. If your child has an accident or injury at home, please inform the staff when you drop your child of the following day so we are aware of the incident.

### **When a Child is Unwell**

If your child is not well, we encourage you to keep them at home or visit a medical practitioner if necessary. If your child is showing symptoms of illness at home (24 hours for fever above 38°C; 48 hours for vomiting, diarrhea and nausea), your child should remain home, until they are symptom-free or well enough to return and participate in the program.

Should your child become sick at the centre, the staff will monitor the child and inform you. Depending on the type of illness, the staff or supervisor may contact you to arrange for the child to be picked up for their own well-being. When your child is returning to care after having a serious illness or communicable disease, we will require a note from your medical practitioner to confirm that the child is safe to return to daycare. These practices support a health and safe environment for children, parents, staff, volunteers, and outside resource professionals to the Centre.

It is common for some children to be more susceptible to illness in the first few months of attendance. We recognize that this can be concerning and stressful for parents therefore we encourage you to ensure that you have plans in place in the event that your child may not be able to attend care. With time, most children develop immunity and adjust to being in a group environment.

For more information regarding common communicable disease and exclusion times, please visit the Toronto Public Health website or speak to our supervisor or director. If Toronto Public Health declares the centre to be in outbreak, the sick child will not be able to attend care for 48 hours of being symptom free.

### **Administration of Medication**

If your child requires medication, the staff will administer prescription medication only. Prescription medication must be provided in the original bottle/packaging, clearly labeled with your child's name and instructions for administering. Parents must also complete and sign the appropriate medication administration form before the medication can be administered by our staff.

A new medication administration form will need to be completed and signed for any changes in medication or medication instructions. For the safety of the children, we ask that parents hand any medication directly to the staff so that it can be securely stored away from the children's reach.

Non-prescription or over the counter medication must be accompanied by a written prescription by a medical practitioner. Parents are required to take any expired or medication that is no longer require administration from the centre for disposal at a pharmacy. For more information regarding disposal of prescription medication, please visit: [www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/safe-disposal-prescription-drugs.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/safe-disposal-prescription-drugs.html)

## **Outdoor Play**

The Child Care and Early Years Act requires children attending care for more than 6 hours (full time) in a licensed centre must participate in at least two hours of outdoor play, weather permitting. Outdoor play time provides children with great opportunities to expand their learning outside of the classroom and encourages physical activities to promote and support a life-long healthy and active lifestyle. Both spontaneous and planned learning experiences are implemented during this time. Therefore, it is important that children are dressed appropriately for the various types of weather to ensure they can actively participate in the outdoor program. Please ensure that adequate and suitable clothing and footwear is provided year round for your child.

At times, due to the weather, children's outdoor time may be extended or shortened to ensure that children are active, engaged and comfortable. Teachers will monitor the children's comfort and activity level in the varying weather conditions to determine the length of time children will remain outside. We also encourages parents to provide child safe sunscreen and sun hat for outdoor play times. The staff will assist children to apply sunscreen to the exposed skin areas prior to going outside.

## **Sanitary Practices**

### **General**

Many infectious diseases and illnesses can be prevented through appropriate hygiene, sanitation, and infection prevention/control practices. Our Sanitary Practices Policy and Procedures follows recommendation by Toronto and York Region's Public Health department and to ensure our facility and equipment are in a safe and clean condition for the health, safety and well-being of children, as well as staff, volunteers, students etc. It covers food safety, proper cleaning and disinfecting procedures, sensory play materials, sleeping equipment, laundry, play pool, sandbox, visits to petting zoo, pest management system, toileting, diapering, cleaning up on blood and body fluid and proper hand washing.

A copy full version of our Sanitary Practice Policy and Procedures is available in our Policies and Procedure Manual at the parents resource centre in the lobby.

### **Clothing**

Each child has a personal cubbie to store their outdoor clothing, shoes and extra clothes. Please always remember to dress your child according to the weather (sun hat, snow pants, neck warmer, mittens, hat, boots, etc.), as outdoor play is an important part of our daily program and make sure a spare sets of clothes (pants, T-shirt, socks) is available at the child's cubbie at the centre so your child can change when needed. To minimize injury, we request children wear rubber-sole and close-toe shoes, as these are the safest for indoor and outdoor play.

