



Early Care & Learning Centre

Parent Handbook 2025/2026

1102 Davies St.
Nelson, BC V1L 3V2
250-354-4673

Welcome!

We look forward to working with you to provide a quality program for your child in a safe and caring environment.

Please take the time to read this document in full. It explains the policies and procedures of our centre so that you know what to expect. Within our online registration forms you will be signing to the fact that you have read and understood this document prior to your child attending the centre.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please bring them to the attention of the centre staff. Your feedback is important to us!

We'd like to acknowledge, with gratitude, that our childcare centre is located on the 'tum xula7xw' traditional territory of the 'sn??ay?ckstx' the Sinixt People. As uninvited guests, we honour their ongoing presence on this land. We recognize that the Sinixt Arrow Lakes, Sylix, Ktuxana, and Yaqaan Nukij Lower Kootenay Band peoples are also connected with this land, as are Métis and many diverse Indigenous persons. We are committed to offering education to children that is honoring and respectful of these people and their connection to this land.

Our Vision

Kootenay Kids Society will be widely known as a dynamic, progressive community organization and employer dedicated to ensuring families in our communities, in all their uniqueness and diversity, receive the supports and services they need to thrive.

For an overview of all Kootenay Kids Society programs, services, updates and general society information please visit www.kootenaykids.ca.

Philosophy Statement

“In this space we are committed to being an environment of trust and collaboration. We welcome all people, hear all voices and acknowledge that we are one with the common world.”

This statement influences our daily living at ECLC. As a team, we cultivate a space where children and staff feel safe, welcome and therefore open to be themselves, explore and learn. We acknowledge that the environment in which we learn together influences how we feel and we strive to create a learning space that cultivates a feeling of wellbeing and belonging.

Our Beliefs

- All children deserve to be treated with respect
- Understanding that children are social beings who construct knowledge in collaboration with others, we encourage children to develop a respect for all of their peers regardless of size, age, race, social status, gender, culture, religion, language or ability.
- Guidance is an integral part of the child’s sense of security. Limits that are reasonable and are taught in a consistent, non-threatening manner will encourage the child’s sense of trust and security.
- Each child’s feelings and uniqueness should be respected and all guidance and discipline techniques will be followed through with care and respect.
- Parents are the biggest influence in a child’s life. A central focus of the care of children will be to develop, strengthen and maintain the child’s emotional attachment with the parent. The efforts made to care for each child will be sensitive to, and support the culture of the families served. The goal is for the staff to work in partnership with the family of each child.
- Children learn best through play and hands on experiences and therefore we focus our program on child inspired activities and continually observe and evaluate the environment to make changes to provide activities that enhance the children’s skills and interests.
- Through observation of each child and understanding that they are unique in personality, temperament, and developmental abilities we facilitate the development of communication including gesturing, sign language, and decision-making, problem solving and listening.
- A rich curriculum that meets the several developmental domains (social, emotional, physical, cognitive, language) is critical for quality learning experiences.

Our Values

Connection: It is vital for children to feel connected to their caregivers when they are away from their family. In an effort to cultivate wellbeing and belonging, ECLC staff are committed to getting to know you and your child(ren) as individuals. Each Educator is assigned key children. The Educator will focus their programming around the interests of their key children and will ensure that not only are your child's basic care needs fulfilled, but also document and share their learnings and development with you regularly.

Pedagogical Work: Each one of our Educators has the pleasure to work with a pedagogist from the BC Pedagogy Network. Each week, Educators are provided time out of the classroom to do research, have discussions and curate projects for their classrooms. We are not only growing children here at ECLC, but growing our Educators as well. Parents are encouraged to participate in classroom research.

Free Movement and Exploration: We believe in free movement and exploration, which means children are free to move, run, jump, climb and get messy. Children sit together for meals so that they can participate in the community act of sharing meals. Children are encouraged to explore materials and equipment freely throughout the day and are rarely limited in their study of the world around them.

Consent: A vital and large component of our work with children involves care. I.e: diapering, washing, feeding, dressing, comforting. Within these routines our team is committed to creating an environment of consensual participation. Before any act of care, children of all ages are allowed the opportunity to consent- or not. This happens verbally and non-verbally. "Can I wash your face for you, or do you want to do it?" In instances when an Educator must act for the safety/wellbeing of a child, informed consent is established through communication. I.e: "I am going to pull your pants down and then I will change your diaper and clean your vulva." In addition to these practices of consent, Educators use all correct language in regard to the human body. There is no 'slang' or 'cutesy' words for genitals etc.

This approach to care routines slows everything down and invites the child to participate every step of the way. Trust is established early when a child says "NO" and an adult respects it. These practices also help ensure the safe-guarding of the children when they are not in our care. You also won't hear the phrase, "Sharing is Caring," as forced sharing contradicts our philosophies around consent.

Communication: Through our Childcare App, we are able to share photos and stories as well as send quick updates and messages to parents/caregivers. It is important to us that parents are involved and aware of all the happenings within our programs. Snack and nap/diapering schedules are diligently documented on the classroom white boards for parents to reference at pick up time. You will also notice written documents and traces of research and development displayed on the walls of the classroom. Communication and collaboration with parents and caregivers enhances our curriculum and daily routines. We consider all families to be a part of our team and encourage families to spend time with us at pick up and drop off times to get to know everyone in our centre.

Inclusion: ECLC is committed to supporting all people to participate fully within our classrooms and society regardless of their abilities. People of all abilities have equal access to, and the supports needed to fully participate in our programming. Children of all abilities have equitable access to quality child care and are provided supportive opportunities to learn through play with other children in the program. All Educators work together as a team, alongside Supported Child Development Professionals and families to collectively meet the needs of all of the children, including children with support needs in their care. Whenever possible, flexibility in routines and expectations is maintained in order to establish well-being and belonging for children with diverse needs and abilities. Our centre strives to feel like a home where all children are welcome to live and play.

