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FAMILY HANDBOOK

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Little Lions Child and Family Centre would like to acknowledge the land of the Anishinabe people, the land that we live and work on, in the shadow of Animikii-Wajiw (Mount McKay). We ask the creator to watch over us, our children, and our families so we can live Mino Bimaadiziwin, live in the good way in the eyes of our creator.

Miigwech, Miigwech, Miigwech

Little Lions Child and Family Centre is located on the traditional lands of the Fort William First Nation, Signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850.

WELCOME TO LITTLE LIONS CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

The Board, CEO and Staff would like to extend a warm welcome to all parents/guardians and their children. We hope you will find this handbook informative and ask that you consider it carefully.

Little Lions Child and Family Centre is a Non-Profit Charitable Corporation, guided by the Board of Directors, CEO and educators. The task of the Board of Directors is to support the centre in all financial, legal, fundraising activities and provide expertise in business ventures. We are licensed by the Ministry of Education to accommodate children from 6 months to 12 years in various programs offered at our eleven locations.

Our hours of operation are 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday during the school year. Some sites may offer care during the summer months depending on enrollment. Occasionally there is a closure for professional development during the year, but families are given advance notice.

As ECE (Early Childhood Education) educators, we appreciate the trust you show when you choose us to educate your children. We pride ourselves in providing a unique learning environment inspired by the Waldorf Philosophy in the hope that through working together with you, we may grow in the understanding of each other and your children.

We strive to provide an environment that meets the essential needs of all ages of the children enrolled. We appreciate your support throughout your child's enrollment and experiences at Little Lions.

HISTORY OF LITTLE LIONS CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

Little Lions Child and Family Centre began as an extension of the Grade 12 Family Studies program at Lakeview High School, conceived, organized and taught by Traude Wedding. It began as a workplace childcare centre that also served the Parenting Practicum course as a model for Waldorf childcare.

A start-up grant was acquired, and a license obtained in 1984 for a one-room day nursery. The program expanded and eventually included an afternoon program, but finances were limited. Requests were made to the city for subsidized spaces. The process of incorporation was completed by 1986. The first Board consisted of three directors: Bobbi Sawchuk, Mary-Jane Wedding and Traude Wedding.

Eventually there was a full childcare centre, morning and afternoon programs and five directors. Later the After-School Program was added and enrollment was growing fast but, unfortunately, Lakeview was due to close. Many applications for grants were made to the city and various foundations. A grant was received from the Ministry of Northern Affairs administered by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. This resulted in the purchase and renovation of the Clarke Street property in 1991. The staff and directors looked forward to the blossoming of Waldorf childcare in their own centre. A Board resolution established Traude Wedding as founder and honorary director for life. New directors supporting the centre have been gradually added to the Board.

In March 2005, the childcare centre experienced some growth and started a second location in the former Drew Street School, a heritage building. We were fortunate to be able to rent the original kindergarten room which made a beautiful childcare space with hardwood floors and a pressed tin ceiling. We later expanded by opening a room on the second floor as well. This centre was our first step into infant childcare and was the site of our first Community Garden.

In January of 2007, we opened a centre on the lower level of St. Paul School. This centre was unique in that it had a forest playground as well as the traditional one. This site collaborates with the school on many projects such as a Community Garden.

In December of that same year, we opened our fourth location, a small After School Program, in Whitefish Valley School, Hymers.

In 2011, we were requested by both the Lakehead Public School Board and the Thunder Bay District Catholic School Board to open programs in their schools. Within a few months, new programs were opened in McKenzie Public School, McKellar Park School, Kakabeka School, Claude E. Garton School and an After-School Program in St. Pius X School.

In 2012 our program has further expanded into Agnew H. Johnston and Valley Central Public Schools.

In March 2013 our location in the former Drew Street School moved into Hyde Park Public School. We were not many years into this location when the Lakehead Public School Board decided to close the Hyde Park School and build a new childcare centre attached to Kingsway Park School. This move happened in January 2018, just one year after our Whitefish Valley location closed due to low enrollment.

April 2018 also saw a new venture opening in Sault Ste Marie with the start of Wild Roots, a nature based cooperative program. The Wild Roots program ended in Spring 2023.

Unfortunately, we had to close our Kakabeka location in November 2019, due to staffing difficulties, often facing rural sites.

The Lakehead Public Board decided to close Agnew H. Johnston school as they were building a new larger school. We made the decision to move our before and afterschool programs into the new school as well. After a delay in the build and then the licensing process we were ready to open our new site in Ecole Elsie MacGill in 2021. Rounding our complement of sites is our newest after school site located in St. Margaret School which opened in September 2023.

All new locations were made possible with funding from Ministry of Education administered through the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB). Their support of our endeavours has been invaluable.

PROGRAM STATEMENT

Little Lions Child and Family Centre is an organization which provides childcare for children 6 months to 12 years of age inspired by the Waldorf philosophy or “Steiner” education. The following Program Statement is consistent with the Ministry of Education’s statement on programming and pedagogy issued under subsection 55 (3) of the Childcare and Early Years Act, 2014 and #46 of Ontario Regulation 137/15. It is the policy of Little Lions to review the program statement annually to ensure compliance and congruency with our own philosophy and policies.

VISION: Resilient and compassionate children in a healthy, vibrant community where love and wonder are the basis of learning and living.

MISSION STATEMENT: Little Lions Child and Family Centre Directors and Staff are dedicated to the principles of “Waldorf” Education and Childcare. We strive to foster the realization of these principles through exceptional childcare that nurtures the whole child, supports families, integrates varying aspects of a nature-based approach, and strengthens the community.

GOALS: Little Lions Child and Family Centre will endeavour to provide an environment and programs in which each child will flourish and grow through the early stages of development. Little Lions seeks to provide a warm, home-like atmosphere with tasks and domestic routines to follow. Programs will allow plenty of time for imaginative play with a nature-oriented environment as expressed and practiced in spaces inspired by Waldorf education.

Our philosophy focuses on four main senses during the early years. These include the sense of touch, balance, self-movement (proprioception) and the life sense which is the sense of well-being that is critical for the healthy development of any child. We nurture these senses by our daily, seasonal and yearly rhythm, our sensory rich environment and the loving kindness expressed by all staff.

Children know that they belong in our program in many ways. For example, indoor programs will have individual cubbies and a chair that has their own personal chair cover. Most importantly, they know they belong because the caregivers can be trusted to make them welcome, to know them and to provide

for their unique needs.

Each child is seen as an individual and we strive to see them for who they are. We strive to recognize their strengths and find the opportunities to further their development. Frequently this happens through play-based assessment or through the keen observation of trained, caring staff. Relating to children respectfully involves taking into account what they need and want. Encouraging them to express and act out on their preferences builds and strengthens a sense of responsibility for themselves and supports the idea that children are active contributors to their own and other's experiences. Children's participation in play is a valuable way to support their development and learning. Making decisions and having choices are very important elements in the daily experience. Child-initiated and adult-supported play experiences afford children the opportunities to develop autonomy and independence as well as to learn social and relationship skills as they explore their interdependence and connectedness with peers and educators.

The educators support children in their ability to self-regulate. All practices are respectful of a child's autonomy while being conscious of the need for safe exploration of the environment during play and positive interactions with other children and adults. This may be achieved through environments (natural or set-up by adults) for children to explore successfully and safely, role-modelling appropriate language and communication and otherwise finding just the right tool for a child to use to achieve self-regulation. Educators role model appropriate language and communication always. Empathy is developed using the healing basket which helps children to focus on the healing act following an incident where another child has been hurt. All staff create a safe social environment by their awareness of group dynamics which then guides their practice (i.e. setting up the program room).

