



PARENT HANDBOOK

YWCA St. Thomas – Elgin

16 Mary Street West, St. Thomas, ON, N5P 2S3
Mon - Fri 9:00 a.m. to 5:00p.m.
519-631-9800
www.ywcaste.ca

Aylmer Community Services

25 Centre Street, Aylmer, ON, N5H 2Z4
Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Tuesdays 9:00 a.m. to 6:00p.m.
519-765-2082
www.ywcaste.ca

Elgin Court FDK Cell Phone	519-619-4253
McGregor FDK Cell Phone	519-280-5082
McGregor Grade 1-6 Cell Phone.....	226-376-6824
Mitchell Hepburn JK/SK Cell Phone	519-281-4371
Mitchell Hepburn Grade 1-6 Phone	519-619-6517
Davenport Cell Phone.....	226-219-8405
New Sarum Cell Phone	519-619-6488
Southwold FDK Cell Phone	226-268-8484
Southwold Grade 1-6 Cell Phone.....	519-280-5086
Éva Circé Côté French Immersion Cell Phone	519-636-9983
Springfield Cell Phone	226-448-5684
Straffordville Cell Phone	519-200-1329
Summer’s Corner Cell Phone.....	519-636-7118



Thank you for choosing the YWCA for your childcare needs. We hope that your child(ren) will enjoy what our Educators have planned for this upcoming year! It is our intent to ensure that your child receives the best quality in childcare. Your input is important to us so please feel free to speak with Educators at your program site or contact the YWCA office at **519-631-9800**.

Please take the time to read this handbook to ensure that you fully understand the guidelines set forth for this program.

THE YWCA MANDATE

The YWCA of St. Thomas-Elgin is a registered, charitable, voluntary organization whose Mission Statement is as follows: ***Providing leadership, advocacy, opportunities, and a voice - empowering women and their families' everyday!*** With this statement we affirm our commitment to St. Thomas and Elgin County.

EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE IN THE OPERATION OF CHILDCARE

The YWCA, both locally and nationally, has been committed to providing quality childcare for many years. Nationally, it is known that the YWCA provided childcare as early as the 1880's. In St. Thomas, children's programs have been part of our programming since 1903.

The YWCA of St. Thomas-Elgin's primary purpose is to empower women and children by providing quality, caring and innovative services. Programs are geared specifically to meet the needs of women, children and families in our community.

Our childcare programs are well utilized and have an excellent reputation in the community. We credit this success to our hard-working team of Educators who ensure the best quality of service and education are given each day.

LICENSING

A licence must be obtained from the Ministry of Education to operate a school age childcare program. The Child Care and Early Years Act, and its accompanying regulations, form the basis of the licensing procedure.

Upon successful completion of annual licensing inspections, a licence is issued to each program by the Ministry of Education. A renewal licence is issued each year, provided all requirements are met.

The YWCA has opted into the Canada Wide Early Learning & Childcare System (CWELCC). The goals of the CWELCC system are to lower childcare fees for families with children ages 0-6. Other pillars of the system include: The agreement focuses on some key pillars including working on increasing program spaces for children and promoting a wage floor to recognize Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECES).

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Our Before and After (B&A) School Program offers “hands on” experiences for children within a warm, relaxed environment. The program is designed with flexibility and creativity in order to respond to and complement each child’s school day. The B&A School Program offers opportunities for decision-making and growth towards increased independence and responsibility.

PROGRAM STATEMENT

The YWCA program statement is consistent with the Ministry of Education’s policy statement on programming and pedagogy issued under subsection 55 (3) of the Child Care and Early Years Act. This program statement is a working document that will be reviewed annually. Copies of our program statement are located at each childcare site, and on our website. Expectations identified within our program statement include the following:

- All Educators will promote and maintain the mental & physical health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of each child.
- We will provide continuous professional learning and growth opportunities to enhance the knowledge of our Educators.
- Educators believe children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Play and program activities will reflect the unique interests of the children with adult supported experiences to enhance growth.
- Educators will provide environments that reduce stress and increase the ability of children to self-regulate.
- Positive, responsive interactions will be built through a sense of belonging among the children and parents within our programs.

We believe that our program statement will guide our work and challenge us to continually improve quality. On the last two pages of this handbook, you will find our full Program Statement. If you have any questions regarding this working document, feel free to contact a member of our Childcare Team.

MONITORING COMPLIANCE AND CONTRAVENTIONS

Compliance and contraventions with policies, procedures and individualized plans will be monitored on an ongoing basis, recorded and addressed. The YWCA will ensure that all staff members receive training on Policies and Procedures. The Director of School Age Childcare (SAC) will monitor compliance of policies, procedures and Individualized Service Plans and follow up on contraventions as follows:

- SAC Coordinators, or senior Educators who are chosen to do so will conduct monthly site visits. During this time adherence to policies and procedures will be monitored and documented using the monthly site visit checklist.
- Program staff not in compliance will receive immediate on the job coaching and role modeling. Program staff will be asked to review the written policy and sign off on thorough understanding and agreement to implement said policy. This document will be filed within their personnel file.
- Ongoing or multiple contraventions will be handled following our Disciplinary Procedures within the YWCA Personnel Manual.

PROHIBITED PRACTICES

The YWCA will ensure that all children in the B&A School Program will be treated respectfully, in ways that protect their well-being, individuality, self-worth and self-esteem. The following behaviours are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment of the child.
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a chair, 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.
- Locking the exits of the childcare premises for the purpose of confining a child or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as an emergency procedure.
- 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.
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Any staff or volunteer suspected of these behaviours will be removed immediately from having contact with children and depending on severity may be terminated from the YWCA. The staff member may be subject to a full investigation into their conduct.

HOURS OF OPERATION

7:00 a.m. until school begins & after school until 6:00 p.m.

