



PARENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024 School Year

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Children's Day Out or CDO. The following guide was designed to help make your time with the program easier. If you have any questions about the program, its content, or if there is something that is unclear in this guide, please feel free to speak with the teachers or anyone on the Board of Directors.

History

CDO was formed in 1978 by a group of parents interested in providing a safe and stimulating play environment for their children. This program was developed to be a co-operative program, meaning parent participation ensures a program that meets the needs of its members. An executive composed of elected society parents co-ordinates the administration of the program. The program also relies on the input and cooperation of society members to improve and maintain the program.

Philosophy and Mission Statement

At CDO we believe that play is extremely important in the development of the children. Our program provides a creative play based environment that allows children to develop life skills and foster a love for learning. The main objective of this program is to offer a safe play environment that provides stimulating activities for children between the ages of 19 months and 5 ½ years. Activities are based on the needs and interests of the children and consider all aspects of development.

Description of Our Child Care Program

At Children's Day Out the children attend one or two days a week for a full day from 8:45-3:30. Programming is based on the children's interests (i.e. emergent curriculum) while also celebrating various holidays and the changing seasons. Children are encouraged to move about freely and explore their interests. The programming at CDO fosters creativity, imagination, curiosity and socialization. Throughout the day, staff use positive reinforcement to help children build social emotional skills, support co-regulation and provide developmentally appropriate resiliency opportunities. Children are encouraged to speak freely about their feelings and develop problem solving strategies. The teachers encourage development of the child's positive self-awareness and self-concept, including independence and responsibility of oneself. Developmental screening is done throughout the year. Informal observations of children's daily activities are recorded in the children's Kindertales profile. Parents are welcome to stay, play and observe anytime during their child's day. Together, parents and staff help children meet their developmental needs.

Code of Ethics

The teachers and program adhere to Licensing and Alberta Health standards. CDO has adopted the Canadian Child Care Federation's 8 Principles of Ethical Practice to serve as a framework for the manner in which the Teachers conduct themselves and as guideline for the program.

1. Early child care educators promote the health and well-being of all children.
2. Early child care educators enable children to participate to their full potential in environments carefully planned to serve individual needs and to facilitate the child's progress in all areas of development.
3. Early child care educators demonstrate caring for all children in all aspects of their practice.
4. Early child care educators work in partnership with parents, recognizing that parents have primary responsibility for the care of their children, valuing their commitment to the children and supporting them in meeting their responsibilities to their children.

5. Early child care educators work in partnership with colleagues and other service providers in the community to support the well-being of children and their families.
6. Early child care educators work in ways that enhance human dignity in trusting, caring and cooperative relationships that respect the worth and uniqueness of the individual.
7. Early child care educators pursue, on an ongoing basis, the knowledge, skills and self-awareness needed to be professionally competent.

REGISTRATION AND COMMITMENT

Requirements for Membership

In order to maintain active membership the following requirements must be fulfilled:

1. Completed enrollment forms
2. Sign up for automatic withdrawal of fees through kindertales - If no automatic withdrawal is set up, will be required to provide deposit cheques for membership volunteer requirements
3. Up-to-date payment of:
 - a. Registration and any additional Fees
 - b. Program fees
 - c. Subsidy approval letter if applicable
4. Commitment to:
 - a. Attend the Fall General meeting and Spring Annual General Meeting
 - b. Complete all volunteer requirements including volunteer duty days, night cleans, and casino volunteer shift

Failure to fulfill the above requirements of active membership may result in termination of membership. Termination of membership will result in removal of member's child(ren) from the program and deposit cheques being cashed.

Application and Registration

There is a registration fee that is to be paid once per school year per child. This fee is non-refundable or transferable. The registration fee is mandatory to secure your spot. Once CDO has confirmed availability, you will have 24 hours to submit the registration fee to secure your spot.