Our environments provide opportunities for children to learn to care for themselves, their peers, adults and the rest of the natural world as well as the materials around them. Indoor programs have plants, pets, and babies (dolls) that need to be cared for. They have special items that must be handled with care, so children learn to have reverence for something that is precious. The environment is inviting, appealing to their changing interests and needs and is aesthetically pleasing, with furniture, toys and furnishings made from natural materials. Broken toys are often mended in the program with or by children. Programs situated in natural settings foster a sharing spaces perspective that is respectful of the more-than-human world.

Our trained staff are cognizant of the fact that a healthy rhythm to the day is crucial. We strive for a flow to the day rather than a schedule. In this way, the day may flow more according to the interests and activity level of the children rather than the clock. The day must have a “breathing” quality with moments of activity and moments that are more subdued. For example, an in-breath such as story time might be followed by an out-breath such as active running. We are respectful of the need for all children to have a rest time or quiet time, even if they do not sleep. Children may decide if they will sleep or rest quietly. Quiet activities, such as fidget bags, will be available for children choosing to rest quietly. As much as possible we allow the children to find their own natural rhythm for rest or sleep. We support their oral language development through storytelling, songs, traditional rhymes, and games which are also built into the rhythm of the day. Staff members sing through the transitions which tend to be slow and natural.

Both indoors and out we offer positive learning environments and natural settings where experiences are child-initiated rather than contrived by the adults. Children are actively involved in the care of their environments. For example, in playgrounds and gardens, they may be engaged in meaningful tasks such as raking, sweeping and shovelling. By dressing appropriately, children can enjoy outdoor play in most types of weather. This enables children to play in wet weather and to enjoy puddles without inconvenience to the parent. The role of the adult is to observe their play, notice their interests, emerging ideas and developmental needs, plan and offer experiences, accordingly, find ways to extend the learning and therefore optimize the child’s development. At times the adult may role model a new experience, inviting the child to join in and supporting their learning through the process which encourages on-going learning. Our goal is for children to be self-motivated learners. The emphasis is on process rather than just the result and healthy play is observed, valued, encouraged and supported by the staff.

Our playgrounds are natural and include a sandbox, gardening area or containers, logs and stumps, trees, rocks and other natural items. A variety of tools, equipment and “loose parts” are provided to ensure that children can interact with the natural environment in a creative way which supports inquiry-based learning. Artistic endeavours are promoted outdoors through simple means such as chalk drawings and collaging natural items and sometimes more complex crafts or activities such as weaving with natural items. We promote healthy gross motor play such as running, jumping and climbing (when safe) and often take children on excursions to places where

this is most likely to happen. Some of our site's compost although not all are allowed to do so depending on the school policy. In general, our organization works hard to support the staff so that they will be equally excited to be outdoors as the children are.

Health and safety are a priority. We not only follow the common guidelines, but we far exceed them in some cases. We consider all aspects of the child's safety including recent research which shows that "no risk" environments have a detrimental effect on children. To achieve that balance, our supervisors have been trained to do "Benefit Risk Assessments" and are encouraged to do this in all programs, indoors and outdoors, with their staff and where appropriate, with the children.

Food is prepared daily on site by the cook. Our food policy is extensive, considering information from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit with regards to nutrition as well as supplementary information from Waldorf sources. We start with high quality ingredients, often organic, locally purchased if possible. We avoid foods with excess fats, sugars, hormones, high levels of mercury, preservatives. Every effort is made to provide wholesome food prepared with attention to safe food handling and storage. Care is taken to serve food in an aesthetically pleasing manner in a home-like setting which fosters a sense of community. Food is served family-style with children encouraged to self-serve when possible. In many programs, children are frequently included in food preparation and wash their dishes following their snack. Foods from various cultures are enjoyed.

Ongoing open communication with families is essential for us to work as a team to support their children to achieve their goals. Staff members strive to communicate daily with families and, in some programs, through daily records as well as through newsletters. As much as possible, we try to be there when the family needs us. Over time this develops into a trusting relationship which facilitates open communication.

A trusting relationship between co-workers and administration is also fostered. We do this by transparency regarding financial practices and decisions that directly impact staff.

Staff meetings ensure that issues arising are dealt with in a timely manner. We are proactive rather than reactive and this opportunity for frank and open discussion enables us to better support the children and families. Meetings

also include opportunities to discuss topics related to the four principles of “How Does Learning Happen?” as well as inspiration from the Waldorf philosophy and nature and wild pedagogies. Staff meeting time may also be used for team planning where staff consider the interests and needs of the children they have observed during the previous week. Occasionally, staff will conduct a child study.

Staff complete an annual Self-Evaluation and a Behaviour Management Self-Evaluation (followed by action plans when deemed necessary by the supervisor) to always ensure positive interactions with children. Positive interactions with parents/guardians occur daily and take many forms from the initial interview process, an extensive application form which includes the child’s history, through the orientation and daily written and verbal communication with staff. We find that interactions are always better when people are well-rested. We want our staff to be patient with children and that is enhanced if they are not tired or over-worked. We provide opportunities for counselling through an EFAP program to ensure good mental health.

We realize how important it is for our staff to have professional development opportunities that are both mainstream and inspired by Waldorf education. This is obtained through site specific training that can take place during staff meetings when requested.

Little Lions is a Red Cross Training Partner, so we ensure that all our staff not only have their First Aid training but also have regular updates that include childcare specific examples. We provide an annual workshop on Choking to raise the awareness of parents/guardians.

We see ourselves as integral to the community and are committed to collaborating with community agencies, schools and professionals in order to support children, their families and staff. Our organization does this by participating actively with such organizations as Roots of Empathy and Keeping Kids Healthy. We regularly use the services of Children’s Centre Thunder Bay and Thunder Bay Health Unit to better support any children with special needs. We take part in assemblies and school events, working in partnership or taking a leadership role. We have built strong connections with other agencies that support families in need, such as Dilico, and have worked to create a childcare centre that has been invaluable in supporting young single mothers, our most vulnerable population.

The inspiration from the Waldorf philosophy stresses the need for continual striving toward our ideals. We believe that we are always in the process of “becoming”, adults and children alike, and so to further this, we must look at ourselves as well as at children. This need for self-reflection is integral to our working in this field.

Future goals for our organization include improving our pedagogical documentation and ongoing communication with families. We hope to go beyond the typical family board that we are currently using. This will take many forms including digital documentation as we explore current practices on making learning and interactions visible.

We see our childcare centre as a “learning organization” where knowledge and information is readily available so that decision-making can happen at many levels. We are striving for the autonomy for each centre under the umbrella of the larger organization. Our approach in this regard is for each Site Supervisor to have a form and financial formula which allows them to truly see the impact of their daily decisions. They meet quarterly with the Financial Officer to see if they are meeting budget expectations. These meetings may be followed up by meeting with the CEO to discuss their decision-making process and the impact it has on the running of the centre. Another aspect of this study of our individual centres is to see ourselves through the eyes of our community partners.

The program statement will be read by all staff upon hire and annually thereafter during the annual Policy and Procedure Manual review. The program statement will be the new standard to which we hold all our staff, but we see this as a living document which will change over time. Job expectations and performance appraisals will reflect this. Staff meetings will be a time for site supervisors to reflect on the program with their staff to further their understanding of the organization’s philosophy and practices and to find opportunities for improvement. Site Supervisor meetings, which happen approximately every three to four weeks, will be a time for us to reflect on the program statement to ascertain whether we are achieving our goals or if new goals are necessary. These findings will be brought forward to the board by the CEO.

