

Red Hill Family Centre

A place to learn, nurture and grow together

PARENT HANDBOOK



Hamilton

25 MOUNT ALBION ROAD, HAMILTON ON L8K 5S4

Phone: 905-546-2424 Ext. 3084

Email: redhillfamilycentre@hamilton.ca

Website: www.hamilton.ca/redhillfamilycentre

Welcome

Thank you for choosing Red Hill Family Centre for your child's childcare experience. Red Hill Family Centre is the City of Hamilton's directly funded childcare centre and has been serving the Hamilton community for over 40 years.

Please take the time to read this handbook, as it contains vital information to ensure a successful partnership between you, your child and our staff. We look forward to building a strong relationship that positively impacts your child's continual growth and success.

We encourage an open dialogue with staff about the program we offer, and parents/guardians are always welcome.

Red Hill Family Centre

☎ 905-546-2424 ext. 3084; Email: redhillfamilycentre@hamilton.ca

Manager, Alex Madjeric ☎ 905-546-2424 ext. 3091

Supervisor, Rick Barker ☎ 905-546-2424 ext. 3083



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RED HILL FAMILY CENTRE'S PROGRAM STATEMENT

Red Hill Family Centre recognizes children are capable, curious and competent and our program values and builds on the strengths, talents and abilities of each individual through caring and responsive Early Childhood Educators, whose focus is on active learning, exploration, play and inquiry. Our program promotes the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of each child. Children and educators are co-learners in a fun, stimulating and positive learning environment.

Red Hill Family Centre strives to ensure learning is joyous through a play-based active learning approach and children are engaged in indoor and outdoor play, active play as well as quiet time and rest periods. Red Hill Family Centre is a fully inclusive program where learning is based on the child's interests, talents and individual abilities. Every child is unique. Educators provide personalized, individual and group learning experiences.

We are committed to developing a positive relationship with families, keeping them informed with open, honest and respectful communication and encouraging a strong partnership between home and childcare. Parent/guardians and family are the foundations to success of each child. We provide support and guidance for the whole family and strive to connect the family with the community. Parent/guardians are our partners and we strive to build self-esteem and self-efficacy with our parent/guardians.

Children learn best when the program fosters the children's exploration, play and inquiry in groups as well as making individual choices. Our staff are Registered Early Childhood Educators, who have shown special interest in learning with joy and providing a loving, stable and enriching environment. Children thrive when they are given abundant opportunities to play in beautiful, creative and supportive environments that are appealing to the senses. Children learn through play. When children play, they express, explore, combine and extend what they have learned about the world around them. Through play, children represent and transform the world. Play allows educators to view each child's inner world and understand a child's thoughts and perceptions. In our toddler and preschool programs children will have access to a variety of play materials and will be encouraged to participate in active and solitary play, both indoors and outdoors.

Each child's learning is unique with strengths, talents and gifts we can all learn from. Educators plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported. Every child learns in a different way. Some children (like adults) are visual learners, others auditory, while others need to touch and feel each experience. Some children socialize easily and seek out companionship. Other children are shy and more reserved. Educators will observe each child's unique temperament and learning style to best determine how to maximize their preschool experience.

Red Hill Family Centre will ensure educators, parents/guardians, students and volunteers review the program statement prior to their involvement in the program. Educators, volunteers and students will review and reflect on the program statement annually and/or anytime it is modified.

STARTING AT RED HILL FAMILY CENTRE

Wait List Policy

If the centre is currently at capacity your child's name will be added to our wait list. There is no fee required to be placed on the wait list and you can contact the centre at any time to confirm your child's placement on the wait list.

If we have not had contact from a family on the wait list for six (6) months, their name will be removed from the wait list.

Priority on the wait list is given to:

1. Siblings of children already enrolled at the centre
2. Child care referrals
3. Children's Aid Society/Catholic Children's Aid Society
4. Families returning from a break in service

To have your child placed on our wait list, please email us at redhillfamilycentre@hamilton.ca or contact us by telephone at 905 546 2424 Ex. 3084.