The registration fee is \$125 for the first child, and \$50 for additional siblings. There is a special early bird price of \$75 if paid before June 1, 2022. Children can be put on a waitlist for a desired day(s) for a \$50 waitlist fee. This waitlist fee is transferable to the registration fee if a spot becomes available during the 2023/2024 school year. It is not transferable to future school years.

Program Fees, Affordability Grant and Subsidy Information

Our current program fees for the 2023-2024 school year is \$165 per month. Each child can register for up to two days per week. Fees are to be paid monthly and are paid via the kindertales app. Monthly fees are due by the 1st of each month. There is no tolerance for late fees. Please discuss any alternative arrangements with the Treasurer directly.

The affordability grant is provided to CDO directly to decrease fees for children in day care and preschool. Children enrolled in our program greater than 50 hours per month are eligible for the grant payments. This means that only children who attend two days per week are eligible to receive this grant payment. Single day students must pay the full program amount. The affordability grant is automatically applied to students who meet the 50 hour per month requirement and does not need to be applied for

by the parents. For children 19 months to 3 years, their grant payment is \$255 per month and for children aged 3 to 5 years, their grant payment is \$225 per month. The leftover amounts of \$75 per month and \$105 per month would then be eligible for subsidy payments or would be paid in full by the family

Families with total income less than \$180,000 are also encouraged to apply for government subsidy which can be directed to CDO. Please visit <https://www.alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx> for more information and application process. Please ensure you apply for subsidy as soon as you enroll. Once subsidy has been approved, please forward your subsidy approval letter to the director immediately to ensure monthly payments are accurate. Subsidy payments are unable to be processed retroactively, so please ensure this is in place prior to the start of school.

Additional Fees

In lieu of a school supply list, there will be a \$25 materials/supply fee per child per day for the school year. This will cover all school supplies required throughout the year. There is also a \$50 field trip fee per child per day they attend that covers all in house field trips and school environment enhancements. Examples of in school enhancements can include music teachers, golf lessons, cooking classes, etc. This means that for single day children, the cost for supplies and field trips are \$25 and \$50, and for dual day children the cost is \$50 and \$100. These fees are due prior to the first day of classes. Your child cannot start in the program until these fees are paid.

General Meetings (September and April)

The society holds two general meetings per year, and as a member you are expected to attend all general meetings. The Board may call an emergency meeting during the year if necessary. Any member may present topics at general meetings, but it is asked that the president be informed prior to the meeting. If a family fails to attend any of the meetings, they will be charged a \$25 fee per meeting missed. A family may be represented at a meeting by another society member who must sign in for them. A member may only represent one other member's family at any meeting.

Volunteer Requirements and Penalty Fees

CDO relies on the input and cooperation of society members to improve and maintain the program. We are unable to function without the volunteer commitment of engaged members of our community. Current volunteer requirements are listed below and may change at the discretion of the Board.

1. **Duty Day:** Children's Day Out is a parent cooperative program. For each child that participates in the program, we require 3 volunteer duty days per child per day they attend. Duty day hours are from 9:15-11:45. Due to licensing requirements, only registered children can attend CDO, so please make alternate arrangements for other children in your care. You will be helping in the classroom working directly with the children and helping them through transition periods. If you are unable to fulfill your duty day, you will be charged \$50 per duty day that you cannot complete. This is to cover the cost of bringing someone else in to cover these hours where we need extra hands to help with the children. You also have the option to outright pay the \$50 per duty day if you do not wish to volunteer. Please ensure you communicate this quickly to the director so that alternate arrangements can be made to take your place. You will also be sent home with laundry and/or bottles to be returned once or twice throughout the school year. Please bring the laundry back cleaned and folded and the money received from bottles on your child's next day at school.
2. **Night Clean-up:** The toys and shelves are cleaned by parent volunteers every month. Each family is required to do 1 night clean-up per child per day they attend. Cleanups usually take about 3-4 hours. The penalty for not meeting this volunteer requirement is \$75 per night clean.

