

## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

*Footsteps Family Centre was established in 1993 and is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors. Board members are elected at the Annual General Meeting in March of each year by the members of this organization. The membership is comprised of parents and interested individuals within this community that are committed to the well being of all children.*

*Monthly Board meetings are held to ensure the effective and efficient provision of the highest quality care and service to all children and their families.*

*We believe that it does take a whole community to raise a child. Your support, suggestions, comments and questions are encouraged and valued. Together we can and will make a difference.*

*As a Board, we welcome you and your family to this Centre.*

*Sincerely*

*Chair of the Board*

# PERSONAL BELONGINGS

## CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS

Children should wear washable play clothes to the centre. A second set of clothing for your child should be kept at the centre to be used when necessary. All clothing and shoes should be labelled to avoid losing articles. Clothing which your child can remove and replace easily is recommended as this encourages self-help skills and independence.

Appropriate outdoor clothing is required, as the children will be participating in outdoor play daily. (I.e. splash pants and boots for rainy weather, snowsuits, mitts, neck tubes and hats for winter). Please note that for safety reasons we request that no strings be attached to any article of clothing. We request that indoor shoes or slippers be left at the centre. This is especially important in case of a fire drill, as the children must exit the building.

We appreciate the fact the children like to bring familiar items from home to help them feel more comfortable in the program. Therefore, to help avoid the loss of personal items, please **label them**.

During the warmer months, Footsteps Family Centre provides appropriate sunscreen protection for all children. We willingly accept donations of "Ombrelle" sunscreen/or monetary contributions to help with this expense

## ITEMS TO BRING FROM HOME

- ~blanket/stuff toy
- ~complete change of clothes (shirt, sweater, pants, underwear, and socks)
- ~appropriate outdoor clothing
- ~pull-ups/diapers/wipes
- ~indoor shoes or slippers (footwear must have rubber soles)

# DAILY OPERATIONS

## ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP

Young children are dependent of regular routines for their own sense of security. Footsteps Family Centre recommends that established hours of pick-up and drop-off be adopted. When a child (ren) arrives, the parent(s)/guardian(s) notify a staff member of the child=s presence. When picking up your child, the parent(s)/guardian(s) should inform the staff that the child is leaving. The above procedure is essential for the safety of all children. Unless otherwise arranged, children will not be released to any person other than those specified on the admission forms. A person delegated by the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to show identification when picking up the child to indicate such a person is indeed the delegate.

Footsteps Family Centre is open from 7:30 am - 5:30 pm (6:00 rural sites). Any children picked up after closing times will receive a late fee charge. Hours determined by Executive Director, TBDSSAB, to subsidy clients will be enforced.

If in the staff=s opinion, the pick up person (parent/guardian or delegate) is not capable of caring for the child (ren) (e.g., intoxicated, incoherent), the staff will offer to call a taxi and contact the designate person(s) listed in the child=s file. If the pick up person still insists on taking the child(ren) with them then the staff person will notify the proper authorities (i.e. designate Director, police or Children=s Aid).

The staff who makes that decision will write up an incident report to be included in the child=s file, make a note of the incident in the daily journal, and call the Director and advise her/him of the situation.

## FIELD TRIPS

Children learn from actual experiences. Therefore, we place a high priority on outings. On the enrollment form, you were asked to sign an area for spontaneous walks close to the centre. This would include walks around the neighbourhood as well as nature walks.

When trips are planned to special places of interest, parents will be asked to sign a consent form, giving information of the destination, date, and times of departure and arrival. If you are interested in attending our field trips, please feel free to join us.

Footsteps participates in an intergenerational program along with the seniors residing at Hilldale Gardens Senior Complex - Hilldale Rd. Children and Seniors share wonderful experiences sharing snack, creative arts, and music circles with one another. At times the children ride the city bus or sometimes (weather permitting) take the strollers, wagons or bye bye buggy.

## DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The centre will be opened from Monday to Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (6:00 rural sites) The following statutory holidays will be observed:

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

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### EMERGENCY EVACUATION / CLOSURE

In the event of a fire or other emergency situation that makes the centre's premises unsafe, the staff and children will be evacuated from the building. The children attending the Our Lady of Charity school locations will walk to the Suomi Koti residence. Holy Cross school location walks to St Anthony's Church, Five Mile school location walks to the McIntyre Recreation centre and Gorham and Ware School location walks to the Lappe Church. They will remain there and be supervised until their parents or guardians can pick them up.