This program statement may be taken as our assurance we are committed to live the vision we espouse.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Objectives

1. To provide exceptional childcare and other appropriate programs for children aged 6 months to 12 years, five days a week, year-round, in a setting inspired by Waldorf education.
2. Provide strong infrastructure which supports staff, programs and the other objectives.
3. To obtain the support, funding and publicity needed to achieve the above goals and stated objectives.

Function of the Board

The Board of Directors meets on the third Wednesday of most months at the Clarke Street location. If a parent/guardian wishes to address the Board, they must inform the Chief Executive Officer so that their presentation is added to the agenda.

The Board works in close cooperation with the Staff and Families with regards to matters concerning (but not limited to) the following:

- Balancing of the budget and other financial concerns
- Long range plans for growth of the centre
- Education of staff and parents/guardians
- Community awareness
- Fund-raising
- Daily operation including wages and expenditures
- Capital expenditure

Contacting the Board

The names and telephone numbers of all board members can be found in each childcare centre on the bulletin board near the entrance.

Committees

The Board may create committees or sub-committees as the need arises. An example of a committee is the Auction Committee. Parents/Guardians may be requested to help with committee activities.

Program, Philosophy and Personnel Committee

This committee meets monthly or as needed to handle the smaller day to day issues that arise from time to time. These can be easily dealt with and prevent the board meeting agenda from becoming too large. A larger issue may be discussed at the PPP with recommendations brought to the board for review.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

We meet all Childcare and Early Years Act (2014) Regulations with regards to staff qualifications.

All staff members are required to have a Police Vulnerable Sector Check, immunizations, and Standard First Aid Level C as a condition of employment.

We take every opportunity to provide all employees with additional professional learning based on each centre's needs.

SUPERVISION

Supervision of Volunteers and Students

Policy

This policy will be reviewed with employees before beginning employment and annually thereafter and with volunteers and students who will be providing care and guidance before they begin their placement and annually thereafter. This review will be signed and dated.

Additional policies including behaviour guidance, prohibited practices, anaphylactic policies and procedures will be reviewed with volunteers and students providing care and guidance before they begin placement and annually thereafter. Reviews will be signed and dated.

Little Lions Criminal Reference Check Policy applies to all employees, students and volunteers apart from students who are under the age of 18 and placed by an educational institution, for example, high school co-op students.

The Site Supervisor is responsible for the implementation of this policy. The Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors are responsible for the review and evaluation of the policy.

Procedures

Direct unsupervised access (i.e. when the adult is alone with a child) is not permitted for persons who are not employees of this centre. No child is directly supervised by a person who is less than 18 years of age. Volunteers and students are not counted in the staffing ratios. Volunteers and students are assigned a supervising mentor/staff member throughout their placement.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for:

- Updating the Family Handbook to include information on students and volunteers.

The Site Supervisor will be responsible for:

- Conducting the orientation using the orientation checklist;
- Developing the expectations, roles and responsibilities of the students and volunteers;
- Assigning mentors/staff members to supervise students and volunteers;

- Informing parents/guardians that volunteers and students are in the centre;
- Training of mentors/staff members on their roles and responsibilities when supervising students and volunteers;
- Monitoring the behaviour guidance practices of students and volunteers.

The mentors/staff members will be responsible for:

- Reviewing the expectations, roles and responsibilities with students and volunteers;
- Supervising the students and volunteers;
- Fulfilling the administration requirements of such placements;
- Communication with other staff members and Site Supervisor.

Students and volunteers will be responsible for:

- Reviewing and signing off on all policies and procedures relevant to this placement;
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the centre;
- Fulfilling the objectives and responsibilities of their role;
- Fulfilling administrative requirements of such placements.

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I have reviewed and agreed to abide by the policy and procedures of Supervision of Volunteers and Students developed by this program.

I understand that contravention of Supervision of Volunteers and Students is a serious matter that will warrant implementation of disciplinary measures, including consideration of dismissal.

_____ Signature (Staff/Volunteer/Student)	_____ Position	_____ Date
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_____ Signature (Person Conducting Review)	_____ Position	_____ Date
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PROGRAMS OFFERED

(VARIES AT EACH CENTRE)

Infant (6 – 18 months)

Our infant program is designed for children 6 to 18 months of age. We offer care in our infant area where there is a dedicated play space and nap room. Staff members have regular in-service training on infant care and work with the children daily on touch, balance, self-movement, and their life-sense. Ample time is provided for floor-play. Infants are immersed in a calm nurturing environment. As the infant's approach 18 months, they make visits to the toddler program to get to know the children and educators. That will ensure that the transition will go smoothly and according to the child's ability to cope with more stimulation.

Toddler (18 months – 2.5 years)

These early years are critical for healthy development of the child. We take great care that the toddler is in an environment that is home-like with a caregiver who is motherly. Through our daily, weekly and seasonal rhythm, the child will feel secure and form a close bond with the caregiver. As in our other programs, there is an emphasis on the experience and exploration of the natural world. At certain times, this group may be mixed age, giving the toddler the experience of having 'siblings' to interact with and imitate, as in any family setting. This program is geared toward helping the child find their way to connect with others in a social setting and to have a gentle transition into the routines of the kindergarten.

Preschool (2.5 years)

Young children, filled with wonder and curiosity, see beauty and purpose in everything. The educator's role in this program is to foster this sense by creating an environment that is beautiful and natural, and an atmosphere that permits exploration of the natural world. Children will make independent discoveries through their experiences of this world and use these discoveries in their own creative play.

The children in this multi-age group learn from their parents/guardians, each other, their educators, and the world around them by first seeing and then by imitating what they see. It is necessary at this age to provide them with as many experiences as possible, such as singing, dancing, creating music, puppet shows, crafts, baking, gardening, painting, beeswax modelling, creative movement, and dramatic play. In addition, time for free play, indoors and outdoors is essential as children need time to assimilate and synthesize what they have observed around them. The foundation for later learning is laid through imitative play, a key element. For this reason, reading and arithmetic are not introduced in this program.

Before and After School Care (4-12 Years Old)

The Before and After School Programs provide care for your child for the transition time between home and school but they are far more than that. After school there is a snack and a sharing time to connect with friend's they have not seen all day, time for a creative activity such as sewing, baking, arts and crafts and time for free play which is a relief for children after the intensity of intellectual activity at school. Outdoor play and exploration of the natural world is always part of this experience.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

SAFE ARRIVAL POLICY

The safety of the children of Little Lions Child and Family Centre is our utmost priority. Strong communication is required to ensure all children have arrived safely.

When you arrive with your child to begin the day with us, **ensure that a staff member is aware of your arrival.** Children must never be left alone in a room. An educator must acknowledge your arrival and be aware of the child before a parent/guardian departs.

If your child/ren is ill or will be absent we ask that you notify the centre by either calling to leave a message or through email.

Infant, Toddler and Preschool

A staff member will contact parents/guardians of any Infant, Toddler or Preschool child, each morning, should a child not come in as scheduled and no message from the parent/guardian has been received. A staff member will contact families no later than 11:00am.

If a child's absence can not be confirmed by contacting the parent/guardian, emergency contacts will be contacted.

Kindergarten and School Age

Our host schools located within Lakehead District School Board and Thunder Bay Catholic School Board have safe arrival programs in place that ensure kindergarten and school age children arrive in the morning. In the event of a child's absence from our program, Little Lions Child and Family Centre will be contacting parents/guardians of kindergarten and school age children, in the morning, on non-instructional days only. We will continue to contact parents/guardians should their child/ren not arrive in their assigned after school program and no confirmation of the absence from the school can be established.