When space becomes available, the family at the top of the wait list will be contacted and an intake appointment/site tour will be scheduled to confirm the space.

Hours of Operation

Red Hill Family Centre is open Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Your child should arrive and depart at the time that was discussed and agreed upon during the intake interview.

Please note that late fees will be incurred for late pick-ups after 5:30 p.m.

Immunization

Prior to admission, a copy of your child's immunization record or a letter of exemption must be submitted.

Children's Clothing/ Personal Items

Red Hill Family Centre is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen clothing or personal items. All personal belongings must be labelled.

Children should be dressed in comfortable clothing appropriate for the weather and season that allows them to explore and play freely indoors and outdoors.

Personal Item Checklist:

- Extra set of clothes (weather appropriate)
- Special blanket or stuffed toy for sleep time

- Soother (if needed)
- Indoor shoes
- Extra sweater or jacket for spring and fall months
- Hat for summer months
- Winter jacket, snow pants, mitts, hat and boots for winter months
- Diapers/Wipes for children not yet toilet trained

Strollers may be left at the centre in the outdoor covered area by the front entrance only if parents/guardians provide their own lock to secure the stroller.

ARRIVAL, RELEASE, and CUSTODY

The following policies have been put into place to ensure the safety of all children attending Red Hill Family Centre.

Arrival

All children are to be escorted to an educator upon arrival so their attendance can be recorded. Parents/guardians are responsible to have their child wash their hands, remove/put on hats, coats etc. upon arrival and departure.

Release

Unless otherwise arranged children will not be released to any person other than those who are identified on the intake form. You must give advance permission in writing if you want other adults to pick up your child.

The alternate pick-up person must be 14 years of age or older and will be asked for photo identification. If photo identification is not provided, they will not be allowed to enter the centre and we will not release any children into their care.

Parents/guardians must make alternate arrangements for pick up if they cannot pick up their child before 5:30 p.m.

Custody

If there is a custody agreement in place, please ensure the centre has a copy of your legal documentation.

PAYMENTS, FEES, AND THE CANADA-WIDE EARLY LEARNING CHILD CARE SYSTEM(CWELCC)

The Red Hill Family Centre is a participant in CWELCC. A main focus of the CWELCC plan is to reduce childcare fees for families with children under the age of six (as well as children who turn six years before June 30th).

Daily fees are \$30.24 per child. This is based on the current CWELCC reduction from our 2020 base rate (\$64.00). Fees are calculated based on the number of days within the month including any vacation, illness and statutory holidays that your child is scheduled to attend.

Statements are sent monthly via email. Once received, payments can be made at the front office via cash or debit. Annual tax receipts are emailed to families by the end of January.

Late Fees

A late fee of a \$10.00 will be applied to your fees for arriving after 5:30 p.m. An additional fee of \$1.00 per minute thereafter will be charged.

Discharge

Written notice to withdraw your child from the centre is required at least **two (2) weeks** in advance. If proper notice is not provided, you will be responsible for any fees incurred for the notice period.

Red Hill Family Centre may terminate services with two (2) weeks notice provided for non-payment of fees, poor attendance, failure to follow policies or in the event that we find a breakdown in the relationship between the centre and the family.

PROGRAM CLOSURES

Red Hill Family Centre is closed for the following statutory holidays and two (2) additional days for professional development each year:

News Years Day	Easter Monday	Civic Holiday	Christmas Day
Family Day	Victoria Day	Labour Day	Boxing Day and the following three (3) business days
Good Friday	Canada Day	Thanksgiving Day	

Notification of the actual dates of the holiday or Professional Development Days will be emailed to families, posted at the entrance of the centre and on the message boards well in advance. Payment is required for all statutory holidays but is not required for the two (2) professional development days or three (3) days following Boxing Day.

Closure Due to Bad Weather

Please call 905-546-2424 ext. 3084 to check the voice mail message for any closures. Parents/guardians may also listen to local radio and TV stations or visit www.hamilton.ca or the City of Hamilton on Twitter @cityofhamilton.