In the event of a school closure (i.e. snowstorm), the centre will be closed. If there were an announcement on the radio that Our Lady of Charity School is closed, then Footsteps Family Centre would also be closed.

In the event of a closure while in the centre, parents will be contacted to pick up their child(ren) as soon as possible.

### SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Children attending Footsteps Family Centre are supervised by qualified Registered Early Childhood Educators and/or individuals 18 years of age or older who is otherwise approved by a director. All employees, students and volunteers of Footsteps Family Centre are required to submit Criminal Reference Check - Vulnerable Sector Check.

Volunteers and students are not permitted to supervise children or be alone with children at any time.

With respect to individuals supervising school aged programs the following are also qualified employees: A) an employee with a diploma or degree in child and youth care. B) an employee who has a diploma or degree in recreation and leisure services. C) a member in good standing with the Ontario College of Teachers.

## ACCIDENTS

Should a child receive any injury (i.e. when ice needs to be applied to a wound) while in attendance at Footsteps Family Centre, an accident report will be written up and the parent will be notified. The parent, staff member involved and the Executive Director will sign this report. One copy will be kept in the child's file, second copy will be given to parent.

## **ADMISSIONS AND WITHDRAWALS**

### ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Clients wishing to apply to Footsteps Family Centre are to create an account on the One list registry/waitlist [www.thunderbaychildcare.ca](http://www.thunderbaychildcare.ca)

Footsteps Family Centre will give priority to those on the onelist waitlist registry as follows:

- 1) Siblings of children already attending.
- 2) Full time enrolment
- 3) part time regularly scheduled day's
- 4) flexible scheduled days if and when space permits.

Prior to enrollment, a tour of the centre will be arranged to familiarize the family with the staff, the surroundings and our policies, as well as complete the required registration & contract forms.

Two weeks written notice is required if your child is *absent due to holidays, doctor/dentist appt* or to *withdraw your child(ren) from the Centre*. If notice is not received, you will be financially responsible for the space for that time period. Two week written notice is to be used occasionally, not as a means of accommodation to flexible schedules.

### REMOVAL OF CHILD FROM CENTRE

Should the child's behavior problems be deemed to be beyond the expertise of the centre staff, pose a risk to safety to him or herself or infringe upon the rights of another child to participate in a safe and secure childcare environment, recommendations will be made in writing to the parent (s) /guardian to withdraw the child from the daycare and seek services with appropriate agencies within the community. The parent will be given two weeks notice of 2 weeks to make alternate arrangements. Please be aware that if a child's behavior issues are deemed unsafe for themselves, or other children, or staff persons, parents will be asked to find alternate arrangements **immediately**.

### PROHIBITED PRACTISES

Footsteps Family Centre shall not permit...

- a) Corporal punishment of a child.
- b) Physical restraint, 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 of the exits of the child care centre 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.
- d) Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child what would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self worth.

- e) Depriving the child 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.

### **ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT**

Footsteps Family Centre recognizes each child=s individual feelings and actions. Support and time will be allowed to let each child express his/her emotions and moods in a positive manner. Positive measures are used in order to help a child learn to deal with all emotions in an appropriate manner. The goal of discipline is to teach the child safe, socially and developmentally appropriate skills and abilities to increase both self-control and skill acquisition. A positive environment is created by skilled staff who provide consistency, structure and appropriate intervention strategies. Disciplinary measures, through the use of behavior management strategies are used to prevent unacceptable behavior and avoid crisis situations. When the need arises, children will be disciplined in a positive manner, at a level that is appropriate to their ages and developmental stages. Acceptable Behaviour Management Strategies:

- |                       |                                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Clear expectations | 8. Removal of triggering object |
| 2. Choices            | 9. Limits                       |
| 3. Redirection        | 10. Controls                    |
| 4. Planned ignoring   | 11. Logical consequences        |
| 5. Caring gestures    | 12. Natural consequences        |
| 6. Humour             | 13. Time away                   |
| 7. Hurdle helping     |                                 |

## **MISSION STATEMENT / PHILOSOPHY**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Footsteps Family Centre encourages learning through play in an environment that is secure, stimulating and promotes the wholistic development of each child. Our centre strives to reach common goals through partnership with the family, the school and community.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

**CHILDREN:** Our belief is that every child is unique with individual needs and abilities. Our program is designed to foster the development of each child so that they can learn to live in harmony with themselves, others and the world.

