

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.

Bi 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 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

Updated August 2023

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 that 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 items.

LABELLED ITEMS TO BRING FROM HOME

~blanket/stuff toy

~complete change of clothes (shirt, sweater, pants, underwear, socks)

~appropriate outdoor clothing

~pull-ups/diapers/wipes

~indoor shoes or slippers (footwear must have rubber soles) ~sunscreen

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 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 such as Police, Children's Aid & Centre's Director.

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.

AGE CATEGORIES/SERVICES PROVIDED

Footsteps Family Centre provides care to children aged 0 - 12 years old. Children are enrolled into programs as age appropriate, Footsteps operates Monday - Friday, 12 months of the year (main centre) Satellite locations follow the school's calendar to which they are affiliated. PA days are offered pending feasibility surveys. Educators will guide you to the sign-up sheet at each site location. Parents will be notified if the program is NOT able to operate with approx. 1 week notice.

Our Lady of Charity School, 370 County Blvd., offers programming for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school age JKSK to School Age 12 yrs. old.

Holy Cross School, 420 Brittany Dr., offers care before and afterschool for children JKSK to School age 12yrs old.

Five Mile School, 2025 Dawson Rd, offers care before and afterschool for children JKSK to School age 12yrs old

Gorham Ware, 2032 Kam Current Rd., offers care before and afterschool for children JKSK to School age 12yrs old.

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

Footsteps closes for the last week of August each year to allow for annual custodial cleaning.

Footsteps offers full day childcare to school age children on days of school closure when feasible to do so. Parent sign up sheets are distributed approx. 2 weeks ahead of the scheduled school closure, pending need, determining feasibility, a decision will be determined by the Executive Director.

SITE LOCATIONS/CONTACT INFO

Footsteps Family Centre Our Lady of Charity 767-1958
Holy Cross 683-0942
Five Mile 683-0958
Gorham Ware, Lappe 629-5431

EMAIL DIRECTORY

Footsteps Executive Director Colleen McBain: cmcbainfootsteps@gmail.com
E transfer email address: footstepsetransfer@gmail.com
Centre Designate, Maria Ryan email address: mryanfootsteps@gmail.com

Hi Mama email correspondence will connect you to your child's educator,

Hi Mama app... Footsteps subscribes to the Hi Mama app. Should you wish to participate you will be able to can check in with your child's educator through out the day, receive updates about your child's activities, add family members so that they too can be involved in your child's day from anywhere! You can send messages to your child's program leaders and comment on your child's picture & record milestones in your child's development. Participation is voluntary to which a participation agreement is required, note: sometimes other children of the centre may feature in photos, videos or stories of your child. By giving your consent you agree NOT to share photos or video of any child other than your own, outside the program without permission.

Facebook page: Feel free to join us & share with others our Facebook group Footsteps Family Centre.

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.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers and students play an important role in supporting staff in the daily operation of Footsteps. Volunteers and Students are not permitted to be alone with a child and cannot be counted in staff-child ratios at any time. Students & Volunteers are required to submit current criminal reference checks, vulnerable sector, prior to starting with the centre.

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 will walk to the nearest designated evacuation site. They will remain there and be supervised until their parents or guardians can pick them up.

Our Lady of Charity School, walks to Suomi Koti Seniors apartments 527 County Blvd.

Holy Cross School, walks to St. Anthony's Church 123 Hilldale Rd.,

Five Mile School, walks to McIntyre Community Centre 2051 Government Rd.

Gorham Ware School, walks to Lappe Luthern Church RR14 Dog Lake Rd.

In the event of a school closure due to inclement weather/power outages the child care centre will close as well. Parents would be contacted for pick up.

Snow closure announcements will be announced on local media stations 94 FM and 105.3 FM

FIRE DRILLS & LOCK DOWN DRILLS

Programs participate in monthly fire drill & lock down safety practises as well as those scheduled by the school.

Programs operating off school hours will conduct monthly Fire drills to ensure children are familiar with the safe evacuation of their before and afterschool program space.

Satellite locations operating before and after school hours will practise lock down procedures should a threat to safety present itself and call 911.