If your child is already at the centre and we are required to close, we will call you and/or your emergency contacts to make arrangements for your child to go home.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OFFERED:

Our children's program is inspired by "How Does Learning Happen?" Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years.

The following are the types of programs and services offered at the centre:

- Individual Support Plans for children with special needs to support integration and development.
- Parent/guardian in-classroom participation opportunities.
- Parent/guardian weekly groups for therapeutically referred families through the Home Management Program. Topics are parent led. Examples of past sessions are parenting, budgeting, nutrition, and self-awareness.
- Referrals to the City of Hamilton's Home Management Program which offers programs to teach individuals, families and groups, through practical instruction and coaching, the skills necessary to be more successful and independent in their day to day living.
- Onsite Resource Teachers to support children's progress and development.
- Coordinated access to Community Partner professionals such as Speech and Language Consultants, Community Living, Special Needs Resourcing etc.

For more information about any of the above programs or services speak to your child's educator.

Children's Toddler Program 18 to 30 months

Toddler Program – 5 children to 1 educator.

Our toddler rooms provide an atmosphere in which children are exposed to opportunities to stimulate creativity, problem solving, independence and confidence. Much of the focus is on developing sense of self and discovery of others; both of which are important foundations for preschool and beyond.

Children and educators enjoy singing songs, counting, moving, sharing stories and listening to books among other activities. It is a time that supports individuality, introduces social guidelines, develops language, and cognitive and gross motor skills.

During free play, toddlers develop self-confidence as they learn to communicate their needs and master challenges in their classroom and their world. Toddlers flourish when they are free to explore and when they feel encouraged by the adults around them.

Children's Preschool Program 30 months to 5 years

Preschool Program – 8 children to 1 educator.

When a child is welcomed into a preschool classroom they are surrounded by a comforting, home-like environment full of natural and thought-provoking materials. The environment is meant to foster the child's exploration, play and inquiry and provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences. Children are able to select materials, companions, and to manage their play independently. As they discover areas of art, blocks, creative play, sciences, math, practical life and literacy, educators observe and

document each child's development.

Each classroom is multi-aged, and consideration is given to family grouping so siblings can stay together.

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

If your child has any signs or symptoms of a communicable disease they should be kept at home. Some of the signs or symptoms that may be present with a communicable disease are:

- An elevated temperature
- An acute cold, nasal discharge (runny nose that is yellow or greenish in colour)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Red or discharging eyes and ears
- Undiagnosed skin rashes or infections
- Unusual irritability, fussiness or restlessness
- Persistent cough

If your child becomes ill while at the centre, we will call you and/or your emergency contacts to make arrangements for your child to go home. Your child may be kept separate from other children until you or your alternate contact arrives to avoid the spread of illness.

You must keep your child home until they are clear of all symptoms for at least 24 hours. Children with fever, diarrhea and/or vomiting, must remain home for at least 24 hours after their symptoms have resolved without the aid of fever reducing medications. If your child is sent home with a fever, diarrhea and/or vomiting the expectation is that they remain home the following day as well. A doctor's note may be requested prior to the child returning.

Time Off from the Centre

If your child will be absent from the centre, please contact the centre prior to 9:30 a.m. to report the absence. If you are going on vacation for any length of time, please let the Supervisor know at least one week in advance.

Our phone number is 905-546-2424 ext. 3084

If no one is available to answer your call leave a message with the following details:

1. Your child's name (first and last).
2. The reason your child will be absent.
3. If sick, report child's symptoms.
4. When your child is expected to return to the centre.

Head Lice

Children with lice should remain home until they are treated with the appropriate shampoo and there are no signs of nits (eggs) or live lice. If a child is found to have lice while at the centre arrangements will be made for them to be sent home. They can only return once

they are free of live lice and nits. If you need assistance in knowing what live lice or lice nits/eggs look like, how to pick out the nits or how to use the nit comb please let us know.

Doctors Notes

A doctor's note may be requested for the following reasons:

- It is suspected that your child has a virus or other communicable disease.
- Your child has been absent for more than 3 days due to an illness.
- Your child has an injury that may affect their participation in our daily program.