You also have the option to pay out the \$75 per clean if you do not wish to participate. Please ensure you communicate this quickly to the director so that alternate arrangements can be made to take your place.

3. **Fundraising:** Members are required to participate in one of the fall/winter fundraisers and one of the spring fundraisers. If you do not participate in both fundraisers, you will be charged a penalty fee. Fundraising is essential to bring in money required to keep CDO open, and we encourage families to spread the word of our fundraising opportunities with their friends and family. The penalty for not participating in each of the fundraising activities is \$50 per fundraising season. This does not include any 50-50's or casino's.
4. **Casino:** We receive the opportunity to do a casino every 2 years. If it is a casino year, it is a requirement that you sign up for one casino job per child within the program (ex. if you have two children, you must sign up for two casino positions). This is a huge source of our income, and failure to participate will result in a \$500 penalty charge.
5. **Serving as a Board Member of the Society:** Board members are exempt from all volunteer requirements except for our Fall and Spring fundraisers. After one year of serving on the board, half of your child's/children's registration fee will be refunded back to you. After each consecutive year, your full registration fee will be reimbursed. Full year fulfillment of board duty is required for registration fee reimbursement.

OUR PROGRAM

Schedule and Hours of Operation

The first day of classes is September 11, 2023 and our last day of classes is June 21, 2024. We observe the following holidays, and therefore CDO will be closed:

- Truth and Reconciliation (September 30, 2023)
- Thanksgiving (October 9, 2023)
- Remembrance Day (November 11, 2023)
- Christmas Day (December 25, 2023)
- Boxing Day (December 26, 2023)
- New Years Day (January 1, 2024)
- Family Day (February 19, 2024)
- Good Friday (March 29, 2024)
- Easter Monday (April 1, 2024)
- Victoria Day (May 20, 2024)

We will be closed for winter break from December 23, 2023 until January 7, 2024, with classes resuming on January 8, 2024. We are also closed for spring break from March 23 until April 1 (due to Easter Monday) with classes returning on April 2, 2024.

Our hours of operation are 8:30am until 4:00pm with children attending between 8:45 and 3:30pm. The teachers are not to be caring for children outside of 8:45 and 3:30pm or late fees will be applied.

Check-list for your child's day at school

- Morning snack (**No peanuts*)
- Water bottle
- Lunch with supplementary beverage if needed, utensils if needed
- Afternoon snack

- Indoor shoes
- Weather appropriate outdoor clothing (snowsuit, splash pants, boots, mittens, toque, etc)
- Spare set of clothes - underwear, socks, shirt, pants and socks (in a labeled Ziploc bag)
- Disposable diapers or pull-ups (labeled in a ziploc bag)
 - If you bring cloth diapers, please provide disposable liners and a wet bag for used diapers. Soiled diapers will be placed in the wet bag and it is the Parent's responsibility to dispose of the fecal matter appropriately

For children who nap (19 months - 3 years), also include:

- Fitted Crib sheet (for use on our sleeping mats)
- Blanket
- Soother or comfort items, if required

Clothing

Please pack a pair of light soled indoor shoes, as shoes must be worn at all times. Pack a full change of clothes for your child, no matter their age. Please include shirt, pants, socks and underwear all in a labeled zip lock bag. The wet or dirty clothing will be returned in the bag. Dress your child in clothes that you don't mind getting stained, as the children are often using paints, markers and glue. Also dress them in items that are easy to manage during washroom and diaper changes. Please no overalls or belts and avoid a fly and buttons if they are unable to do it themselves. Dress your child appropriately for the weather. This means mittens, hats, warm coats, and boots in the winter; rain gear and rain boots in the spring and fall, and hats in the spring. Please ensure that all clothing items coming to school are labeled. During the warmer/sunnier months, please remember to apply sunscreen to your child prior to leaving them at school. If we do go outside in the afternoon, sunscreen that is provided by you will be reapplied. Please ensure you have signed the sunscreen application waiver and that your labeled sunscreen is in an accessible spot in your child's cubby.