**FAMILIES:** Our centre is committed to building partnerships with the parents to provide an extension of the family unit. Parents are encouraged to engage in and become active participants in their child=s day at the centre. We believe open communication and daily contact will provide our families with the trusting environment and relationship they seek.

**STAFF:** The staff members have chosen their work because of a belief in the importance of the task, suitability of their skills and education as well as the strong commitment to the healthy development of children.

## **NUTRITION / REST TIME**

### **NUTRITION**

Footsteps Family Centre is a NUT/SCENT-SENSITIVE centre.

This means that there will not be any peanut or nut products allowed in the centre. We ask that any children attending our program do not bring peanut or nut products into the centre. Please refrain from sending your child into the centre with any food from home. We have children enrolled that are anaphylactic (fatal allergy) to nuts/scents and their derivatives.

A nutritious mid-day meal, morning and afternoon snacks, will be provided for the children. Individual and special dietary needs including allergies and sensitivities will be posted in the kitchen and both play room serving areas. Weekly menu plans will be posted for the current and following week. Menus are planned with respect to the Canada Food Guide requirements. We welcome menu ideas that are special to your child=s family or background.

## REST TIME

Footsteps provides a supervised two-hour rest period after lunch for children attending the centre full day. At this time, the children lie down on cots in a darkened room with soothing lullaby music played. This is a time for the children to sleep or take part in restful activities (i.e. puzzles, books, etc.). Please feel free to send a favorite blanket and /or stuff animal to help your child rest. Children are monitored to ensure safe sleep by sleep room supervisors. Documentation is logged in 15 minute intervals.

Children unable to fall asleep following a  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour period are welcome to quiet rest activities such as books, puzzles.

Children who are awake after one hour of rest will have the opportunity to participate in quiet activities.

## PROGRAM STATEMENT

Footsteps Family Centre is committed to working toward the four foundations of learning: **Belonging, Well-being, Engagement and Expression.**

These foundations, or ways of being, are a vision for all children's future potential and view of what they should experience each and every day. Regardless of age, ability, culture, language, geography or setting. noted in "How does Learning Happen" Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years ...

- **Belonging** ~ refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individuals' experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world.
- **Well being** ~ address' the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation skills.
- **Engagement** ~ suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through play inquiry experience the children develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond
- **Expression** ~ or communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words, and use of materials, children 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 foundational for literacy.

**For the Children; Footsteps strives...**

- ~ to provide a safe, nurturing environment enabling all children to gain trust in themselves and others, to enhance their self-esteem and to form positive relationships with others.
- ~ to recognize and celebrate the similarities and differences among all children
- ~ to support and respond to the child=s sense of curiosity and innate need to explore.
- ~ to value the interrelatedness and wholistic process of development.
- ~ to provide numerous opportunities for play so that children can gain an understanding of their world and the people around them.
- ~ to enhance self-help skills and provide experiences for children to develop self-regulation, independence and problem solving skills,
- ~ to encourage creativity with emphasis being placed on the learning process rather than the end result.
- ~ to provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry.

**For the Families:**

- ~ to build a strong foundation of trust, and a relationship of respect with all families.
- ~ to enhance the parent-child-teacher relationship with open, honest, and positive communication.
- ~ to value all families and encourage each of their unique contributions to the centre.
- ~ to assist families to connect with local community partners and allow these partners to support them in various ways. For example: Children's Centre Thunder Bay; offers a variety of programming for children (0-18 years of age) educational workshops, counselling services, & George Jeffrey Treatment centre; offers Occupational therapy, Physiotherapy, & speech and language therapy services just to name a few.

**For the staff:**

- ~ to create safe work environments which offer opportunity for professional growth, lifelong learning which in turn supports positive and responsive interactions among children, parents, and co-workers.

**For the School and the Community:**

- ~ to work in partnership with the school to enhance the care and education of all children, Footsteps provides before and after school needs.
- ~ to foster and encourage belonging within the community; currently ...Biwaase'aa Cultural Learning Program is available here at Our Lady of Charity School and operates alongside Footsteps after school program in the school's gymnasium.