The transfer of care cannot take place until the operational hours of program begin at 7:00 a.m. for safety and insurance purposes. The B&A School Programs are offered in coordination with the school year and holidays followed by Thames Valley District School Board.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAM EDUCATORS

Each program room will be staffed by a Registered Early Childhood Educator, Child and Youth Care Practitioner, Recreation and Leisure expert, Developmental Service Workers, staff with BAs of Education, or have alternative demonstrated experience working with children. Site Supervisors and Educators staff must provide a Police Vulnerable Sector Check, a valid certificate of training in First Aid and CPR Level C and a current Food Handlers certificate. All staff will be trained on YWCA policies and procedures.

VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENT PLACEMENTS

The YWCA welcomes volunteers and placement students to some programs periodically throughout the year. All staff and volunteers are age 18+. No volunteers or students will be counted in program ratio, or have unsupervised access to children. Occasionally, supervisory staff will attend programs to assess student's or volunteer's progress.

AGE CATEGORIES AND RATIOS

Children are placed in groups according to the following age categories:

Category	Age Range	Ratio
Kindergarten (JK/SK)	44 months – 67 months (3.8 to 5.6 years old)	1:13
Primary/Junior School Age (Grade 1-6)	5.6 – 12 years old	1:15
Junior School Age	9 - 12 years old	1:20

Where Director Approval is granted, mixed age groupings will be offered. Staff ratios will follow the youngest age group requirements when more than 25% of children are from a younger age category and requirements for the youngest child in the group apply. If you have any questions regarding staff to children ratios, please contact the SAC Coordinator team.

THE PROGRAM

The B&A School Program is designed around the Educator's observation of children's skill and interests in play. Educators use these observations to set up invitations for learning and activities that will challenge and engage the children. The program environment offers open ended play opportunities that provide children with creative crafts, musical, dramatic, science, technology, and construction experiences. Outdoor play has an important role in our school age programs. During outdoor time, there is opportunity for large group and independent activities, physical activities and learning about the world around us. Please ensure that your child is prepared for outdoor play when attending the program as it is part of our daily curriculum.

MEDIA USE IN PROGRAM

As exposure to technology and media grows in our world, we are conscious that children are increasingly interested in it. In our programs, our focus is to maintain curriculum that focuses on hands on, interactive experiences to enhance social-emotional development for the children. When appropriate and as approved by the SAC Coordinators, access to iPads and video will be facilitated by the program Educators. Smart boards may be used for interactive experiences such as dancing opportunities or group games. Music approved and selected by Educators will also be played in programs.

RE-REGISTRATION for existing families

Existing families are rolled over in registration from year to year. Please ensure all your family's information is kept up to date with our Childcare Office as well as at program. Children with Individualized Support Plans and Individualized Medical Plans will have their needs re-assessed prior to the change over from program to program (i.e Summer Camp to B&A, etc.) Please note there will be a blackout period from August 15- September 15 while we build, staff and prepare our programs for the school year. No new registrations will occur during this time. Your family's space in program is always dependent upon enrollment, program resources, etc.

HOW TO REGISTER- New Families

Online Registration – Program registration is a two-step process, as mandated regionally. First, we ask you to register through the OneHSN website <https://onehsn.com/stthomas>. Please create an account using the following information:

- Family name
- Child(ren)'s name
- Contact information
- Date of birth of child(ren)
- Requested start date
- Type of care required

Upon completion of registration through the OneHSN website, you will be placed on a waiting list and contacted by the YWCA Childcare Registrar on a first-come-first-served basis based on program ratios, resources, and specific needs. At that point you will proceed with the registration process and be emailed a registration form, and supplemental documents to **return in two business days**. If you have not returned the fully completed, required documents in this time frame, you will be placed back on the bottom of the list. You will not be considered for enrollment until the completed registration forms are returned. Regular email correspondence is used to provide the forms and ask clarifying questions during this time period.

OneHSN is also used to individually register for our PA Day camps, Holiday Camps and March Break. There is a section included on our registration forms to indicate your interest in these programs. As with the process above, your child will be placed on a waitlist in chronological order once the completed registration forms are received.

Children are welcome to visit the program prior to their official start date. To set up a meeting, please contact the Childcare Registrar or SAC Coordinator Team. Children arriving at the program for the first time will be introduced to all Educators and children, receive a tour of the program space, have a chance to explore the program environment and review the daily plan.

WAITLIST POLICY

The YWCA will take every effort to register families in a timely manner. Knowing that childcare is a critical component of a family's well-being, we will process registrations as efficiently as possible and keep wait lists to a minimum whenever possible. Families who request care through the OneHSN website will be contacted within one week of their request to begin the enrollment process or to be informed they are entering a waitlist.

- Program space is determined based on licensing and staff allocations. The Childcare Registrar will monitor and track new registrations through online software.
- Should space not be available the Childcare Registrar will review licensed capacity and human resources to determine if children can be moved from one age grouping to the next to accommodate more children.
- Once this process is exhausted, any part time families enrolled will be given first right of refusal to upgrade their space to a full-time space (either before or after or both) or withdraw from the program so that a full time child may access the space.
- This process will follow a chronological timeline and once it is exhausted the Director of SAC will explore opening a new classroom and allocating new human resources to the new space in demand.
- During this process children will be kept on a wait list in chronological order of registration date.
- Families will be notified in a timely manner to keep wait times to a minimum.
- The wait list will be made available (through verbal conversation) to a parent/guardian requesting their child/ren status on the list, in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the families and children on the list.

CHILD ADVOCACY AND SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT

The YWCA St. Thomas – Elgin is committed to supporting all children. At the point of registration, we ask parents/guardians to disclose any special needs and additional supports their child requires to be safe and successful in a group setting. Our commitment to families can only be achieved by working together in partnership to support children in a manner that is best suited to their specific needs. YWCA Educators work in partnership with parents and special needs resource agencies such as All Kids Belong.