Absences for children attending school located in the same building as the

childcare centre or those arriving by bus from another school will be confirmed immediately after school dismissal or after the bus arrives. Little Lions will contact the school to confirm the child's attendance and if they were at school but have not arrived at childcare the parent/guardian will be contacted to establish why the child is absent.

DEPARTURE POLICY

At the end of the day, we assume responsibility until you have approached a staff member and have greeted your child. This is especially crucial at moments when there may be several other children and parents in the process of departing. Since parents/guardians on occasion may take a few minutes of the educator's time to see how their child's day went, the educator may not be aware of your arrival. ***IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU MAKE CONTACT WITH A STAFF MEMBER PRIOR TO LEAVING.*** If a child is not in the childcare centre or playground and departure time was not recorded, staff will follow our serious occurrence procedures.

Releasing a Child

Little Lions will not release a child to anyone other than the person or persons listed on the application form. If you are unable to pick up your child and have alternate arrangements, please contact the centre prior to departure time. A description of that person will be required, and they will be asked to show identification when arriving at the centre to pick up a child. We will not release a child to anyone who is not on the pick-up person list. You may add or delete people from this list at any time, but for the sake of security, please do it in person, not by telephone.

It is the policy of Little Lions to uphold family law. Therefore, we are obliged to release a child to either parent/guardian regardless of whether they are listed on the pick-up list, unless we have a copy of any custody papers on file. In the event of one parent not being allowed to pick up a child, please inform the Site Supervisor immediately and see that the appropriate documentation is at the centre.

Health and Safety

Safety is of prime concern to us. In the event of an emergency, please be assured that every effort will be made to contact you. If we are unable to do so, the name given as an emergency contact will be called.

In the unlikely event of an emergency evacuation the centres will each go to their designated emergency evacuation point:

SITE	EMERGENCY SHELTER	ALTERNATE LOCATION
ELSIE MACGILL	CHURCHILL POOL	
CLARKE	SUPERIOR MOTEL	RELAX MOTEL
CLAUDE E. GARTON	CURRENT RIVER COMMUNITY CENTRE	
JUNE STEEVE LENDRUM (JSL)	ARMOURY	
KINGSWAY	ST. PATRICK HIGH SCHOOL	
MCKELLAR	FORT WILLIAM GARDENS	
MCKENZIE	SHUNIAH FIRE HALL	163 LAKESHORE DR
ST. MARGARET	ST. MARGARET CHURCH	BISHOP GALLAGHER SCHOOL
ST. PAUL	CURRENT RIVER COMMUNITY CENTRE	
ST. PIUS X	HAMMARSKJOLD HIGH SCHOOL	
VALLEY CENTRAL	OLIVER PAIPOONGE FIRE HALL	

Our playground meets all CSA standards for safety. Children play in a safe manner indoors and outdoors, both on and off campus. The children are always under supervision. Our educator/child ratios comply with the Childcare and Early Years Act 2014.

Illness

We ask, out of consideration to other families at our centre, that you keep your child at home if they are ill with a contagious condition or a fever. All children attending must be able to participate in all parts of the program, including outside playtime. A child who is not well enough to play outdoors is not well enough to attend the centre as they will not be able to participate fully in the program. In addition, we do not have extra staff available to stay indoors with a sick child so we cannot comply with requests to keep individual children indoors.

If your child becomes ill while attending a program, they will be cared for until arrangements for pickup have been made. Please ensure that your emergency contact information is updated and complete, including phone numbers.

According to guidelines set by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, designed to protect all children, your child must be kept home when any of the following occur:

- Fever, runny red eyes, diarrhea, head lice, impetigo, swollen glands, earache.
- Persistent itching, vomiting, sore throat, jaundice, undiagnosed or contagious rash.
- Thick mucus or pus draining from the eyes or nose, heavy or persistent cough.
- Grey or white stool, dark (tea coloured) urine, sores with crusty yellow or green drainage.

A manual from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit is available at the centre if you would like to review it. Little Lions adheres to the guidelines set out by the Health Unit regarding procedures for all communicable diseases that may arise periodically.

Please call to let us know if your child will not attend for any reason, including illness, as it will allow the program to continue with the planned activities so staff will not be waiting unnecessarily for your child's arrival.

The numbers to call are as follows:

<u>Main Office</u>	807-344-2283	MCKELLAR	807-474-3017
CLARKE	807-344-2283 ext 2	MCKENZIE	807-683-5624
CLAUDE	807-683-9497	ST. MARGARET	807-627-7850
ELSIE MACGILL	807-577-4406	ST. PAUL	807-343-0506
JSL	807-345-0325	ST. PIUS	807-683-9324
KINGSWAY	807-622-5833	VALLEY	807-577-4343

Please understand that your call may not be answered directly, and you may have to leave a message on the voice mail. Be assured that our staff check the voice mail regularly and your call will be noted.

Administration of Medication

The medication policy of this centre is to only administer medications prescribed by a medical doctor.

There has been a lot of controversy regarding many over the counter drugs. Staff will not administer any medication which is not prescribed by a doctor, for example such things as cough medicines, Tylenol, etc. If you wish your child to have such a medication, you are welcome to come to the centre to administer the medication. If you are sending a friend or family member to administer the medication, then **written consent** must be provided so that the staff is aware that this person has been given your permission to do so.

Parents/guardians are required to complete an Administration of Medication Form and give the medications to a staff member for proper storage in a locked box out of reach of children. The forms are available from the program educator.

Medication must be in the **original container** on which must be clearly legible the name of the medication, the dosage of medication to be administered, date of purchase and/or expiry date and instructions for storage and administration. All unused medication will be returned to the parent for disposal and parents will sign that it is received.

Staff will only administer medication that can be applied to the skin or given by mouth, except for anaphylactic shock. In this case, the staff will administer the required EpiPen. We do not administer ear or eye drops.

Children in the After-School Program are not to arrive from school with unauthorized medication. **Unauthorized medication will be confiscated and returned to the parent.** Please ensure that there are no medications in a child's packsack except for allergy medication. If there is allergy medication, we will determine a safe place to store the packsack.

Special procedures apply to the self-administration of allergy medications and to the receiving and documenting of narcotic/controlled medications. These procedures can be discussed with the Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer and the appropriate forms will be given to you.

Nutrition

One nutritious hot meal and two healthy snacks are served at our centre daily with a small snack available at some sites for children who must stay past 5:00. Menus are posted to make you aware of the daily/weekly diet. We offer a healthy selection of food, free of additives, preservatives, or high sugar content. Little Lions is a nut allergy conscious environment. **Nuts of any type are not permitted**, but coconut is served on occasion, and coconut may be used in other forms in the centre (ie. coconut mat). Nutmeg may also be used in cooking.

For the safety of the children with allergies, we do not allow children to bring food of any type to the centre. Please ensure that your child finishes eating breakfast at home so that you do not inadvertently compromise the safety of another child by bringing your child's breakfast into the childcare centre.

The Thunder Bay District Health Unit is requested to check our menus to ensure that they meet all requirements.

Rest Time Policy

All children in attendance for a full day will have a rest period of approximately 1 - 2 hours after the noon meal. Educators sit with the children, sing, play the harp and otherwise comfort the children until they sleep to ensure a rich sleep experience. Children who are not sleeping will rest on their beds for a minimum of 1 hour and will have a quiet time for the remaining time, so they do not disrupt the rest time of others.

Children in a program that have only children 4 years and older are not required to nap but will have a period to engage in quiet activities.

Cribs/cots/mattresses, blankets and sheets are provided by Little Lions. Bedding is washed weekly at the childcare centre or more often if needed.