Labeling

Please label all items that you bring to school for your child. This prevents mixing items up between other children and/or siblings. Please ensure the following items are labeled with your child's name:

- outdoor clothing, coats, hats, mitts, toques, shoes, boots
- extra clothing including, pants, socks, underwear, and shirt
- lunch items, including lunch bag, yogurt containers, granola bars, utensils, plastic storage items, including lids, zip lock bags, snacks, cups and drink containers
- diapers
- backpack, sleeping gear and stuffed friend

Children's Day Out has an ongoing fundraiser with [Mabel's Labels](#) (Click Support a Fundraiser/ Search Edmonton/ Scroll down to Children's Day Out)

Food and Nutrition

CDO is a long day for many preschoolers and they require the proper nutrition to fuel them throughout the day. At CDO we require 2 nutritious snacks, a lunch and a beverage. Morning snack is at 10 a.m., lunch at 11:45 a.m. and afternoon snack is at 2:45 p.m. The children have access to their beverage containers throughout the day.

- We are unable to heat lunches in the microwave in accordance with licensing protocol. If you wish to send a hot lunch, put food in a thermos container and leave it on the counter beside the fridge.
- Try to avoid lunch items that your child needs help opening.
- Place food in a container if it is easier for them to open themselves and pre-open packages of

snacks and granola bars.

- Practice opening containers/ lunch boxes at home so that your child can learn to be independent.
- Send a napkin or bib if your child is used to using one.

The following is directly from Public Health and we are required by licensing to follow it for safety standards.

The following foods are **NOT** permitted at preschool: Peanuts/nuts of any kind, large seeds, popcorn, marshmallows, raisins, gum, or small, hard, round candies.

There are certain foods that must be modified in order for them to be considered safe for consumption at CDO. Small and round fruits and veggies such as grapes, cherry tomatoes, olives or cherries must have the pits or seeds removed and cut into bite sized pieces such as in 4's. Hot dogs, sausage or pepperoni sticks must have the outer casing removed, cut lengthwise and again into bite sized pieces. Raw veggies such as carrots and celery can be cooked to soften them or cut into narrow strips. Stringy, chewy or foods that can stick to the roof of the mouth such as some deli meats, spaghetti, soft cheeses, spreads and fruit leathers need to be cut into small pieces and any spreads should be spread thinly.

Drop-off Procedure

- Take outdoor shoes off and leave at the main door
- Place outdoor clothing/backpack in your child's cubby
- Put their indoor shoes on
- Drop your child off at the Sunshine Room
- Sign your child in via the [Kindertales app](#)
- Put your child's lunch in the fridge and afternoon snack in the bin in the fridge or on the counter.
- Place their morning snack and drink in the designated snack spot
- If your child is in diapers, place all labeled diapers in the diaper bin outside the washroom
- If your child is napping, please set up their sleep mat with fitted sheet, blanket and comfort items as well as provide a reusable bag to pack nap items up when nap is over.
- Check the Kindertales app, Email or Parent/Community board in the hallway for important information

Teacher Communication

We welcome and encourage families to inform staff of any situations at home which may cause your child to behave differently at school (i.e. lack of sleep, a parent out of town, death in the family, etc.)

Please update the teachers about your child's self-care routines (for ex. potty training or soother use) so that the teachers are able to carry through with the same routines as at home. It is very important to keep teachers informed about your child, so that they can better care for them at school. Please communicate with the teachers through the kindertales app.