A SAC Coordinator will reach out to you to meet and discuss your child's needs and availability of resources to support your child. This communication helps prevent a delay in enrollment of a child to program while we are arranging proper supports. An Individual Support Plan (ISP), or Individualized Plan for a Child with Medical Needs will be created for the child before they start in the B&A School Program. The ISP or Individualized Plan for a Child with Medical Needs must be completed, and program staff must have reviewed it in order to support a child entering program. This process may take up to two weeks. During the process of developing an ISP or Individualized Plan for a Child with Medical Needs for your child, their registration will be held in cue on the waitlist.

CHANGES IN REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Any changes to personal information must be updated with the Childcare Registrar, by emailing childcare@ywcaste.ca. Changes could include but are not limited to: family contact information, guardianship, medical changes, introduction of medications, change in emergency contracts, parent work place, etc. Your child's safety in the event of an emergency could depend on the

CANCELLING OR REDUCTION OF CHILDCARE

If you are changing an enrolment, withdrawing from a program, or reducing services; the YWCA office must receive notice of any changes *in writing* by emailing: childcare@ywcaste.ca, or by filling out a “**Withdraw/Change/Reduction Form**” available from the Childcare Registrar. A \$20 administration fee per child will be applied when withdrawing, changing, or reducing services. Please communicate all schedule changes with the Childcare Registrar, as prior approval and appropriate billing needs to be in place.

All cancellations or reductions in childcare services require a minimum of two weeks written notice. Parents/guardians are required to pay the fees for these two weeks and may continue to use the childcare services during this two-week period. School closure due to labour action or government closure will result in a refund that will be processed as a credit applied to your next childcare cost. Refunds are not provided for inclement weather days.

PART-TIME FAMILIES

Our part-time spaces are for children who require regular scheduled part-time care. Part-time care, with a predetermined schedule may be available depending upon the space available at the program. Children must be registered for a minimum of 10 individual sessions in a month. Parents/Guardians have the ability to pick their scheduled days. Any changes to the schedule must be done by the 15th of the previous month (e.g. Changes for the month of September must be in the system by August 15th). Part-time families will be required to provide their schedule by the 15th of the month for the upcoming month to prepare proper attendances.

If your child occupies a part-time space and full-time care is required by another family, you will be notified and given the option of taking the space full-time. If you decline the full-time spot, you will be given two weeks’ notice to find alternate care.

If a child is sick on a scheduled day, or there is inclement weather, no refunds, or reschedules apply.

PROGRAM FEES AND CHILDCARE PAYMENTS

Payment is made using **Automatic Withdrawal, or Credit Card Billing** for families with children enrolled on a full-time and part-time basis. Upon registration you will be required to provide your requested method of payment. Your account will then be debited/charged on the 1st of each month, or the next banking day if the 1st lands on a weekend/holiday, based on your selected enrollment.

All childcare fees are prorated for the year and no refunds will be given for inclement weather days, stat holidays/PA Days/Early Dismissals/Christmas/March Break. Parents/Guardians are suggested to apply to register for recreational day camps (PA Days, Holiday Camp and March Break Camp) at the point of B&A School Program registration. Space is not guaranteed. Additional fees apply.

The YWCA reserves the right to change program fees without prior notification but will take measures to contact everyone affected by the changes.

PARTIAL SUBSIDIZED CHILDCARE PAYMENTS

Partial subsidized families as determined by St. Thomas Children’s Services Department will receive an invoice within the first 5 days of the month following childcare attendance verification. Their payment will be processed using Automatic Withdrawal or Credit Card Processing on the 20th of the month.

NSFWITHDRAWALS, OR DECLINED CREDIT CARDS

Non-Sufficient Fund (NSF) withdrawals or declined credit cards will be charged a \$35.00 administration fee. NSF fees and program fees gone NSF must be paid within 7 days of the NSF transaction, failure to do this may result in dismissal of children from program. After two NSF transactions in a school year, families will be required to make advanced payments for their child(ren) to remain in care.

LATE FEES

Late fees may apply to all parents/guardians who arrive after 6:00 p.m. A fee of \$1.00 for every 1 minute is payable directly to the Program Educator (e.g. if you arrive at 6:05 p.m. - a late fee of \$5.00 applies). Parents/guardians who consistently arrive after 6:00 p.m. will be contacted by a member of the Childcare Management Team to discuss the situation.

SUBSIDIZED CARE

The YWCA recognizes the need for subsidized childcare and will work with individual families to ensure they are receiving childcare. For families that require subsidized care please speak with St. Thomas-Elgin Social Services at 519-631-9350 (option 3).

CHILD ABSENCES

Please call or text the cell phone for your child’s program location if your child will be absent from the program, including absences due to sickness. Cell phone numbers are listed on the front cover of this booklet for each school age program. This will ensure that we are aware of any absences and ensure the child is safe.

If your child is sick, there will not be reimbursement for that day. Fees are established to allow a space to be reserved for your child. In cases of prolonged illness, we need written verification from a physician before a reimbursement is given. The B&A School Program is a not for profit community service. All fees are allocated to the substantial operating costs of the program, which is planned well in advance.

PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The YWCA Board of Directors, Director of SAC, SAC Coordinators and Educators believe that every child deserves a safe, warm and caring environment in which to grow and develop. We are committed to fostering each child’s self-esteem and believe that through the collaborative efforts of parents/guardians, professionals and the community, opportunities for optimal growth are provided for every child.

The B&A School Program Policies and Procedures underline our community commitment and our licensing for the Ministry of Education. If at any time you would like to review our policy and procedures, please speak with the SAC Coordinator Team. If needed, additional consultation with the Director of SAC is available. Our goal is for the children to have a safe and enjoyable time in a program that emphasizes high quality. To assist us in achieving this goal, we request your support in adhering to these policies and procedures.