Please clearly label all of your children's clothing and belongings to minimize mix-ups and lost items. Please refrain from leaving any valuables in your child's cubbie. Little Giants is not responsible for lost or missing clothing or personal items.

### **Dress Code**

We believes in teaching children to put their best foot forward in life and be world changers. We ask parents to assist their child in picking out clothing that delivers a positive message. We wish to ask for your understanding in helping us to create a positive environment for everyone in the centre.

## Toys

Please avoid sending toys to the centre with your child, an exception to this rule would be a nap time stuffed animal, or an initial comfort toy to assist in separation anxiety. Please understand that the centre is not responsible for loss or damage to any personal items left at the centre.

## Diapering and Toileting Routines

Children in diapers will be provided with a small storage area in the diapering area to store diapers, wipes, creams, etc. Parents must supply disposable diapers for use at the centre for children who are not toilet trained and ensure your child has sufficient supplies each day. Staff will strive to notify parents when supplies are becoming low but we encourage you to monitor this as well.

Here are our procedures for diapering:

**Step 1** – Gather needed supplies.

**Step 2** – Wash hands.

**Step 3** – Put on disposable gloves.

**Step 4** – Remove and discard soiled diaper.

**Step 5** – Clean child's bottom. Diaper and dress the child.

**Step 6** – Discard the soiled gloves in the garbage container.

**Step 7** – Wash hands and the child's. Return the child to a supervised area.

**Step 8** – Clean and disinfect the change pad ensuring proper contact time is followed.

**Step 9** – Wash hands again.

Shall a child be ready to use potty chairs or toilet seat inserts, here are the procedures we follow:

**Step 1** – Gather needed supplies.

**Step 2** – Wash hands and then put on disposable gloves.

**Step 3** – Remove and discard soiled disposable training pant.

**Step 4** – Place the child on the toilet/potty chair.

**Step 5** – Clean child's bottom. Put on a new disposable training pant and dress the child.

**Step 6** – Discard soiled gloves. Wash hands and the hands. Return the child to a supervised area.

**Step 7** – Put on gloves. Empty contents from potty chair into the toilet and flush. Clean and disinfect toilet seat insert/potty chair.

**Step 8** – Discard gloves and wash hands.

**Step 9** – Store toilet seat insert/potty chair in a sanitary manner.

## Toileting Training

Toilet readiness differs from child to child. Parental involvement is essential in reaching this milestone in their child's development. We would only toilet train a child when they show 2 or more signs of readiness:

- Able to say or non-verbally indicate they have a bowel movement or pee.
- Able to stay dry for at least 2 hours.
- Is interested in the toileting routine.
- Able or try to pull down his/her own pants.

Our techniques:

- Slowly expose and involve the child in the process of other children's toileting routine to develop their interest.
- Place child in the potty chair while other children are doing toileting routine.
- Slowly increase the duration of time spent on the potty chair.



- Always encourage the child to sit at the potty as soon as he/she is awake from afternoon naps.
- Encourage, praise and celebrate each milestone.

To accelerate the process, we recommend parents not to use training diapers. Make a special day with the child, discard all the diapers and go shopping for underwears on the same day. Only buy the ones your child is comfortable with and make the day extra special and memorable. If this is the method parents wish go with, please supply extra underwears and cotton pants (for absorbancy).

Most children using underwears will be toilet trained within two weeks; children in training diapers will take up to 8 weeks. We will evaluate our process each week and if a child is not ready (signs of stress), we will stop after two weeks and try again after 3-6 months, depending on the child's readiness.

## **Animals**

Providing opportunities for children to interact with animals, that reside in the centre or visit for a short time, contributes to children's mental, physical and emotional well-being. However, animals can pose a risk for infectious disease, particularly for infants and children under the age of five years. Our staff will be educated on infection prevention and control measures related to animal contact prior to animals visiting or residing in the centre. Children will be supervised when they are handling pets. All animals visiting the childcare centre should be healthy and have up-to-date rabies vaccinations. Dogs and cats, three months of age or older, are legally required to be immunized against rabies. A copy of the certificate of immunization must be readily available.

