

CHILDREN'S DAY OUT



PLAYSCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027 School Year

*created 1995
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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, 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 two or three days a week for a full day from 8:45am-3:15pm. 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. Photos of the children's day are uploaded to our private Facebook page at the end of every day and parents are encouraged to speak with any of the teachers regarding their children's day at school. 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 a 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 monthly programming fees.
3. Up-to-date payment of:
 - a. Registration and any additional Fees
 - b. Program fees
4. Commitment to:
 - a. Attend the Fall Orientation meeting and Spring Annual General Meeting (1 parent/guardian per family)
 - 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 may result in removal of member's child(ren) from the program.

Application and Registration

There is a one time registration fee that is to be paid per child when entering the society. 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 \$100 for additional siblings.

Program Fees and Affordability Grant Information

Our current program fees for the 2026-2027 school year is \$230 per month. Each child can register for up to three 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 Director directly.

The affordability grant is provided to CDO directly to decrease fees for children in day care settings. Children enrolled in our program greater than 50 hours per month are eligible for the grant payments. 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.

Additional Fees

Throughout the school year, teachers plan in house field trips/events. Participation in these events are not mandatory but do add value to your children's day. The opt in amount usually ranges from \$10-\$30 per child, with approximately 1 per semester. These fees would be paid via kindertale app. Examples of in school enhancements can include music teachers, golf lessons, etc.

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. 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

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/Night Clean-up:** For each child enrolled in the program, your family will need to complete 3 volunteer requirements per child if they attend 2 days, 4 volunteer requirements if they attend 3 days.
 - Duty day: duty day hours are from 9:00-12:00. 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. You may also be asked to help with organization/cleaning at teachers discretion.
 - Night Clean-up: The toys and shelves are cleaned by parent volunteers every month. Cleanups usually take about 2-2.5 hours and start at 6:30pm.
2. **Laundry/Bottle Depot:** 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 clean and folded and the money received from bottles on your child's next day at school.
3. **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). If you fail to sign up for a casino date, this may result in the termination of your standing with the Society..
4. **Serving as a Board Member of the Society:** Board members are exempt from all volunteer requirements.

OUR PROGRAM

Schedule and Hours of Operation

The first day of classes is September 8th, 2026 and our last day of classes is June 18th, 2027. We observe the following holidays, and therefore CDO will be closed:

- Truth and Reconciliation (September 30, 2026)
- Thanksgiving Monday (October 12, 2026)
- Remembrance Day (November 11, 2026)
- Christmas Day (December 25, 2026)
- Boxing Day (December 26, 2026)
- New Years Day (January 1, 2027)
- Family Day (February 15, 2027)
- Good Friday (March 26, 2027)
- Easter Monday (March 29, 2027)
- Victoria Day (May 24, 2027)

We will be closed for winter break from December 21, 2026 until January 3, 2027, with classes resuming on January 4th, 2027. We are also closed for spring break from March 29th until April 4th, 2027 with classes returning on April 5th, 2027. CDO will have professional development days for the staff and teachers on Friday, November 13, 2026, Thursday, February 25, 2027 and Wednesday, April 28, 2027. CDO will be closed to students for those days to allow our staff to attend professional development sessions.

Our hours of operation are between 8:45 am and 3:15 pm. The teachers are not to be caring for children outside of 8:45 am and 3:15 pm 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 ends at 9:50am, lunch is at 11:45 am and afternoon snack starts at 2:35pm. 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.
- 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 bring to your child's cubby
- Place outdoor clothing/backpack in your child's cubby
- Put their indoor shoes on
- Drop your child off at the programming room
- 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 spots
- If your child is in diapers, place all labeled diapers in the diaper pouches outside the washroom
- If your child is napping, please set up their sleep mat with a 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

Intro Into Care

If this is your child's first experience in care, or if they have a more sensitive temperament, we encourage a gradual introduction to the program. This transition may look like bringing your child for the morning and staying with them, then heading home together before lunch. As your child becomes more comfortable, parents may begin staying for only 20–30 minutes at drop-off and picking their child up before or after lunch. Over time, this can progress to a full day with a brief 5–10 minute drop-off. We have found that when children experience the program as a safe and connected place alongside their parent first, it helps build confidence and sets them up for long-term success. Being left in an unfamiliar environment too quickly can sometimes lead to distress during drop-offs.

Our team is always happy to work with families to create a transition plan that helps your child feel safe,

supported and comfortable as they begin their time at CDO.

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 directly with teachers or the director when dropping off child or through email at teachers@childrensdayout.ca.

Prescription Medication

Please notify the teachers if your child is on prescription medication. You will be asked to fill out a form providing the medication information on a Medication Plan. 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, Benadryl 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.** These parameters are required by Licensing for the operation of CDO.

Pick-Up

All children must be picked up before 3:15 pm. The doors will be open from 2:45 pm. When picking-up your child, remember to pick up all food items and remove all belongings out of their cubby,. Photos of your child's day will be posted to our private Facebook page at the end of the day. 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 3:15 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 48 hours from the last display of symptoms. 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 Director, 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 with windchill
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 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 are encouraged to nap throughout the day at CDO. Nap requirements are on a case by case basis and a plan for your child should be discussed with the Director.

Minimum Staffing Requirement Policy

To ensure the safety, supervision, and quality of care for all children, our preschool maintains a strict minimum staffing requirement at all times. The centre must have a minimum of three (3) qualified staff members present and on duty in order to operate. This standard supports appropriate child supervision, emergency response readiness, and adherence to licensing and safety guidelines. If, due to unforeseen circumstances (such as illness, emergencies, or staffing shortages), the minimum requirement of three staff members cannot be met, the centre will be required to close for the affected period. Families will be notified of any school closure as soon as possible, and no later than 7:45 a.m., through available communication channels (e.g., phone, email, or messaging systems). We will make every reasonable effort to provide timely updates and information regarding reopening. Please note that refunds or fee reimbursements for closures due to staffing shortages will not be provided. This is due to the structure of the affordability grant and how program fees and hours are calculated.