Sunscreen Policy

It is suggested that all children have wide-brimmed sun hats (5" wide on all sides) as recommended by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

Parents/guardians are required to provide their own sunscreen (labeled clearly with their child's name).

Staff will apply sunscreen 15 minutes before the children go in the sun. Staff will encourage play in shaded areas and discourage play in the full sun.

Thunder Bay District Health Unit recommends that in the summer months your child should be dressed in loose fitting, tightly woven, lightweight clothing that covers arms and legs.

Prohibited Practices

As a parent you may wonder what disciplinary practices you can expect in our childcare setting. We want to assure you that our staff follows strict guidelines on behavior guidance. These can be discussed with the Site Supervisor at any time.

In addition, we follow the Ministry of Education regulations regarding prohibited practices and other internal policies which are there for the protection of children and families. Little Lions Child and Family Centre shall not permit physical, emotional, psychological or economic abuse of a client, which may include but is not limited to the following:

- a) Any corporal punishment of a child by an employee or by another child or group of children.
- b) Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, 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.
- c) Locking the exits of the childcare centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and

is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;

- d) 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;
- e) Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding;
- f) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will;
- g) Any verbal attack on the self-esteem of a child or parent by staff.
- h) Ostracism or isolation of a child.
- i) Unsafe play that may be hazardous to a child's well-being.
- j) Any form of racism.

Challenging Behaviour Policy

It is the policy of Little Lions Child and Family Centre to make every effort to serve all the children and to work collaboratively with parents/guardians, staff and various community support systems to meet the individual needs of each child. It is our policy to assist children and parents/guardians to make any behaviour changes that are felt by staff, administration and/or outside agencies to be necessary for the health, needs and safety of the child and the other children in the centre. Continual attempts will be made to find appropriate solutions to resolve any problems. Support and guidance through this process will be provided by the Site Supervisor and Resource Consultant to ensure that parents are actively involved.

If a child is experiencing problems that may pose a direct threat to the safety of the other children or staff, the parent/guardian may be required to withdraw the child from the program and make other childcare arrangements.

The following procedure will be followed when a child's behaviour is an issue.

1. The initial interview will be an informal meeting between the parent(s) and educator. At this meeting, the parent/guardian(s) will be informed of the child's social behaviour(s).
2. Support may be requested from the Resource Consultant (parent/guardian consent required).

3. The Educator, Site Supervisor, and Resource Consultant, collaborate to facilitate further evaluation of the child's needs, to determine the nature and severity of the problem, and appropriate programming is provided. The PPP Committee may be requested to attend any meeting or to be part of this collaborative effort.
4. In most cases, the above steps will be sufficient. If not, the following course of action will be followed:
 - First Written notice for a conference to take place. An action plan will be developed so that all parties are consistent with the strategies that need to be put in place. The type of supports needed will be determined at this time.
 - Second Written notice may result in a suspension. This will provide more time to hold an in-depth evaluation of the child and to develop a more detailed plan to better support the child in the program. An action plan will be developed to plan for the child to return to the program.
 - Third Written notice: Should the child's needs be deemed by the Site Supervisor, Chief Executive Officer and PPP Committee to be beyond the expertise of the centre staff and Resource Consultant, recommendation will be made in writing for the parents to withdraw their child and to enroll the child in an alternate facility where their needs may be addressed.
5. Whenever possible, the parent/guardian will be given sufficient notice to make alternate arrangements. However, if a child's individual needs or behaviour pose a serious threat to the safety of other children and staff, the parent may be required to immediately withdraw the child from the centre at the Site Supervisor's written request (following consultation with the Chief Executive Officer).

Conflict Resolution

Little Lions Child and Family Centre acknowledges that conflict is a normal part of the life of any organization where services are purchased. Parents/guardians may have views or goals which are different from the beliefs and value system of the childcare centre. It is important that both sides can voice their opinion or point of view in hopes that open communication will lead to understanding. It is important that these discussions are respectful, timely, in the spirit of collaboration and focussed on the best interests of the child. The following steps are to be followed when an issue has come up between staff and parents/guardians.

1. The matter should be addressed expediently through direct communication with the parties involved. This should be done within 5 business days, at a time that is convenient to both parties, and not in the presence of the child. Depending on the issue, the involvement of the Resource Consultant may be requested. This first meeting will be documents. The Site Supervisor will be informed of the meeting.
2. If the family is dissatisfied with the outcome of the meeting, they may request a meeting with the Site Supervisor, with or without the presence of the program staff. Depending on the issue, the Site Supervisor may request involvement of outside agencies such as CCTB, CAS and Dilico. The employee will be informed. If the discussion may call into question the competency of the staff, the staff may request the involvement of the Human Resource Officer. The meeting will be documented.
3. If the family is not satisfied with the outcome of the second meeting, they may appeal, in writing, to the Board of Directors. The board will review the documentation and respond within 10 business days. The Board's decision will be final.
4. The staff may receive further direction from the Human Resource Officer with regards to the decision if it related to their competency. An action plan may be required.
5. At all times, staff will avoid triangulation (discussing with a third party) as this will be considered gossip. A high degree of professionalism is required during times of conflict.

1	Direct communication with all parties involved within 5 business days.	RC may be requested to attend. Site Supervisor will be informed.
2	Assisted Communication with all parties and the Site Supervisor with resolution within five working days.	HR will be informed and invited to attend if necessary. Outside agencies invited as needed.
3	If still dissatisfied with the results, an appeal by either party can be made in writing to the Board of Directors. A decision will be made within 10 business days. The board decision is final.	All parties informed of the decision.

Resource Consultant

Little Lions uses the services of a Resource Consultant from Children's Centre Thunder Bay. The role of the Resource Consultant is to work in collaboration with the educators and, with family consent, do observations, implement developmental screening, coordinate services, support the educators and offer information and support to families.

Parents may request the services of the Resource Consultant, or it may be recommended to parents by the staff. At any time, the benefits of this may be discussed with the Site Supervisor before a decision is made.

Emergency Closures

Snowstorms

When the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board and the Lakehead Public School Board close all schools within city limits due to inclement weather, Little Lions Child and Family Centre will also close. Please listen to the radio for the announcement.

Power Outages

If a power outage occurs in winter and the temperature drops in the building, you will be called to pick up your child. Every attempt will be made to keep your child warm until your arrival.

No Hot Water

If there is no hot running water, the Thunder Bay District Health Unit requires that the centre close. Parents/guardians will be called to pick up their child(ren). In the case of a short interruption in hot water, the centre may still operate.

Emergency Management

Little Lions has extensive policies and procedures on emergency management up to and including a Pandemic Plan.

All sites have an emergency contact sheet for every child in the centre. Using these sheets, when an evacuation occurs, or any emergency requiring that your child be picked up from the centre, staff will call parents first, then the people listed as your emergency contacts. Please inform us of any change of contact information, address, phone number, change of place of employment, change of emergency pick up people, etc. It is essential that these forms are current so periodically you will be asked to update your information. Be assured that staff will remain with your child until you or your alternate pick-up person arrives.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted monthly according to the guidelines set out by the fire marshal. Children are assured of their safety and handled with care. Since the fire drills are not announced and we must make a complete evacuation of the building, it is necessary for the children to be always wearing their slippers/indoor shoes.