## **General**

### **Community Walks & Off-Site Excursions**

Connecting the children to their community is very important to the development of self-identity. Little Giants strive to implement a variety of learning experiences for children to explore and participate in their community through walks to local sites. We encourage parents to share suggestions and resources within the community that the children may enjoy exploring.

Occasionally older children may participate in planned off-site excursions by TTC or personal vehicle (staff or volunteering parents). Parents will be consulted and notified in advance of all off-site excursions and will be provided with a consent form to complete prior to their child's participation.

### **Sleeping Supervision**

Children's sleep and rest play an integral part in a child's well-being and development. All children will be provided with the opportunity to sleep or engage in quiet activities based on their needs. Children 18 months and older will be provided time to sleep for a period of no more than two hours each day. Children under 18 months of age and over 12 months, in the toddler program, will be provided time to rest on a cot. A visual check will be conducted every 30 mins during this resting period.

Children under 12 months of age, in an infant program, will be sleeping on their backs which align with the requirement to meet the recommendations set out in Health Canada's document entitled "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada". Infant's cribs will also be free of extra items other than a firm mattress and fitted sheet and only light, breathable blankets are permitted. Our staff perform direct visual checks on each sleeping child, which varies in frequency depending on the age of the child, to look for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours.

## **Emergency Management Policy and Procedures**

To ensure everyone's safety, fire drills are practiced monthly to ensure staff and children are familiar with their role, responsibilities and routines. In the event that the centre requires an evacuation, the meeting place to gather immediately will be located by the outdoor play area along the fence. If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' to the childcare centre, the evacuation site to proceed to is located at: Parkway Forest Community Centre. If Parkway Forest Community Centre is unsafe to relocate to, we will evacuate to Forest Manor Public School.

For any emergency situations involving a child with an individualized plan in place, the procedures in the child's individualized plan will be followed. If an emergency situation results in a serious occurrence, the serious occurrence policy and procedures will also be followed and all emergency situations will be documented in detail by the supervisor, director or designate in the daily written record.

It is very important that parent/guardian update their personal or emergency contact information with supervisor or designate of any changes. Before evacuating, supervisor, director or designate staff will post the signage provided on entrances. When we reach the evacuation point, the supervisor, director or designate staff will call the childcare centre to leave a voice mail, and send out a message on Lillio.

For a full version of our Emergency Management Policy and Procedures, please see our Policies and Procedures Manual at the parents resource area by the lobby.

## **Supervision of Volunteers or Student Placements**

Little Giants supports field placement to students enrolled in Early Childhood Education programs from institutions. The participation of students in placement at our centres provide the children with new learning experiences and additional positive adult interactions throughout their day. It also offer opportunities for students to observe, learn and practice skills working with children. Our staff are eager to share their knowledge and experience by mentoring future Early Childhood Educators.

Prior to commencing their placement at the centre, all students are required to provide confirmation of a clear Police Vulnerable Sector Check and medical assessment. They are also required to review and be familiar with our Policies and Procedures Manual, and Program Statement prior to the start of their placement. Placement Students are not included as staff in meeting child ratios. Students are never left alone with the children. They are supported and supervised by a staff member at all times.

Any one who wishes to seek volunteer placements in any of our centres must speak to the supervisor and same procedures will follow (Police Vulnerable Sector Check and medical assessment).

## **Serious Occurrence**

Under the Childcare and Early Years Act, 2014, serious occurrences are defined as:

1. The death of a child who received childcare at a childcare centre,
2. Abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving childcare at a childcare centre,
3. A life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives childcare at a childcare centre,
4. An incident where a child who is receiving childcare at a childcare centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or
5. An unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a childcare centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving childcare at the childcare centre.