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

In order to ensure that all children arrive and depart from the program safely we are requesting that parents adhere to the following guidelines:

- Children 10 years of age or older may be permitted to sign themselves out of the program with prior written consent from the parent or guardian. A special arrangement form must be completed and signed.
- Any child younger than 10 years of age will not be permitted to leave the premises without the supervision of someone over the age of 14 years. Written consent from the parent and a special arrangement form are required.
- A written request must be submitted to the Site Supervisor one week in advance detailing the reasons for this arrangement. The Site Supervisor can provide you with the appropriate form.
- Prior to implementation, a SAC Coordinator will need to approve the request. The completion of a special arrangement form does not guarantee approval of the request. The Childcare Team reserves the right to deny this request based on the nature of the request and the overall safety of the child.
- If the request is denied the parent will be notified in writing. Parents have the right to appeal the decision and request a meeting with the Director of School Age Childcare.

Beyond the special circumstances listed above, in order to ensure the safe arrival and departure of your child, it is required that you come into the program each morning and afternoon. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child is picked up by 6:00 p.m. each day. If an unexpected situation arises and you are unable to pick up your child by 6:00 p.m., please arrange for another adult to do so. This person must be identified on your child's registration form.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT FORMS

Please be advised that these forms are only to be used for extra-curricular activities that happen consistently and are located within the school or special arrangements outlined within the "SAFE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE" section of this handbook. If your child will be attending an extra-curricular activity within the school, a special arrangement form **MUST** be completed 24 hours prior to the event. For occasional changes in a child's schedule that are not routine, parents will need to write a note and give it to the Site Supervisor.

RELEASING CHILDREN TO AUTHORIZED AND NON AUTHORIZED ADULTS

To ensure the safety, of the children in our programs, we request that parents list all authorized individuals who can pick up their children. **These names must be listed on the registration form.** All individuals will be asked for photo identification prior

to the children being released from the program. If a person comes to pick a child up and is not listed on the form or the staff have not received written notification, children will not be released to the individual.

CUSTODY: Please be advised that the YWCA requires a copy of all custody papers in order to enforce these proceedings. If a parent comes to pick up a child and we do not have the papers to enforce the custody issue, we cannot deny the parent access. The YWCA will take all measures to contact the parent with the custody to verify release of the child and will try to dissuade the non-custodial parent from taking the child.

IMPAIRMENT: If a parent/guardian arrives to pick up a child and shows signs of alcohol or drug impairment staff will take necessary precautions to protect the child according to YWCA Policy and Procedures.

SAFE TRANSITION

Safe transition of children between the B&A School Programs and the classroom is ensured by requesting that the children go directly from the Before School Program to school supervised, outdoor play. After school, we ask that the children go directly to the After School Program. The YWCA Educator will accompany the JK and SK children from their school classrooms/groups to the After School program. Parents are encouraged to visit the program room with their children before starting the program. This will help the children familiarize themselves with the program room location in relation to his/her classroom.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION SITES

The YWCA has a comprehensive Emergency Management Policy that includes detailed procedures that program Educators will follow in case of an emergency situation at the school during program hours. In the event that the school is deemed unsafe, the YWCA programs will safely escort the children to the following locations:

Elgin Court Public School
Lutheran Church (Redeemer)
271 Elm St
St. Thomas, ON N5R 5C5

McGregor Public School
Aylmer Baptist Church
153 John St S
Aylmer, ON N5H 2C6

New Sarum Public School
New Sarum Diner
46230 New Sarum Line
Central Elgin, ON N5P 3S7

Summer's Corners Public School
Aylmer Evangelical Mennonite
Mission Church
50619 Talbot Line
Aylmer, ON N5H 2R1

Springfield Public School
Springfield United Church
51149 Ron McNeil Line
Springfield, ON N0L 2J0

Éva Circé Côté French Immersion
Sparta Community Hall
46272 Sparta Line
Sparta, ON N0L 2H0

Mitchell Hepburn Public School
Fellowship Christian Reformed
Church
641 Elm Street
St. Thomas, ON N5R 1K9

Southwold Public School
Elgin Manor
39262 Fingal Line
St. Thomas, ON N5P 3S5

Straffordville Public School
Bayham Community Centre
56169 Heritage Line
Straffordville, ON N0J 1Y0

Davenport Public School
McGregor Public School
204 John St. S.
Aylmer, N5H 1T2

Once the programs have arrived at the emergency evacuation site, YWCA program Educators will notify the on-call SAC Coordinator. Together, the Educators and SAC Coordinator will contact parent/guardian(s) via phone call to alert them of the emergency and the location to the emergency evacuation site for pick up. To ensure the safety of all children, attendance must be taken prior to the release of any child into their parent/guardian's care.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE IN PROGRAM

A positive approach is used to guide the children and each situation is considered individually. Methods include redirection, logical and natural consequences, limit setting, modelling, providing choices, anticipating situations and recognition of appropriate behaviour. Our goal is for children to have a safe and enjoyable time. To help us achieve this goal, the Educators and children establish reasonable limits for behaviour through reflection and collaboration. These limits are appropriate to the developmental level of the children and consider health, safety, and rights of the individual.

All individuals who participate in the YWCA B&A School Program are expected to treat others in a respectful manner. The YWCA supports an environment free from bullying, racism, sexual harassment, and disrespectful behaviour. Staff and volunteers will always take preventative measures and intervene appropriately as required. Situations that cannot be resolved may result in removal of a non-compliant participant from the YWCA B&A School Program. Appropriate action will consider the following: seriousness of offense, actual or potential risk or harm to child, recent performance, frequency of occurrence and previous disciplinary action taken. Unfortunately, not every child is best suited for this type of environment and if persistent behaviour concerns are raised, we may ask you to find alternative care for your child/ren.

The YWCA strives to ensure the safety of all children and staff and any child that jeopardizes this safety could be suspended and/or dismissed from the program immediately. We appreciate your support assisting us in implementing policies. The safety of all children attending our programs is our first priority.