TBCDSB has partnered with Biwaase'aa to run cultural learning programs in our schools. Biwaase'aa is a culturally designed program that provides Aboriginal youth aged 7 to 13 years and their families with a fun opportunity to participate in programs which contribute to their cultural, mental, physical, and emotional well-being.

## **FEES / AGES OF CHILDREN**

### **FEES / PAYMENTS**

Families will be invoiced twice monthly, on the 15<sup>th</sup> and at the end of the month. Statement of accounts are printed at the end of each month and stapled to the current invoice. Payments are due within 3-5 business days following the distribution of invoices, which are then submitted to the Executive Director. Payment will be accepted by e-transfer, cheque or cash to: Footsteps Family Centre Inc. If paying with cash, receipts are issued by a staff person only. **DO NOT DROP CASH INTO CASH BOX** without given a receipt first. Footsteps does not accept postdated cheques. Should your child's last name be different than your own, please indicate in the memo section along with the invoice # on the memo section.

N.S.F. cheques will have a \$10.00 charged attached. Receipts will be provided within one week.

In keeping accurate accounts please pay the exact amount of invoice including cents.

Please contact the office within 3-5 business days following receipt of your invoice to report any discrepancies. Inquiries past 30 days will be subject to a \$25.00 administration fee.

Accounts overdue are subject to suspension

## **LATE CHARGES**

Footsteps Family Centre is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Any child(ren) picked up after 5:30 p.m. (6:00) at rural sites will received a late charge.

Late pick of child fee will be as follows:

5:31 p.m. - 5:45 p.m. - late fee of \$15.00
5:46 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. - late fee of \$25.00
6:00 p.m. - and on - late fee charge of \$40.00

Where attempts to call parents and emergency contacts for pick up continues past 30 min staff are instructed to call Children's Aid Society for assistance.

## **AGES OF CHILDREN**

Footsteps Family Centre OLOC site is licensed to accommodate 29 full time children ages 0-4 years of age as well as 13 Kindergarten age and 30 school age children for 6 to 12 years.

Footsteps Holy Cross site is licensed to accommodate 18 kindergarten age and 45 School age.

Footsteps Five Mile site is licensed to accommodate 13 Kindergarten age and 15 School age.

Footsteps Gorham and Ware site is licensed to accommodate 13 Kindergarten and 15 School age.

# **HEALTH / MEDICATION**

## **HEALTH AND ILLNESS**

The Child Care and Early Years Act stipulates that prior to admission, each child 0-4 years of age must be immunized as recommended by the local Medical Officer or Health. Parents of children who object to immunization due to religious/conscience or medical reasons must complete a standardized ministry approved form. Medical exemption forms must be completed by a doctor or nurse practitioner.

Regulations require daily outdoor play for each child. In light of such regulations, it is the Centre policy that for a child too ill during the day, temporary care will be provided until the parent(s)/guardian(s) are contacted and the child is taken home.

If a child shows any of the following symptoms, he/she cannot attend Footsteps Family Centre until the symptoms have disappeared, 24 hours is the exclusion period. If your child comes in contact with any of these conditions, please inform a staff member.

- ~ cold symptoms that hinder regular activity (i.e. coloured discharge from nose)
- ~ ear ache
- ~ discharge from eyes or ears
- ~ repeated diarrhea or vomiting (diarrhea - two bouts in one day)
- ~ Unexplained rash
- ~ Swollen neck glands
- ~ fever above 38 C or 100.4 F
- ~ Head lice (nits are removed fully)

A child must remain home if diagnosed with any contagious diseases such as:

Measles  
Chicken Pox  
Impetigo

Mumps  
Roseola  
Pink Eye

A doctor=s note is required to confirm the child is no longer contagious and is ready to return to a group child-care setting.

Unfortunately, payments cannot be refunded for children who are ill as a space is being held for them. Please call the centre if your child is ill and will not be attending on his/her scheduled day.

#### **DRUG ADMINISTRATION**

Footsteps Family Centre will administer both prescription and non-prescription medication to children in accordance with provincial legislation.

The legislation requires that parents provide:

- i) Written authorization form, including dosage, reason for taking the medication and time medication is to be administered.
- ii) The medication must be in the original container, clearly labeled with the child=s name, name of medication, the dosage, the date of purchase, and instructions for storage and administration.
- iii) Parents must give all medication to a staff person, who will place it in a locked medication box.