All Ontario licensed childcare programs are required to post information about serious occurrences that occur within their programs. This is in support of the Ontario governments' increased transparency and access to information initiative, in the delivery of childcare services. Shall an incident requires Little Giants to report a Serious Occurrence to the Ministry of Education, a notification form will be posted by the office within 24 hours.

The Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be updated if additional actions or investigations take place. It will be posted for a minimum of 10 business days from the last update or additional action. For privacy reasons, no personal information will be included.

For more detailed copy of our Serious Occurrence Policy, please see our Policies and Procedures Manual in the parents resource area by the lobby.

### **Prohibited Practices**

Staff at Little Giants uses behaviour guidance strategies to support children in developing appropriate social and emotional skills that comply with our Program Statement. Little Giants and The Child Care and Early Years Act prohibits the following practices:

- a) Corporal punishment of the child;
- b) 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 a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- c) Locking the exits of the child care centre or home 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 the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- d) 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 his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- e) Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

If, at anytime a staff member or placement student were to implement any of these practices immediate action would be taken. Please see our Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions Policy in our Policies and Procedures Manual.

### **Parking**

Parents can park briefly at the roundabout of the condo complex—not at the loading area. However, if you wish to spend more time in the centre, please park at visitors parking in the underground garage at P1. Please be respectful and refrain from blocking other cars as we share the driveway with other residents in surrounding condo towers. Stopping on Helen Lu Road is discourage. Little Giants is not responsible for any parking costs, damages to the ballords at the roundabout, parking infraction costs or damage done to your vehicle while on condo common property.

## **Smoke Free**

The Smoke Free Ontario Act prohibits persons from smoking in enclosed and public places, to protect workers and the public from the hazards of second hand smoke. Smoking, handling of a cigarette or use of an e-cigarette is prohibited in the centre and playground, near entrances and playground areas whether children are present or not.

## **Duty to Report**

Every person in Ontario is required under the Child and Family Services Act to report his/her belief that a child may be in need of protection: “A person who believes, on reasonable grounds, that a child is, or may be in need of protection shall forthwith report the belief and information, upon which it is based, to a society.”

The legislation specifically requires individuals who perform professional or official duties with respect to children such as the “operator or employee of a day nursery” to report suspicions of child abuse. If in the course of their professional duties, the supervisor and/or staff of the centre have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may have been abused, the suspicion, and the information upon which that suspicion is based, must be reported immediately to a Children’s Aid Society. A professional who works with children can be charged and fined for failing to report. It is the responsibility of the child protection agency to investigate and follow-up on the situation, as necessary.

## **Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and 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 and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by all the staff members at Little Giants and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian 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 1-3 business day(s). The person who raised 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.

### **► 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).

### **► Conduct**



Our centre 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 supervisor and/or licensee.

### ► **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.

### ► **Escalation of Issues or Concerns**

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to Ministry of Education who overs the program.

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.

## ► Procedures

NATURE OF ISSUE OR CONCERN	STEPS FOR PARENT AND/OR GUARDIAN TO REPORT ISSUE/CONCERN	STEPS FOR STAFF AND/OR LICENSEE IN RESPONDING TO ISSUE/CONCERN:
<p><b>PROGRAM ROOM-RELATED</b> For example: 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"> <li>► the classroom staff directly or</li> <li>► the supervisor or licensee.</li> </ul>	<p>Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 1-3 business days.</p> <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the date and time the issue/concern was received;</li> <li>• the name of the person who received the issue/concern;</li> <li>• the name of the person reporting the issue/concern;</li> <li>• the details of the issue/concern; and</li> <li>• any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GENERAL, CENTRE-OR OPERATIONS-RELATED</b> child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>► the supervisor or licensee.</li> </ul>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p>
<p><b>STAFF-, DUTY PARENT-, SUPERVISOR-, AND/OR LICENSEE-RELATED</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>► the individual directly or</li> <li>► the supervisor or licensee.</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. 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>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 1-3 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p>
<p><b>STUDENT/ VOLUNTEER RELATED</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>► the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or</li> <li>► the supervisor and/or licensee.</li> </ul> <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 supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>