SUPERVISION

The YWCA B&A School Program is an educational program providing fun activities for your children. Please be advised that the B&A School Program does not provide your child with one on one supervision. A visual or verbal tracking system will be employed to track how many children are in the program. This system must be updated continuously as children arrive or leave the program. A daily record indicating arrivals, departures and absences helps to establish a rapid and accurate account of all children in the event of an emergency. Every child in attendance at a YWCA B&A School Program must be supervised by an Educator at all times.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

As part of our programming, daily outdoor play is incorporated into the afternoon schedule, weather permitting. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately based on the weather conditions. (i.e. Winter – coat, hat, mitts, snow pants) Each child will be required to have two pairs of shoes (indoor and outdoor).

HEAD LICE

It is imperative that parents notify staff immediately if their child has head lice. This allows us to take preventive measures and notify all other families in our program. We ask that your child be free from nits before returning to program.

If head lice are detected during program hours, program staff will notify child's parents upon pick up that head lice were detected and remind parent that child cannot return to program until child is free of head lice and nits.

CHILDREN WITH ILLNESS

Please do not send children to the program if they are sick. Sending sick children to the program also exposes the other children and staff to illness. We understand that children have common colds throughout the program and can still attend depending on severity. Children that have a stomach flu, fever or contagious illness will not be permitted in the program. If the program staff feel the child is not well enough to attend, parents will be notified to make arrangements to pick up their child. If your child is not well enough to participate fully in the program, please inform the program staff as soon as possible. Please ensure you are completing the Daily Covid Screening Tool prior to your child attending program each day.

ADMINISTRATION OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

Medication may only be taken by children with the written authorization from the parent or guardian through the Authorization for Drug/Medication Administration form. The medication must be in the original container with the prescription label indicating the child's name, name of medication, date of purchase, expiry date and instructions for storage and administration. No over the counter medications will be administered. When possible, we encourage medication be given at home. Forms for the Authorization for Drug/Medication Administration are available at each program site. They must be completed and signed before medication is administered.

ASTHMA AND EMERGENCY MEDICATION

Children can carry their own asthma medication or emergency medication with the parent's permission for the child to self-administer (e.g. antihistamines, epinephrine and puffers). All asthma medications may be stored in a labeled pocket on their backpack. Epinephrine for anaphylactic allergies must be in the possession of the child in a labeled pouch on their person. All other emergency medications will be assessed on a case by case basis prior to the child joining program. An Authorization for Drug/Medication Administration form and an Individualized Plan for a Child with Medical Needs must be completed in advance by the child's parent/guardian(s). When the child self-administers the medication, the Educator will follow emergency procedures described in the Individualized Plan. They will complete and sign the Administration of Medication Report within the Authorization for Drug/Medication Administration form. During times of transition, or when going off site, Educators will ensure that the child is in possession of their emergency or asthma medication. If children do not self-administer asthma or emergency medication, this medication must always be in the Educator's possession, the same rules applying to location of medication.

EMERGENCY EXPENSES

These expenses (i.e. Ambulance) are the responsibility of the parent/guardian and the YWCA waives all responsibility of these expenses.

CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS

The YWCA is not responsible for lost or damaged personal belongings. Parents and children are asked to speak with their Site Supervisor about permission to bring personal items into the program. To ensure safety during play time we ask that children leave a pair of indoor shoes in the program space throughout the school year.

HEALTH & NUTRITION

Children are provided with a nutritious snack during the morning and afternoon program. Due to ministry regulations and safe food handling we ask that parents do not send additional food with their child to eat during program hours, since children will not be permitted to eat from their school lunches. Exceptions may be made for health and safety reasons, as per information provided by parents/guardians. For your information, a rotational snack menu is posted in the program bulletin board.

BAGGED LUNCHES DURING FULL DAY PROGRAMS

A full day program requires parents/guardians to send along a nutritious bagged lunch. The YWCA has a responsibility to support nutritional adequacy of meals and a healthy environment free from allergens to support a child's growth and development.

The YWCA requires that lunches packed for our full day programs meet the following criteria:

- An insulated lunch bag and freezer pack is used to keep foods safe. Hot foods should be kept hot using an insulated thermos. Each lunch bag must be labeled with the child's name. If a freezer pack is forgotten, there will be backup freezer packs available at the program.
- If a freezer pack is forgotten, there will be backup freezer packs available to the program.
- Lunches are not to contain peanuts or nut products. Educators will check the contents of lunch bags at lunch times to ensure safety. If an allergen is noticed, a replacement food will be offered, and the allergen will be double bagged and sent home with information about allergens being present in program.
- At least one serving of fruit or vegetable is provided. Fresh fruit is best, but canned fruit in its own juice is acceptable as well.
- Beverages are water, milk or fruit juice.
- We encourage parents to consider whole food options versus pre-packaged treat items to prioritize nutritional value for optimal health benefits.

If a lunch is forgotten, the YWCA will attempt to contact parent/guardian to provide a lunch. If parent/guardian is unable to be reached, the YWCA will offer the child a substitute healthy lunch.

Children will not be permitted to share lunches. Child's own "lunch food" can be consumed only if child is still hungry after eating during designated snack times where the YWCA offers the program snack.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

When the schools are closed (system-wide) due to bad weather, we close our B&A School Programs. If the school closes during school hours, it is the responsibility of the parent to make arrangements to have their children picked up. Please listen to your local radio station for school closure information.

When buses are delayed or cancelled, our B&A School Programs will still run as scheduled. Our staff make every effort on inclement weather days to be on time and ready to run program as scheduled. On inclement weather days, we truly appreciate your consideration for staff safety when they are traveling a distance to open program.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We love parent involvement, please come in! Parents are encouraged to engage in program and speak openly with program educators daily. The more involved our families are, the better we can get to know the children and meet their, and their family's, needs in the program. We also encourage participation through donations (craft supplies, game, equipment, toys), sharing talents or expertise with the children, and completing the annual program evaluation survey to support quality in our programs.