Prescription Medication

Please notify the teachers if your child is on prescription medication. You will be asked to enter the medication information on a Medication Plan on the Kindertales app. The drug name, dosage, route, storage instructions, last dose given, and times to be given must be indicated on this log. The teachers can only administer the medication if the log has been filled out and the medication is in its original

container with the prescription label attached. The teachers place all medications in a bag marked with the child's name and in the locked medications box. If necessary, the lock box can be placed in the fridge. The teachers are not permitted to administer non prescription medications such as Advil, Tylenol, Benedryl ect. Epi-pens will be placed in a wearable fanny pack provided by CDO that staff keep on them at all times. Families are to fill out the Consent to Administer Emergency Medication Form which will be kept with the Epi-pen. **IF A CHILD'S EPI-PEN IS NOT BROUGHT TO SCHOOL WITH THEM ON THEIR DAY, THEY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO STAY.**

Pick-Up

All children must be picked up before 3:30 pm. The doors will be open from 2:45pm. When picking-up your child, remember to pick up all lunch items from the cart, remove all belongings out of their cubby, and sign your child out on the kindertales app. Updates on your child's day will be found on the kindertales app. If someone other than the regular parent or guardian is picking up your child please inform the teachers. Teachers will ask this individual for identification. Failure to provide the proper identification will result in the child not being released to that individual.

Late Pick-up Fee

Children must be picked up by 3:30 pm. Late charges will apply if you are more than 5 minutes late. One written warning will be given for a late pick-up. Subsequent late pick-ups are assessed a fee of \$25 for each incident. Continual lateness is unacceptable and will be reported to the executive.

ILLNESS & BEHAVIOUR

Illness

We care for your child's wellness, along with the wellness of all of the children in our care. If your child is not feeling well, please do not bring them to school. The children are in close contact with each other all day long and germs can spread quickly. Please reinforce the importance of covering their mouth and nose when they cough or sneeze. If your child should become ill during the day, you will be phoned to come take your child home immediately, (this is in accordance with licensing due to potential health risk). The following are signs of illness where you should keep your child at home or will be required to pick them up:

- low energy
- 2 episodes of diarrhea
- vomiting
- headache, sore tummy, rash
- fever of 37.9 or higher
- runny nose other than clear
- shortness of breath
- pink eye
- child requires greater care and attention than can be provided without compromising the other children in the program
- having or displaying any other illness symptoms the teachers know or believe may indicate that the child poses a health risk to the persons on the program premises

You are required to keep your child home for 24 hours from the last display of symptoms. If our center is declared "in outbreak" the requirement is 48 hours from last display of symptom. If your child is ill and will not be attending school, please log the absence due to illness in the kindertales app. If your child

contracts a communicable disease such as influenza, strep throat, lice, red measles, scarlet fever, mumps or chicken pox, please contact the teachers, as Alberta Health Services needs to be notified.

Notification to parents via letter/email will be made if a child with a communicable disease attended the class. In the event of an emergency, if an ambulance is called for your child; payment for the service will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Absences

Children are registered for a specific day and no drop-ins are allowed. Notify the teachers if your child is going to be away on his or her regularly scheduled day via the kindertales app. Please note that fees remain in effect regardless of absences due to illness or vacation.

Child Behavior Guidance

All child behavior guidance actions taken will be reasonable in the circumstances and appropriate for the child's level of development. All efforts will be made to keep the classroom a safe and comfortable environment for all children. The children will participate in activities that will assist in understanding the appropriate behavior to exhibit.

Step 1: Inform child

The child is given information that they are exhibiting improper behavior and an explanation of why the behavior is unacceptable. The teacher will ensure the child provides a verbal confirmation that they understand. The teacher can remind the child of the appropriate behavior that is expected.

Step 2: Communicating Consequences

The child is given a second explanation of why the behavior is unacceptable. The child is informed of the consequence if continued. The teacher will ask the child to choose to discontinue the improper behavior or choose to pick an alternate activity. The teacher will ensure the child provides verbal confirmation that they understand the expectations and the consequences.