Items to be Brought from Home

- Indoor pull or push on slippers/shoes (non-skid) are needed for use during the day. This is very important as we conduct monthly fire drills, and the children must vacate the building regardless of footwear.
- Two extra complete changes of clothing are to be placed in your child's locker. These must be washed and replaced as necessary.
- Clothing appropriate for all weather conditions is a must. Warm hats, snow suits, mittens and neck tubes (for safety reasons, SCARVES and MITTENS on STRINGS HAVE ARE NOT PERMITTED) are needed for the winter, rubber boots and splash pants/suits for the wet season and hats for sunny days. Although Little Lion's staff are diligent about returning your child's clothing to their locker, we are not responsible for missing items. For this reason, clearly mark your child's name on the clothing.

- Children who require diapers, wipes and any diapering cream or powder that you wish to be used on your child will need to be replenished as needed.

Items Not to be Brought to the Centre

- Please refrain from allowing children to bring toys from home to the centre. We have found in the past that toys from home cause undesirable complications. If your child occasionally wishes to share a found treasure from nature, or a handmade article from home, it would be welcomed. The simpler the toy, the more the child is able to work with inner feelings and imagination. We have also found that items from home may cause ownership issues and do not promote sharing.

Field Trips

A field trip within walking distance of the childcare centre may take place on any day and frequently does! Families are not given advance notice. The application form signed upon enrollment represents the authorization for educators to take your child off the premises of Little Lions. A typical example of this would be a walk to a local park.

It is vitally important for the children to be able to explore nature and the environment. Appreciation and reverence for the world of nature and the cultural heritage of all people form the core of our educational programs. Exploring the local environment fosters interaction with the community. Because of this, educators will at times take the children on longer excursions for nature discoveries and adventures. If taking public transportation, families would be notified in advance, and a further field trip consent form is required. We usually overstaff on field trip days so there is adequate supervision.

Insurance

Little Lions Child and Family Centre carries insurance coverage with The Co-Operators.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Little Lions is closed for all statutory holidays including the following:

New Year's Day	August Civic Holiday
Family Day	Labour Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving
Easter Monday	Christmas Day
Victoria Day	Boxing Day
Canada Day	

Little Lions is open during the school year from September to June. Depending on enrollment, Little Lions may be open during the summer months and school breaks, such as March Break but we are closed for the Christmas Break. For March break and summer months, you will be asked to notify us WELL IN ADVANCE so that we may determine the number of children requiring childcare and the number of staff required to keep the centre open. We can then confirm if the centre will be able to offer you care. We will endeavour to provide you with care but if we are unable to, due to financial considerations, and then you will still have ample time to make other arrangements for care. There may be additional closures for professional development. Families are given at least two (2) months' notice to enable them to make other arrangements.

Festivals and Celebrations

Our programs follow the seasonal rhythm of the year. We celebrate Festivals and other special days that are part of our multi-cultural heritage. Other days may be celebrated by individual educators in their programs, not as public events.

Celebration of the festivals throughout the year provides us with rich nourishment for our inner selves and contributes to the well-being and stability of the community. Festive events are held seasonally and presented by the educator, and these will vary by site.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Parents/Guardians, who have consciously chosen to support this type of education and are committed to it, will find consistency and harmony in their children's growth. You are invited to attend parent/guardian – educator meetings, workshops, discussion nights, festivals and celebrations. These commitments help the parent to stand behind their child's education.

We may ask for help in selling raffle tickets, helping with activities or baking for fairs, making crafts for sale, finding sponsors to give donations or other types of fund-raising activities. We are always looking for ways for you to become a part of your child's education.

Becoming a Board Member

Parents/Guardians are invited to become Board Members. They may attend the Annual General Meeting in April/May and allow their names to stand for election to the Board of Directors. For more information on what is involved, please feel free to contact any Board Member.

The Main Office

The Chief Executive Officer carries out her administrative work at the Clarke St. location. The main office, located in the basement of 211 Clarke is usually open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Even though you may get a recording when you call, there may be people in the office who are on the other line. You will get a call back as soon as possible. The extensions for the office staff are as follows:

(807) 344-2283

Lindsay Gaw-Martin, Chief Executive Officer ext. 4

Dannielle Musgrave, Human Resources Officer ext. 1

Giulia Sanzo, Financial Officer ext. 5

Since we are in a secure building, if you wish to meet with any of the office staff, please call ahead so we can schedule an appointment at a time that is convenient for you.

Please do not give verbal messages to the staff since we do not want them to be distracted from their duties with children. This can also lead to messages being confused or forgotten. Messages for staff regarding your child's attendance may be left on the voice mail for the site.

Staff frequently check the voice mail throughout the day. If you leave a message and require a response, the staff will return your call at their earliest convenience. If messages concern changes to schedule or other important information, it is always best to give instructions by emailing your site supervisor.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Waitlist Policy

Little Lions Child and Family Centre enrolls children from the OneList, a community waitlist that is found at www.thunderbaychildcare.ca. It is mandatory that all clients register and there is no charge to be on this waitlist. Parents/guardian may request to know where they are on the waitlist.

Site Supervisors offer spots when they come available based on the following criteria:

1. Priority given to children of employees.
2. Priority given to a family that wishes to enroll the sibling of a child currently attending. These families must still register on the Onelist.
3. Priority given to a family requiring a full-time spot.
4. If there are no requests for full-time, then Site Supervisors will offer part-time care to families with set schedules. Every effort will be made to match families that have complementary schedules, for example M/T/TH family matched with W/F family. This will ensure maximum use of the available spaces.
5. Site Supervisors will remove a person from the waitlist if they refuse a spot three times.
6. Site Supervisors will remove a person from the wait list if they do not call or email back within three business days of receiving an offer.
7. Little Lions is an inclusive childcare centre and discrimination during enrollment for any reason is not tolerated.
8. Children with special needs are accommodated provided the program will not exceed their manageable mix.
9. Children are not enrolled based on whether they are subsidized. We make every effort to keep this information confidential.
10. The June Steeve Lendrum location is a private childcare centre reserved for children of residents in the building. For this reason, an application does not require that the client be on the mandatory waitlist. Clients are accepted in the order that they request services, provided the childcare centre has the capacity to accommodate the

Enrollment Practices

A parent/guardian who wants to enroll a child receives a tour. The parent/guardian can ask questions about programs, philosophy and fees. A tour of the centre (during a time which is not disruptive to the programs in session) will enable the parent/guardian to see some educators with their groups. This initial tour is very important for you to be able to see the philosophy in action and the Site Supervisor will be able to address your questions immediately.

When the family decides that this is the education they want for their child, Application Forms must be completed. Up to three visits for the parent/guardian and/or child will be scheduled in the appropriate program. The Site Supervisor will arrange the times for the visit and any necessary follow-up discussion.

A copy of the Family Handbook is available on site. Upon enrollment, the parent/guardian is referred to the Family Handbook on the website. In this handbook, rights and financial responsibilities are clearly laid out. Please read all the information in the handbook. If you have any questions or want further discussions of the rights and responsibilities as laid out in the handbook, please contact the Site Supervisor. We want to ensure that the parent/guardian clearly understands the content of the Family Handbook before signing the contract. When all forms have been completed and submitted, including the immunization record for the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, and the deposit is paid, registration is confirmed. Please note that the completed immunization form is required by the Medical Officer who is responsible for the enforcing of the Health and Day Nurseries Regulations. **This form is to be received by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit upon their request and must be readily available** so please do not delay.