ADDRESSING MATTERS OF CONCERN

We strive to provide a quality childcare experience. To do this, we work in partnership with parents, the Thames Valley District School Board, the City of St. Thomas, employees and community partners to meet the individual needs of children and their families. We value positive and open relationships and work in collaboration to ensure that strategies are implemented to reduce or eliminate barriers and effectively support each child and family's unique needs. Open, honest and timely communication with parents is an essential component in a cooperative approach to support each child. We encourage families to communicate any concerns at any time. Daily, parents and Educators both make an effort to connect regarding how a child's day was, and any matters to discuss. Further to this, annual program surveys are distributed for families to comment, anonymously, on program related successes or issues, staff-related challenges, operational challenges, and reflecting on "How Does Learning Happen?" in our program.

- The program Educators are parents' first point of contact and are encouraged to discuss your child's day with you and will ask for your feedback to ensure your child has a positive experience in the program. We encourage these conversations to occur out of earshot from children when they are sensitive in nature.
- Any initial parent issues or concerns should be addressed by Educators within 2 business days.
- Issues may be brought forward verbally or in writing to any of the following: Educators, designated Childcare Coordinator supporting the program, the Director of School Age Childcare or the Executive Director.
- We encourage you to discuss issues or concerns with the program Educators; however, if the issue is unresolved, please contact the YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin's head office and a SAC Coordinator will gladly help you navigate any concerns. A SAC Coordinator will reach out to parents within 2 business days to discuss any unresolved concerns.
- If concerns are not resolved by having a conversation with a SAC Coordinator, the Director of SAC will be contacted and an agreement will be reached at this level OR if a family has unmet needs or concerns, they may reach out directly to the Director of SAC at any point in this process.
- Director of SAC will notify the Executive Director if any additional steps need to be taken.
- Childcare Coordinators and Director of School Age Childcare reserve the right to protect the privacy of the family voicing the concern. At times, specific examples may be necessary to address a situation, thus impacting anonymity.
- When addressing concerns, Coordinators may use a variety of modalities including general program reminders to all staff, specific examples and feedback with specific staff, job coaching, policy review, re-training, resource provision, etc.

At times, specific feedback will require consultation area resource agencies, such as, All Kids Belong, the Ministry of Education, the Thames Valley District School Board, SW Public Health, Family and Children's Services, or the City of St. Thomas. While we protect confidentiality, if your concern is safety related, please note we have a responsibility to protect and promote safety of children, and may need to provide specific information to necessary parties.

Individuals who suspect abuse or neglect of any child are encouraged to contact Family and Children's Services to report this concern.

FULL DAY SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS (P.A. DAYS/ HOLIDAYS/MARCH BREAK)

The YWCA offers full-day programs during some non-instructional days and school breaks. These programs offer a

variety of activities that ignite children's creativity and social-emotional intelligence including dramatic play, sensory learning experiences, group games, community outings, and much more. Our full-day programs are typically held at Mitchell Hepburn Public School and McGregor Public School and operate from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. We provide programming throughout Elgin County depending on the need required. Please contact the YWCA office at 519-631-9800 for more information. As indicated in the registration section of this document, we ask families to notify us, in their registration forms, if they require this care. Registration is not guaranteed, and is subject to availability, location, enrollment, and resources to accommodate children.

Please note: Our programs do not operate on the last P.A. Day in June, nor any prior to the official start of school. Other exemptions may apply.

FIELD TRIPS (NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS)

On scheduled day trips and/or outings if you do not wish your child to attend, you must make alternative arrangements. Transportation is provided via school bus without wheelchair accessibility. In cases where a child requires wheelchair accessible transportation, the parent/guardian is responsible to coordinate paratransit or personal transportation at their own expense. Educators will not be on site to watch children during trip days. During off site excursions, Educators will maintain staff to child ratios (as outlined in "Age Categories and Ratios"). Educators will take head counts during transitions and a buddy system will be utilized. Educators will take attendance prior to leaving school and upon arrival at off-site locations. Educators will carry the program cell phone, first aid kit and registration binder to all off-site locations.

Please be aware that all day trips are weather permitting. Departure times will vary – it is important that your child arrives on time to meet the bus. Day trips canceled due to weather may be rescheduled for an alternative day during the same week depending on facility and transportation availability. No Refunds are issued for day trips canceled due to weather.

SERIOUS OCCURRENCES

If a serious occurrence should occur, the YWCA will post a serious occurrence notification form for 10 days following the incident. All serious occurrences are reported to the Ministry of Education and The City of St. Thomas Children's Services Department in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act. If it looks like the program may lose power, water, etc. and is forecasting a program closure; Educator and SAC Coordinators will do their best to contact families in a timely manner to inform them of possible/definite school closure. These notifications start with email, but may also involve phone calls or texts. Most school closures are set by the TVDSB, and we follow their operating recommendations. Alternative care is found at the responsibility of the parent.

PROGRAM STATEMENT (August 2023)

The YWCA is committed to supporting children’s learning, development, health and well-being through caring and responsive educators. Our Educators focus on active learning, exploration, play and inquiry. They see children and their families as competent, able and active participants in all aspects of the program. Guided by the Ministry of Education and the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, the YWCA is dedicated to ensuring high quality experiences for our participants and families. The CCEYA authorizes the Minister of Education to issue policy statements regarding programming and pedagogy for the purpose of guiding operators of child care and early year’s programs. How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014) is the document that guides our childcare policies and practices. This document is organized around four foundations that are considered essential to optimal learning and healthy development for children. They are: Belonging, Well-being, Engagement, and Expression.

Belonging refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual’s experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world.

Well-being addresses 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 their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.

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.

The four foundations apply regardless of the child’s age, ability, culture, language, geography, or setting. Unlike a structured curriculum, the conditions are high states of being that children naturally seek for themselves and should not be viewed as separate elements.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

All staff will promote and maintain the mental & physical health, safety, nutrition and well-being of each child. Educators will foster the connection between cognition and physical and emotional well-being. Staff will foster a child’s sense of self, self-care, and self-regulation.