Step 3: Choice of Alternate Activity

If the child continues with the unacceptable behavior, the child will be taken aside so that they may privately discuss their improper behavior with the teacher. The child is asked what alternate activities they could participate in that they will use appropriate behavior. The child is asked how they could handle the situation differently in the future. The child will be given permission to rejoin the activity once they are able to behave appropriately, at which time the teacher will provide positive feedback to the child.

Step 4: Redirection

If the first steps do not work, the child will be redirected to an alternate activity to be conducted with the teacher. The child must ask permission to rejoin the group, if they are ready to display appropriate behavior. When applicable, positive feedback is provided by the teacher.

Step 5: Parent Mediation

If all other steps have failed and the behavior continues, the parent will be contacted. In the event of continual problems with a child disrupting class or behaving inappropriately, the teachers will arrange a meeting between the parents to try to resolve the issue and determine a course of action.

Teachers are not permitted to inflict any form of physical punishment, verbal or physical degradation or emotional deprivation, deny or threaten to deny any basic necessity or use any form of physical restraint, confinement or isolation.

High Needs Children

The following steps will be taken when teachers encounter a child that has not responded well to the above-mentioned Child Behavior Guidance Procedure strategies. At Children's Day Out, a child is defined as high-needs when they require one-on-one attention frequently throughout the day, taking the teachers out of ratio.

These children can be those with separation anxiety, disruptive children, unhappy children, and children being recommended for occupational assessment. In order to better assess this designation, our teachers use a Behavioural Record form to make notes of the child's behavior throughout the assessment phase.

Parents are encouraged to review the notes with a teacher everyday their child attends the program. After two weeks of anecdotal notes on behavior, our teachers will work with the families to identify issues and develop an action plan. The child will be observed for an additional two weeks with the action plan in place.

At that time, if the behavior does not change another meeting will be scheduled with parents, teachers, and a member of the executive to discuss a final decision regarding the child's continued participation in the program. If it is determined that the child needs extra support in the classroom, the family will have two weeks to arrange for these supports. The child may be asked to attend the program with parental supervision at this point. Failure to do this will result in removal from the program. Any child that is asked to leave the program will not be required to pay outstanding fees.

POLICIES

Outdoor Play, Off Site Permission and Weather Policy

Outdoor time is an important part of our day at CDO and we aim to take the children out every day except for during the following:

1. heavy rainfall
2. Temperatures of -15C or lower
3. Temperatures higher than 28C
4. Slippery environment deemed unsafe for the children to navigate

Outdoor time can occur in our outdoor play yard, or with walks around the neighborhood. A signed off-site permission form is required for your child to attend CDO. All outdoor activities are supervised at all times and when going off site, a first aid kit and emergency portable records are brought along by the teachers.

Withdrawal/ Cancellation of Membership

A 60 day written notice must be given to the Registrar or Director if you are withdrawing your child from CDO. This means that if you are withdrawing, we require a full two months notice. You are responsible

for the monthly fees for these two months, regardless if your child continues to attend or not. You are also responsible to complete all volunteer duties prior to the withdrawal date. The only exception is if you decide to withdraw within the first 4 weeks of your child's start date.

Potty Training Policy

If your child is over 3 and starting at CDO, your child must be potty-trained without exception. If your child is currently in the program in the 19m-3 year cohort and not potty-trained, it is expected that your child will be potty-trained at 3 years old to transition out of the nap room into the play room in the afternoons. CDO will work in partnership with you in this transition period, depending upon each child's needs. Please communicate with the teachers so they are aware of what is happening at home. Potty seats are available for all children. During potty training, please ensure to send disposable training pants to use during nap time.

Nap Room Policy

Children under the age of 3 years old upon registration will be required to spend the afternoon portion of the day in the nap/quiet room. Children who turn three during the school year will be assessed for moving to the over three room on a case-to-case basis. If the over three room is at capacity, the child will need to remain in the under three room. It is important to note that children are not required to nap during their time in the under three room. Quiet toys, games and books will be offered to non-napping children.