Parent/Guardian Fees and Terms

We have been approved to be part of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Childcare System! This program will provide fee reduction and will be implemented using a phased in approach,

- A fee reduction of up to 25% for eligible children (under age 6) retroactive to April 1, 2022 for the first year of implementation.
- An additional 25% reduction bringing the total to 50% on average for eligible children by the end of the 2022 calendar year (reflected in January for families),
- Additional fee reductions scheduled for September 2024 and September 2025, bringing the average childcare fees to \$10 per day per eligible child,

In the first year of implementation, childcare fees will not be reduced lower than \$12.00 per day, as such, if the cost of care for an eligible child to attend after school is \$13.00 per day, the reduced rate in year one will be \$12.00 per day,

An "eligible child" means:

***Any child, until the last day of the month in which the child turns 6 years old

Childcare Fees

PROGRAM		HOURS	FEES (as of January 1, 2025)
Infant Full Day Extended Day	6 months - 18 months	up to 8 hrs	\$22.00
		8+ hrs	\$22.00
Toddler Full Day Extended Day	18 months - 2 1/2 years	up to 8 hrs	\$22.00
		8+ hrs	\$22.00
Preschool Full Day Extended Day	2 1/2 - 5 years	up to 8 hrs	\$19.85
		8+ hrs	\$22.00
Before School	4 - 12 years	7:30 - school bell	\$12.00
After School <i>4 - eligible 6 yr old (end of month turned 6)</i>			
		school bell - 5:30	\$12.00
After School	6 - 12 years	school bell - 5:30	\$13.00
Before & After School <i>4 - eligible 6 yr old (end of month turned 6)</i> combined			\$12.00
Before & After School combined		6 - 12 years	\$25.00
P.D. Day & Holiday Full Day Extended Day	4 - 5 years	up to 8 hrs	\$18.90
		8+ hrs	\$21.26
P.D. Day & Holiday <i>eligible 6 yr old (end of month turned 6)</i> Full Day Extended Day		up to 8 hrs	\$17.01
		8+ hrs	\$19.37
P.D. Day & Holiday Full Day Extended Day	6 - 12 years	up to 8 hrs	\$36.00
		8+ hrs	\$41.00

DIRECT PAYMENT CLIENTS

Statement of Account

- You must register your child for licensed childcare using the online registry. Once your application is submitted, the site(s) you select will contact you when a space becomes available. You can apply at: www.thunderbaychildcare.ca
- Direct pay clients are billed at the beginning of every month. You will expect to receive an Invoice and Statement of Account in the first week of every month. These will be emailed directly to the email address on file.
- Billings are done during the first three days of every month, so if you have submitted a Request for Change of Schedule Form after the first three days, it will not reflect on your account until the following month.
- A Change of Schedule Form **must** be submitted **2 weeks** prior to the change. If two weeks written notice is given (A Request for Change of Schedule is submitted) you will be given credit for the requested days off. Failure to do so **will** result in full payment of the days missed. As a non-profit organization, we must be sure that programs are as full as possible every day in order to be financially sound. Giving us ample notice will ensure that you do not pay for days of care that you did not use and also ensures that we have a chance to offer that spot to another client.
- Attendance sheets are reviewed and verified at the end of every month so if your child attends the centre an extra day during the month it will reflect on the following month's Statement of Account.
- Payments are due in full by the 20th of every month. If a payment plan is needed, please contact your site supervisor.
- If payment is not received by the 20th of the month a late notice slip will be sent out.
- A "SUMMER SCHEDULE" will be handed out in April or May of every year. This **is** a contract and **must** be filled out and handed in on the date specified by the Site Supervisor. We understand that some parents/guardians may not know when they will be booking their holidays when the Summer Schedule is due.
- You will not be billed for any closures including unscheduled closures for example, snowstorms.
- You will find the current Program Fees posted on the Family Board.

SUBSIDIZED CLIENTS

Statement of Account

- You must register your child for licensed childcare using the online registry. Please indicate if subsidy is required when registering and once your application is submitted, the site(s) you select will contact you when a space becomes available. You can apply at: www.thunderbaychildcare.ca
- You may be eligible for a fee subsidy from the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB). The Site Supervisor will ask you upon interviewing you if you require subsidized assistance and have you complete a subsidy questionnaire. You must first have a confirmed spot at the centre. Once you have a spot confirmed and you have returned the completed questionnaire, the Site Supervisor will then initiate the subsidy process with TBDSSAB and you will be contacted to book an interview with TBDSSAB. If time passes and you do not hear from them, please feel free to check back with the Site Supervisor to ensure that there has been no delay in sending your information to the subsidy office.
- To be eligible for a subsidy you must be able to provide your most recent Notice of Assessment from your tax return. If you have filed but are unable to locate your copy of the Notice of Assessment, you may request a copy by calling Canada Revenue Agency at 1-800-959-8281 or by going online at www.cra-arc.gc.ca.
- Clients receiving a full or partial subsidy from TBDSSAB are billed at the beginning of every month. You will receive an Invoice and a Statement of Account.
- Payments are due by the 20th of every month.
- The number of absent days you are allotted is set by the TBDSSAB. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep track of the absent days allotted by TBDSSAB. The childcare centre will, however, notify the parent if the absent days are very low.
- **Please be aware that once your absent days are depleted, it is the parent(s) responsibility to pay for the absent days not covered by TBDSSAB.**
- If you are aware of any upcoming appointments or if you are going on holidays, a Change of Schedule Form **must** be submitted **2 weeks** prior to the change. If two weeks written notice is given (A Request for Change of Schedule is submitted) we will mark this on the Attendance submitted to TBDSSAB and you will not lose any absent days for the requested time off. Failure to hand in a Change of Schedule Form **will** result in the loss of absent days. As a non-profit organization, we must

be sure that programs are as full as possible every day in order to be financially sound. Giving us ample notice will ensure that you do not pay for days of care that you did not use and ensures that we have a chance to offer that spot to another client.

- For any changes to your child's schedule, please contact the TBDSSAB office as they must approve any change you wish to make after you have discussed this with the Supervisor.
- A "SUMMER SCHEDULE" will be handed out in April or May of every year. This **is** a contract and **must** be filled out and handed in on the date specified by the Supervisor. We understand that some parents/guardians may not know when they will be booking their holidays when the Summer Schedule is due.

ALL CLIENTS

Contracts

Your contract must be signed before your child begins at Little Lions. Please read the contract carefully or discuss it with the Supervisor to ensure that you fully understand the terms. For any time off during the school year, September to June, written notice if required two weeks in advance. Even if your child is enrolled through the school year, a separate contract is required for Summer Care. Because of our need to ensure staff shifts for the summer, we do not allow changes to the schedule therefore the two weeks' notice does not apply in July and August. You must pay according to the schedule you provide. Extra days may be accommodated if space and staffing allow.

Late Charges

Little Lions Child and Family Centre is licensed to care for your child/children until 5:30pm and that is when our employee shifts end. It is expected that parents/guardians pick up their child/children prior to that so we can remain in compliance with our license and employees can leave when their shift ends.

Any pick-up after 5:35pm will result in a late charge of \$30 per child that will automatically be applied to the child's account. The Site Supervisor will also notify the Chief Executive Officer who may reach out to the family if needed.

If parent/guardian is ten (10) minutes late without notifying the centre, they will be called. If they are unreachable the emergency contact would then be called.

In the instance that no contact has been made between the centre and the parent/guardian, or any emergency contact and 30 minutes have passed (after centre closure), the Site Supervisor, the Chief Executive Officer as well as CAS will be notified.

Little Lions Child and Family Centre understands that situations may arise that are out of your control (ie. traffic accident). With notification of these types of instances the late fee will not be applied however the Chief Executive Officer will still be notified.

Termination of Contract

Two week's written notice must be given to terminate your contract. If it is necessary to terminate due to a strike or lay-off, please speak directly to your child's site supervisor to make specific arrangements.