Medication

Red Hill Staff can administer medication at the centre only if the following conditions are met:

Medication must be prescribed by a doctor and in its original container/bottle with a complete label that states when and how to administer the medication.

'AS DIRECTED' is not acceptable and CANNOT be administered at the centre.

Parents are required to sign a consent form before any medication can be administered.

Please note if the medication is to be administered two (2) to three (3) times per day we expect that this will be done at home.

Medications are kept in a locked container located in the classrooms. Emergency medications are not locked but are inaccessible to children.

OUTDOOR PLAY

All children play outside each day weather permitting. If your child is not well enough to play outside, please keep him/her at home.

Sun Safety

Red Hill Family Centre provides a 40 SPF sunscreen and you will be asked to complete a form providing permission for the application of sunscreen to your child.

NUTRITION

Our qualified cook prepares a nutritious breakfast, morning and afternoon snacks and lunch for each child daily in our kitchen.

Our menu has been developed in consultation with a registered dietician and meets the recommendations set out in Canada's Food Guide. All our menus are posted in the main hallway of the centre.

If your child has a food allergy, please make sure we are aware so we can avoid serving those foods to your child. Substitutions are carefully planned for children with allergies and/or special diets. Red Hill Family Centre is a nut free facility.

In cases where a child has food allergies and the meals and snacks provided by the child care centre cannot meet the child's needs, the child's parent may be asked to supply snacks/meals for their child. In such cases, the following rules will apply:

- All written instructions for diet provided by a parent will be implemented.
- Parents must label food brought to the child care centre with the child's full name and the date the food arrived at the centre.
- Parents will provide a list of all food ingredients.
- Appropriate supervision of children will be maintained to ensure that food is not shared or exchanged.
- Parents must not send in food containing known allergens.

REST PERIOD

All children attending a licensed child care centre more than 6 hours per day are required to have a daily rest period. The rest period will not exceed 2 hours in length. It is not necessary for children to sleep but they are encouraged to rest quietly on a cot during this time. Educators perform a direct visual check every 30 minutes to ensure the comfort and safety of each child.

Alternate quiet activities available during rest period include:

- Puppets, stuffed animals, dolls
- Books
- Puzzles
- Manipulative toys
- Paper, crayons

A blanket will be provided for each child however if your child has a special blanket or soft comfort item that you wish to bring from home it must be labeled with your child's name.

CHILD GUIDANCE

The following strategies are used by educators to model appropriate ways of interacting and encourage positive behaviour and self-regulation.

Educators where able will anticipate potential problems before they arise and make appropriate plans and preparations. Educators will provide choices so that children are encouraged in making their own decisions with educator guidance. Some inappropriate behavior can be ignored with more emphasis given to appropriate behavior. The use of positive reinforcement uses encouragement to acknowledge appropriate behaviour.

Redirection helps to guide children into acceptable options when engaged in an unacceptable activity. Logical and natural consequences help children to be aware of the results of their actions. By setting limits, boundaries are developed by the educators for the children as a group and for individual children according to each situation.

Prohibited Practices

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, Red Hill Family Centre does not permit:

- Corporal punishment of a child;
- Physical restraint of a child;
- Deliberate use of harsh or degrading measures on a child that would humiliate the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- Depriving a child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding;
- Locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining a child;
- Using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine a child if he or she has been separated from other children.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on a child including making children eat or drink against their will.

EMERGENCIES

Emergency Management Plan

Red Hill Family Centre has Emergency Management Policies and Procedures in place in the event of an emergency. Parents/guardians will be contacted by telephone should an emergency occur. Please ensure any changes to your address, telephone numbers and emergency contacts are reported to the centre immediately.

Accidents and Injuries

If your child has an accident at the centre, you be informed of the accident by telephone. You will be provided with an Accident Report to review and sign when you pick up your child. If there is an injury that requires professional medical attention you will be notified immediately. In the event your child is transported from the centre to a medical facility you will be notified immediately and met by a centre staff member at the hospital.