Approach: Staff will provide a clean and safe environment, offer a balanced variety of food choices daily based on Canada’s Food Guide, have access to drinking water throughout the day, and reduce hazards that may cause injury. Community supports and resources will be brought in to assist the families and Educators who may be experiencing mental health challenges.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Our goal is to provide continuous professional learning and growth opportunities to enhance the knowledge of our educators. The YWCA Management team will guide our Educators as lifelong learners.

Approach: All Educators will participate in professional development training workshops and be encouraged to attend additional PD opportunities offered through community agencies. The YWCA will ensure that our written policies and procedures with respect to Educator training and professional development reflect continuous professional learning.

PLAY & ENVIRONMENT

We believe that children are competent, capable, curious and full of potential. Play and program activities will reflect the unique interests of the children with adult supported experiences to enhance growth. Through active play, open-ended questions, observation and documentation, Educators will provoke inquiry-based experiences with the children. With the environment as the “third teacher” for our children, it evolves to meet the individual needs for engagement of all participants in the childcare program. Programs that encourage meaningful

interactions, self-regulation, the ability to co-exist, and opportunity to grow together, will be utilized in our childcare spaces. All children will be treated with respect in ways that enhance their well-being, individuality, self-worth and self-esteem.

Approach: Educators will support children’s development of self-regulation by learning and being responsive to the child’s unique cues, arousal state and response to specific stressors. These are documented and reflected upon within the Educator team to build a cooperative and consistent approach to developing self-regulation. Educators will build relationships with children through opportunities to co-regulate, role modelling, demonstrations, asking open ended questions and providing choices. Educators will create environments that reduce stress by considering altering the space, lighting, noise, equipment and layout. Children will gain independence and practice self-control while experimenting in various types of play. Active and passive play, rest and quiet time, will be facilitated daily. The program environment will offer open ended play opportunities that provide children with experience in science, technology, art, music, construction, cooperative games, physical activities and sporting equipment.

COMMUNICATION & BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

We believe that meaningful interactions are built through a sense of belonging among the children and families within our programs. Families are the children’s first teachers, and they have unique knowledge and expertise of their child. We strive to constantly seek new information from families about their children. We want to create an environment of open and active communication between, families, Educators and administrators. We will engage with families, and value their strengths, contributions and unique perspectives by building positive and responsive relationships.

Approach: Educators will reflect upon children’s cues and interactions to support a meaningful relationship. By building strong connections with the children, Educators enable them to feel safe and have the confidence to play, explore, and learn about themselves and the world around them. Educators will role model and assist children in expressing their feelings, recognizing the feelings of others, and helping others. Educators will encourage and support children to take risks, try new things and explore within their environments. All interactions between Educators, Children and Families will begin from a place of care. A strength based approach will be utilized, as well as tones of voice that sound gentle, supportive, and kind. Families will be invited to participate in their children’s learning experiences on a regular basis to foster relationships and a sense of community within the program. Educators will ask parents questions and invite them to collaborate in problem solving and identify their child’s strengths while referencing the four foundations (well-being, belonging, engagement and expression). We will reach out to families and share information through emails, social media, phone calls, text, the website and newsletters. The YWCA will invite and solicit feedback from families regarding programming, staffing and other childcare related activities. Childcare programs will showcase children’s learning via photographs, postings and narratives. These displays will be accessible in the childcare.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We believe that building positive reciprocal connections with community broadens discovery and learning. Community members offer valuable knowledge, talents and skills that enhance children’s learning.

Approach: When designing field trips, consideration is given to local community supports and partnerships. We will provide opportunities for children to engage in the world around them. Children will be given opportunities to engage with their local community by participating in community, neighbourhood or school events. The children will be able to make meaningful contributions to the community on an ongoing basis (e.g. food drives, yard clean-up, etc.) Staff will be encouraged to look for opportunities to build community connections. The YWCA will continue to participate on a number of community committees to build relationships with traditional and non-traditional community partners. (Elgin County Child Care Advisory Committee, Elgin

Children's Network, Community Action Network for Children and Youth in Elgin, Thames Valley Child Care and Early Years Advisory Committee, Strive, and Pride Elgin). We invite volunteers and community leaders to visit, contribute and participate in the program. We invite community partners to staff meetings for in-service workshops and to build relationships. We believe that special needs resources are an essential community resource. We will participate on the All Kids Belong Advisory Group. We will maintain open communication with All Kids Belong Resource Consultants and connect families with All Kids Belong resources and supports. We believe that Family and Children's Services of St. Thomas and Elgin are an essential community resource. We will make referrals when appropriate and share valuable resources for their organization. We will provide opportunities and places for families and F&CS staff to meet.

DOCUMENTATION & CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

Our Program Statement guides our work and challenges us to continually improve quality. Our Program Documentation includes examples of reflective practice, observation of children, their interactions with one another, Educators, and their environment. Documentation serves to enhance and further consolidate relationships between the children's play and learning.

Approach: We understand that children are capable and curious learners, and that educators and families are co-learners cultivating opportunities through reflection and collaboration to enhance children's mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health and well-being. Documentation is displayed to children, families, and the program community. Children should see themselves in program documentation and be able to reflect upon activities and opportunities to learn and practice social skills. Documentation encourages reflection. Reflection encourages opportunities for planning more invitations to play, all based in the children's interests, inquiries and curiosities.

Regular site visits help ensure quality programming, and to ensure we continue to make program improvements. The YWCA solicits feedback from children, families, and stakeholders regularly to improve and enhance programs.

MONITORING COMPLIANCE AND CONTRAVENTIONS

Compliance & contraventions with policies, procedures and individualized plans will be monitored on an ongoing basis, recorded and addressed. The YWCA will ensure that all staff members receive training on Policies and Procedures. The SAC Coordination Team will monitor compliance of policies, procedures and Individualized/Medical Support Plans and follow up on contravention.