PROCEDURES FOR CHANGES:

Child's Schedule, Dates, and Times

Please provide any changes to your child's schedule including times and dates in writing to your Site Supervisor, knowing that two weeks written notice is required for time off. Please refer to the section on Invoice/Statement of Account to be sure that you give adequate notice for changes.

If the change is a minor one, for example, a change in pick-up time for the day, the site may be notified by phone, or you may inform the educator who receives your child in the morning.

Address and Phone Numbers

For your child's safety, changes must be submitted in writing and handed to your Site Supervisor as soon as possible after the change occurs.

Emergency Contact Numbers

Please inform the site of any change in writing and hand it to your Site Supervisor.

PARKING

For all locations: Drive slowly when approaching the parking area. Watch for children who may, in the excitement of arrival or departure, run suddenly to or from their parent's car. Please do not call your children from the parking lot. We do not want the children to leave the playground until you have entered the premises, and the educator has acknowledged your presence.

Thunder Bay has an idling by-law. We request that you respect that by-law and turn off the motor of your vehicle while it remains in the parking lot so that the toxic exhaust fumes do not drift over the playground. Idle Free Zone signs are posted at most sites.

Clarke Street: Parking spaces are located at the front of the building. We do not have permission for childcare clients to park in the Dairy Queen parking lot. Parking there puts you at risk of being towed away. Please read the signs very carefully if you park on the street to ensure that you comply with the city regulations.

Elsie MacGill	Parking for families is available in the main parking lot.
Claude E. Garton	Parking for families is available on the north side of the school in the main parking lot.
JSL	Parking for families is available in the front of the building in the designated parking lot.
Kingsway	Parking for families is available in the main parking lot.
McKellar School	Parking for families is available in the lot on the north side of the school.
McKenzie School	Parking for families is available on the south side of the school along Lakeshore Drive.
St. Margaret	Parking for families is available in the main parking lot beside kiss and go.
St. Paul	Parking for families is available in the lower parking lot adjacent to the childcare centre.
St. Pius X School	Parking for families is available in the visitor's parking lot at the front of the school.
Valley Central	There are spaces available on the north and west sides of the school.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If my child is ill, do I still have to pay:

Unfortunately, the answer is yes. When a child falls suddenly ill and misses a day (or days), the childcare centre has no opportunity to offer that spot to another family. We will also have staffed the program according to the number of children expected and still must pay our staff. We are a non-profit organization so you can be assured that this is not for the sake of a bigger profit; it is so that we remain financially viable. If we do not stay financially sound, your child's care could be at risk.

What if my child is sick from contact with children at the childcare centre? Do I still have to pay?

The answer is yes. Perhaps on occasion your child will pick up something at the centre. This is perfectly normal and is to be expected in any group care situation, especially when children are new to group care and have had limited exposure to common childhood sicknesses. There may also be times when it is your child who is the one who brings an illness to the centre. We hope that all parents/guardians will be tolerant and understanding, that there are times when this is unavoidable. But the bottom line is that the centre must charge for the day, regardless of whose fault it is. You may refer to the previous question for more explanation.

If I keep my child home for personal reasons or for an appointment or holiday, do I still have to pay?

Some childcare centres charge a set monthly amount with no discount for missed days. Instead, we have opted to give families a chance to lower their fees if they know in advance that they will miss a day. We have chosen to waive the fee if we are given two week's notice in writing, because, with adequate notice, we are able to either cut down our staff or can offer that spot to another family.

If I pay at the beginning of the month and then give you 2 weeks notice about a missed day, am I reimbursed?

The amount will not be reimbursed. Instead, you will get a credit which will apply to the next month's bill. Reimbursement would apply only if you gave 2 weeks notice.

May I request that my child NOT play outdoors when recovering from illness?

If your child is too ill to play outside, they should not attend the centre as

they have not yet fully recovered. They will recover more quickly if they get adequate rest at home before returning to a stimulating environment such as a centre. The centre must comply with government regulations regarding the ratio of staff to children. We cannot spare a staff member from the program to stay indoors with a child when the rest of the children are outdoors. We do not have extra staff on site to provide one-to-one care for a child who is unwell.

May I request that my child NOT nap?

Your child does not have to sleep but must have a quiet time. Many children who have given up naps at home will still fall asleep at the centre. That is often because they are more tired from the stimulation of a group care environment and the outside playtime. If your child falls asleep and you wish us to wake them up at a specific time, we will do so.

May I bring food from home if my child does not like what is on the menu?

We do not allow any food from home due to the risk to children with life-threatening allergies. Food from home is only allowed in the case of a child on a special diet who is restricted from eating what is provided at the centre.

May I drop in to visit my child during the day?

This is not recommended. Typically, children view your arrival at the centre as a sign that it is time to go home and there is often a reaction to your departure. If separation is difficult for your child in the morning, it will be at least as bad or worse later in the day. It is not advisable to put your child through that stress twice in one day and it also is very disruptive to the rest of the program. If your reason for visiting is to see if your child is fine, you may instead call the centre. We will gladly ask the caregiver to give a reply or to speak to you directly if it is possible.

To whom do I direct any questions?

That depends on the nature of the question. Generally, questions regarding your child's daily participation and their program should be directed first to the program staff. Questions regarding centre programming, playground, or concerns about staff should be directed to the Supervisor.

Questions regarding policies or any concern that you feel has not been properly addressed at other levels should come directly to the Chief Executive Officer, as should any question that is particularly sensitive. At any time, if you are still unsure, feel free to call the office and ask your question. You will be directed to the appropriate person.

HOW TO READ YOUR MONTHLY INVOICE AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT

Invoice

The monthly invoice will provide you with specific information for the current month. This information will include:

- an invoice number located on the top right-hand corner of the page
- the date of the invoice
- your child's name and the site they attend
- your name and address
- the care code or program your child is attending
- the number of days billed for the current month
- a description of the program your child is attending. Please refer to the description if you are attending a full or extended day
- the cost per day
- And lastly, the total charge (amount due) for the month.

At the beginning of each month, you will receive an ***invoice***.

Please note that your invoice will show what you are being billed in the current month. ***It may also reflect any adjustment(s) to your prior month's invoice.***

Statement

A ***statement*** will be issued at the end of the month to reflect your account activity.

The monthly **statement** will provide you with specific information for your account with Little Lions. The top portion of your statement will provide you with the following information:

- the date of the statement
- your child's name and the site they attend
- your name and address

The body (middle) part of the statement will provide you with:

- a transaction date
- the invoice number
- transaction type
- the amount for the invoice
- any balances carried over from previous billings
- and the amount due

The bottom portion of the statement shows:

- the current amount billed to your account
- any overdue amounts from the previous 2 months (31-60)
- any overdue amounts from over 3 months (over 60)
- and lastly, the total balance due on your account

How to Recognize Any Adjustments Applied to Your Account

Please note that if there has been an adjustment applied to your previous month's invoice (last month's invoice) it will reflect in the body of the **statement**.

In the body of the statement the first line will show the previous month's invoice date, invoice number and the amount of the original charge. The second line will show any payments applied to the invoice (or account), and then the third line will show the amount still owing on the invoice. Below this information your current month's charges will appear.

On the bottom of the statement, you will see your current amount due, any balance owing from the previous 2 months (31-60) and any balance owing from prior 3 months and over (over 60). These 3 columns are added together which gives you the total balance owing on your account which appears on the bottom right-hand corner of the statement.

If the adjustment applied to your previous month's invoice was a credit to your account (you gave two weeks notice and had booked a day off) the balance on the third line will have a negative sign beside it (-). The statement will subtract this credit amount and your balance owing on your statement will be less than the amount showing on your invoice.