Serious Occurrence

If there is a Serious Occurrence, the centre is required to provide the information of the incident to the parent/guardian as well as the Ministry of Education. A Serious Occurrence notification will be placed on our Licence bulletin board located at the front entrance.

Fire Drills

Red Hill Family Centre conducts monthly fire drills to prepare children in the event of an emergency. All staff, children and visitors must exit the building through the closest door and move to one of our designated safe areas.

SPECIAL EVENTS, FIELD TRIPS AND OFF SITE ACTIVITIES

Special events are planned each year for both the children and the families of Red Hill Family Centre. Some of these annual events include:

Snuggle up and Read: The Centre celebrates children and parents/guardians through a variety of literacy activities. Enjoy some tasty treats and beverages and speak with the staff.

Graduation Ceremonies: We have an annual graduation in the summer for those children attending kindergarten in the fall.

Holiday Celebrations (December): We invite families for a visit to gather and enjoy a few hours of family fun.

Nature Walks: Our children go on several nature walks throughout the year. They are encouraged to explore and learn about what they see during their walks. We encourage parents/guardians to volunteer their time.

PARKING

Red Hill has limited on-site parking available. Additional street parking is also available. We ask that parents/guardians dropping off or picking up their children be respectful of the following:

- Do not park in the Accessible Parking spot unless you have a designated parking pass.
- Do not block the entrance to the driveway or block other vehicles.

VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

Volunteers and students participate in an orientation and review of relevant policies and procedures prior to their placement at Red Hill Family Centre. Volunteers and students are required to complete a Criminal Reference Check with a Vulnerable Sector Screening.

Volunteers and students do not have unsupervised access to the children in the centre and they are paired with and mentored by a Red Hill Family Centre staff member. If you would like to volunteer, please speak with the centre supervisor.

PARENT/GUARDIAN ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our centre and regularly discuss their child's experiences with our program with staff.

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

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two (2) business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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

Confidentiality

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

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parents/Guardians to Report Issue/Concern	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern
<p>Program Room-Related E.g.: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom staff directly or; • Supervisor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or; • Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within two (2) business days.
<p>General, Centre- or Operations-Related E.g.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, wait lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor, Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ the date and time the issue/concern was received; ➢ the name of the person who received the issue/concern; ➢ the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; ➢ the details of the issue/concern; ➢ any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
<p>Staff, Duty parent/guardian, Supervisor, and/or Licensee-Related</p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parent/guardians, etc. that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported as soon as parent/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual directly or; • Supervisor, Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.
<p>Student / Volunteer-Related</p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported as soon as parent/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or; • Supervisor, Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within two (2) business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing. • Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern/

Escalation of Issues or Concerns

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to:

Jessica Chase, Director
Healthy and Safe Communities Department
Children's Services and Neighbourhood Development Division
Lister Block Building, 28 James St. N. 4th Floor,
P.O. Box 2040,
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4Y5
905-546-2424 ext. 3590

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

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

Contact Information:

- Red Hill Family Centre ☎ 905-546-2424 ext. 3084 redhillfamilycentre@hamilton.ca
- Manager, Alex Madjeric ☎ 905-546-2424 ext. 3091
- Supervisor, Rick Barker ☎ 905-546-2424 ext. 3083
- Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: ☎ 1-877-510-5333
childcare_ontario@ontario.ca
- College of Early Childhood Educators ☎ 1-888-691-8558 ext. 239
www.college-ece.ca; discipline@college-ece.ca
- Public Health Department ☎ 905-546-2424
www.hamilton.ca; publichealth@hamilton.ca

Conduct

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interactions, 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 member feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Supervisor and/or Manager.

Zero Tolerance

We want all children to be safe, have fun, and enjoy our program. For this reason, we have expectations and rules that respect the rights of all members in the program. The City of Hamilton, Red Hill Family Centre abides by the Zero Tolerance for Violence Policy in which physical violence or verbally abusive behaviour will not be tolerated at any time.