Approach: SAC Coordinators will conduct monthly site visits. During this time adherence to policies and procedures will be monitored and documented through the use of the monthly site visit checklist. SAC Coordinators will review ISP/MSPs upon monthly site visit and ensure they are being followed. Recommendations will be offered as well as positive feedback. This can be documented within the Comments column of the ISP chart. Program staff not in compliance will receive immediate on the job coaching and role modeling. Program staff will be asked to review the written policy and sign off on thorough understanding and agreement to implement said policy. This document will be filed within the personnel file. Ongoing or multiple contraventions will be handled following our Disciplinary Procedures within the YWCA Personnel Manual. This document will be filed within the personnel file. Ongoing or multiple contraventions will be handled following our Disciplinary Procedures within the YWCA Personnel Manual.

REFERENCES

How Does Learning Happen? - Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014

YWCA SCHOOL AGE CHILDCARE BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

September 2023 – June 2024 Rates

The YWCA Discovery Club is part of a non-profit organization, which operates under the guidance of a volunteer Board of Directors. Each year the Board of Directors approves the fees at an amount that will cover the operating costs of the program.

ELGIN COURT, SUMMERS' CORNERS, MCGREGOR, STRAFFORDVILLE, SPRINGFIELD & MITCHELL HEPBURN

UNDER AGE 6

Before School only\$223.88 per month per child
 After School only\$236.40 per month per child
 Before and After School..... \$241.92 per month per child

ELGIN COURT & SUMMERS' CORNERS, MCGREGOR, STRAFFORDVILLE, SPRINGFIELD, MITCHELL HEPBURN & DAVENPORT AGES 6+

Before School only\$219.18 per month per child
 After School only\$243.02 per month per child
 Before and After School\$462.20 per month per child

ÉVA CIRCÉ CÔTÉ FRENCH IMMERSION Under Age 6

Before School only\$236.40 per month per child
 After School only\$236.40 per month per child
 Before and After School..... \$241.92 per month per child

ÉVA CIRCÉ CÔTÉ FRENCH IMMERSION Ages 6+

Before School only\$231.10 per month per child
 After School only\$231.10 per month per child
 Before and After School\$462.20 per month per child

NEW SARUM & SOUTHWOLD UNDER AGE 6

Before School only\$236.40 per month per child
 After School only\$223.88 per month per child
 Before and After School..... \$241.92 per month per child

NEW SARUM & SOUTHWOLD AGES 6+

Before School only\$243.02 per month per child
 After School only\$219.18 per month per child
 Before and After School\$462.20 per month per child

PART TIME RATES (MINIMUM 10 DAYS)

MCGREGOR & MITCHELL HEPBURN, DAVENPORT

UNDER AGE SIX

Morning only..... \$12.00 per day per child
 Afternoon only \$12.00 per day per child
 Morning and afternoon..... \$15.13 per day per child

AGES 6+

Morning only\$14.20 per day per child
 Afternoon only\$15.91 per day per child
 Morning and afternoon\$30.10 per day per child

SOUTHWOLD & NEW SARUM

UNDER AGE SIX

Morning only..... \$12.00 per day per child
 Afternoon only \$12.00 per day per child
 Morning and afternoon..... \$15.13 per day per child

AGES 6+

Morning only\$15.91 per day per child
 Afternoon only\$14.20 per day per child
 Morning and afternoon\$30.10 per day per child

ELGIN COURT, SPRINGFIELD, STRAFFORDVILLE & SUMMERS' CORNERS

UNDER AGE 6

Morning only..... \$12.00 per day per child
 Afternoon only \$12.00 per day per child
 Morning and afternoon..... \$13.41 per day per child

AGES 6+

Morning only\$14.20 per day per child
 Afternoon only\$15.91 per day per child
 Morning and afternoon\$30.10 per day per child

EVA CIRCE COTE

UNDER AGE 6

Morning only..... \$12.00 per day per child
 Afternoon only \$12.00 per day per child
 Morning and afternoon..... \$13.02 per day per child

AGES 6+

Morning only\$15.05 per day per child
 Afternoon only\$15.05 per day per child
 Morning and afternoon\$30.10 per day per child

SPECIAL “NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS”

PA DAY CAMPS AND NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS (Under age 6)

\$22.07 Per Day

PA DAY CAMPS AND NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS (Over age 6)

\$44.86 Per Day

March Break Camp (Under age 6)

Daily rate: \$22.07 (\$110.35 per week)

March Break Camp (Over age 6)

Weekly rate: \$223.72 per child per week

Winter Break (Under age 6)

Daily rate: \$22.07 (\$110.35 per week)

Winter Break (Over age 6)

Weekly rate: \$232.67 per child per week

NOTES:

- Typically, Non-Instructional Days such as P.A Day Camps etc. are held at Mitchell Hepburn Public School and McGregor Public School. All programs are dependent upon sufficient enrollment, and resources such as space, staffing, etc.
- A 50% reduction in fees applies for the third and subsequent child in the family

RECEIPTS: The YWCA will issue annual official receipts for tax purposes.

WITHDRAWALS: Please email childcare@ywcaste.ca with two weeks’ notice prior to withdrawing your child. A refund will be issued, provided that the required two weeks’ notice is given. There will be a \$20.00 Administration fee for any changes, or reduction in services, including prior to the start of school. In lieu of notice, the full fees will be applied.

UNDER AGE SIX: When a child turns 6 between September and December, their rate changes to the 6+ bracket at the end of their birthday month. If a child turns 6 between January and June, their rate will change effective June 30.

Non-Base Fees (CWELCC discounts not applicable)

- Withdrawals or reductions in care: \$20.00/child
- Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF): \$35.00
- Summer Camp Sunblock Program: \$20.00/child
- Late Fees: \$5.00/five-minute period (rounded up)
- Special guest or trip costs: Families will be advised at the time of registration or planning.