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. Should the injury provide more than standard first aid treatment the staff will call 911 and the parent.

ADMISSIONS AND WITHDRAWALS

ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY

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.

WAITLIST POLICY

Clients wishing to apply to Footsteps Family Centre are to create an account on the One list registry/waitlist www.thunderbaychildcare.ca Spaces within the centre are filled according to date of enrollment to the registry list.

Due to our limited spaces available, Waitlist times can be extremely lengthy please continue to monitor your account on the one list waitlist registry to be sure the account is active.

Footsteps Family Centre will set priority on the following basis:

Full time enrolment, part time regularly scheduled days each week, flexible scheduled days if and when space permits.

Staff's children, siblings of those already affiliated with the centre, & school staff's children, are also prioritized on the waiting list.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

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 behaviour management strategies are used to prevent unacceptable behaviour 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
2. Choices
3. Redirection
4. Planned ignoring
8. Removal of triggering object
9. Limits
10. Controls
11. Logical consequences

5. Caring gestures
6. Humour
7. Hurdle helping

12. Natural consequences
13. Time away

PROHIBITED PRACTISES

1. Corporal punishment.
2. Physical restraints for the purpose of discipline.
3. Locking of exits for the purpose of confining a child without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the emergency management policies and procedures.
4. Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language 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.
5. Depriving a child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding or
6. Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

NO employee, volunteer, student or parent affiliated with the centre shall engage in any of the prohibited practises set out in subsection (1) with respect to children receiving childcare.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All issues and concerns will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers except when the information must be disclosed for legal purposes. (i.e., to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or Children's Aid Society.

CONDUCT

Footsteps 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 or designate.

CONCERNS OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF A CHILD

Everyone including members of the public and professionals who work with children are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. Individuals with concern are advised to contact the children's aid society or Dilico directly.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Parents/caregivers of Footsteps Family Centre have the opportunity to express their concerns and complaints to staff without fear of retribution. The parent's concerns are important and are a natural step in providing an inclusive environment which meets the needs of children and families. Building and maintaining positive relationships with parents is valued at our centre.

This policy is to support open communication between staff and parents. Communication is essential in preventing and resolving conflict. Parents and staff who openly communicate with one another regarding the care of their child (children) can potentially avoid dissatisfaction with services.

Families are composed of individuals who are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience. Families love their children and want the best for them. Families are experts on their children. They are the first and most powerful influence on children's learning, development, health, and wellbeing. Families bring diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. Families should feel that they belong, are valuable contributors to their children's learning, and deserve to be engaged in a meaningful way. (HDLH)

Fostering good relationships with children and their families is the single most important priority for educators in early year's programs. The ability to establish constructive relationships with children and families is a requirement for Registered Early Childhood Educators in Ontario, as set out in the College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. (CECE 2011)

Procedure:

All concerns will be addressed in a professional manner and kept confidential, documented and filed. Staff will provide clear and consistent messaging to ensure concerns received are addressed in a transparent and timely manner. Staff will provide information collected from policies and procedures to align with the concern.

The first line of communication for parents is with their child's educator.

If the concern is not program related and cannot be handled by the child's educator then the parent or staff member will take the concern to the Executive Director/Designate.

All concerns will be handled in the following manner:

- If the concern/issue is directly related to a program room, this may be addressed with the program educator.
- If the concern/issue is regarding a staff member, student, volunteer, or parent this may be addressed with the Centre's Director/Designate.
- If the concern is regarding the Director/Designate, this may be brought to the Centre's Board of Directors & Officers.
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Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies for e.g., local public health, police, fire, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, College of Early Childhood Educators where applicable.

All issues/concerns need to be handled as outlined and at no time should any matters be brought to social media.

REMOVAL OF CHILD FROM THE CENTRE

Should a 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.

When possible, the family will be given a two-week period in which to find alternative arrangements.

NUTRITION / REST TIME

NUTRITION

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

We ask all parents to refrain from sending your child into the centre with food. Families with dietary food restrictions such as food intolerances, family dietary choices or religious observance may make special arrangements with the centre for food to be brought in for the child. Parents of School age children required to bring in bagged lunches for PA days are required to comply with our anaphylaxis allergy policy and avoid products containing nuts.

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 closest to the children's cubbie areas. While all of our 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 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 soft lullaby music playing, 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 feel comfortable and relaxed during the rest period. Children who are awake after a half hour will have the opportunity to take part in quiet activities.

PROGRAM STATEMENT

The centre is committed to working toward the four foundations of learning: Belonging, Well-being, Engagement and Expression.

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.

For the staff:

- ~ Footsteps is committed to continuous professional learning, the shift toward a pedagogical foundation for professional practice in early childhood settings has staff of Footsteps participating in workshops with our local community college, as well as the early years team - pedagogical officers (TBDSSAB) that together work to support staff in their journey to align traditional & contemporary curriculum.
- ~As we question, research, reflect, respond and co-construct our understanding of the world around us we gain new perspectives and new more complex questions arise. Ontario's Pedagogy, How Does Learning Happen is intended to support pedagogy and curriculum/program development within early years programs.

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 ~

FEES / PAYMENTS

FEES / PAYMENTS

Annual fee lists are posted in programs & our website.

Families will be invoiced monthly, within 3-5 business days following the last day of the month.

Statement of accounts are printed at the end of each month along with 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 encouraged to be made by e transfer (see staff for details) 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 on the e transfer or cheque information along with the invoice # please.

N.S.F. cheques will have a \$10.00 charged attached. Receipts will be provided with in 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.

ACCEPTED METHODS OF PAYMENT:

E transfer, cash or cheques

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 parents will receive 1 documented warning. Reoccurring late charges will be subject to services being terminated.

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 period, staff are instructed to call Children's Aid Society for assistance.

Families utilizing subsidized spaces must follow drop off and pick up times as directed in the letter or approval.

HEALTH / MEDICATION

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

The Child Care and Early Years Act stipulates that prior to admission, each child must be immunized as recommended by the local Medical Officer or Health.

Regulations require daily outdoor play for each child. In light of such regulations, it is the Centres 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.

Children experiencing any of the following symptoms should be sent home until a health care provider has examined them and/or they no longer have symptoms. Symptoms that suggest a child may be ill and should be sent home from childcare:

~ unusual behavior, respiratory symptoms, vomiting, diarrhea, fever 38 degrees or higher, eye/nose drainage, itching, rashes, an unusual colour (to the skin, eyes, urine or stool) we ask that your child remain at home away from the centre 24 hours and/or until symptoms have started improving, and/or have been assessed by a health care professional (48 hrs following the last bout of vomiting or diarrhea for Gastro Intestinal illness)

All licensed childcare centres must report reportable diseases to their local health unit.

It is the responsibility of the centre's director to exclude a child from the program if this measure is necessary to control the spread of the disease. Thunder Bay District Health Unit has developed a resource that includes an overview of 28 common childhood infections or diseases of concern by providing information on the signs, symptoms, means of spread as well as any exclusion guidelines that may apply for each infection on their website www.thdhu.com

Footsteps Family Centre continues to adhere to current Directives provided by the Ontario Ministry of Health and our Local Health Unit regarding Covid 19 Pandemic. Please visit TBDHU website for current information pertaining to the schools and childcare setting screening tools. Rapid Covid test kits are available to children and their families (infant, toddler, preschool age categories) Schools will provide test kits to children attending school.

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/SKIN PRODUCTS

Footsteps Family Centre will administer both prescription and non-prescription medication to children in accordance with provincial legislation. legislation requires that parents provide:

- a) Written authorization form, including dosage and time medication is to be administered.
- b) 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.
- c) parents must give all medication to a staff person, who will place it in a locked medication box.
- d) Written authorization for Non prescription skin products such as sunscreen, diaper creams/ointments, lip balm, hand sanitizers, insect repellent & lotions are required prior to staff administration.

Should you have further questions please feel free to contact the Director for assistance.

767-1958 ext. 5 or email cmcbainfootsteps@gmail.com