Truth & Reconciliation: ECLC is committed to providing a curriculum and learning space that is supportive of and celebratory of Indigenous languages and cultures. Local Elders and Indigenous workers are frequently invited into the centre to provide appropriate programming for the children and staff. This includes, but is not limited to: sharing of indigenous foods, songs, stories/books, sacred drumming.

The United Nations Declaration of The Rights of The Child

- The right to a name and nationality.
- The right to affection, love, and understanding and to material security.
- The right to adequate nutrition, housing, and medical services.
- The right to special care if handicapped; be it physically, mentally, or socially.
- The right to be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.
- The right to full opportunity of play and recreation and equal opportunity to free compulsory education, to enable the child to develop his individual abilities and to become a useful member of society.
- The right to develop his full potential in conditions of freedom and dignity.
- The right to be brought up in spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace, and universal brotherhood.
- The right to enjoy these rights regardless of race, colour, sex, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, and property, birth or other status.

Full list of all 54 UN Rights of the child accessible here: <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/children>

Fees & Financial Arrangements

Our facility is proud to be a \$10/day site. Childcare fees are capped at \$200/month (\$10/day) ECLC does not offer a half day fee schedule.

Fees are payable in advance.

The financial viability and continued operation of ECLC is dependent upon childcare fees being paid in full and on time.

Parents will receive an invoice for the upcoming month's fees on the first of every month. Payment is due within the first 5 business days of each month.

If outstanding fees are not paid by the last day of the current month, the child care space will be given to another family until the outstanding balance is paid or a repayment plan is agreed in writing with the Executive Director of the Kootenay Kids Society.

If the outstanding balance is not repaid or a repayment plan agreed in writing, after 45 days the child care space will be permanently forfeited and the account sent to a collection agency.

How to Pay

E-transfer is the preferred option for payment. Should you be interested in taking advantage of this payment method, through your financial institution (bank fees might apply), you will be required to set up Kootenay Kids as a recipient in the "**Send e-transfers**" window in your online banking.

To ensure that Kootenay Kids can deposit your payment, please set up the following details when **Adding a Recipient** in your online banking:

Name: Kootenay Kids Society Email: eclc@kootenaykids.ca

Send Transfer by: Email (For addition Information, contact KKS Finance at 250-352-6678)

NSF Cheque

If a cheque is returned for non-sufficient funds and therefore fees have not been paid on time a note will be placed on the parent's statement requesting the parent contact the Director of Childcare Programs to arrange payment or an action plan for payment. There will be a \$40.00 banking charge levied by Kootenay Kids Society on all NSF cheques.

Child Care Subsidies

Parents are responsible for applying and re-applying as necessary for the [Provincial Affordable Child Care Benefit](#).

The Provincial Affordable Child Care program may not cover 100% of childcare fees. Parents receiving subsidies are responsible for the portion of their childcare fees not covered by the benefit.

Assistance applying for subsidies is available at ECLC (please speak to the Director), or at the Child Care Resource and Referral office (312 Silica St., 250-352-0407)

Our Team

ECLC is staffed by a welcoming and diverse group of Licensed Early Childhood Educators who hold their first aid and clean criminal record checks. We pride ourselves in our attention to detail, deep relational connection to the children and families in our care and our high standards for quality early childhood education. We promote a working environment that fosters the growth and development of our educators' craft and celebrate and support one another as a team. An emphasis on self-care is encouraged and supported for all staff as the work we do is important- and hard! Curiosity and the ability to experiment and try new things is

celebrated amongst our team. We operate under an enhanced ratio for staffing as much as we can. Ratio for infant rooms is 1:4 and multiage is 1:8, however we often have extra staff beyond these ratios to ensure quality care is provided and all developmental needs are addressed.

Volunteers, Practicum Students, Substitutes (Casuals)

Substitutes are necessary to replace sick and vacationing regular staff. All of our substitutes are certified in Early Childhood Education or have Responsible Adult certification and provide extra supervision during excursions and outings. There will be at least one certified Early Childhood Educator in each classroom at all times. From time to time, we also have volunteers and practicum students involved in our program. All of the individuals have undergone criminal record checks prior to working in the centre. The regular staff will make every effort to introduce you to the substitutes, practicum students, and volunteers when you are dropping off/picking up your child. If they are busy, please do not hesitate to introduce yourself.

Board of Directors at Kootenay Kids Society

A governance model volunteer Board of Directors oversees the functioning of Kootenay Kids Society and the society's programs. The Board meets monthly to discuss current issues, reviews policies and procedures, oversees the Society's budgets and engages in Strategic Planning and goal setting for the organization. If you are interested in becoming a board member please phone our Executive Director at 250-352-6678 for information on how to get involved.

Policies & Procedures

Drop off and Pick up Times

ECLC is open Monday to Friday. Children may be dropped off any time after **7:45 am** If your child will be arriving late or will be absent for the day, please notify the centre director or leave a message in the Parent app. Children must be picked up by 5:00 pm. Parents are **REQUIRED** to sign their child in/out each day via the Parent App.

Late Pick-up

A fee equal to the cost of half an hour of staff wages including benefits, will be charged if I am beyond 5:00. If a parent is more than 15 minutes late to pick up their child, a fee of 1 full day will be charged. **Should extenuating circumstances arise beyond control that cause a parent to be late to pick up their child, the Director will have the discretion to waive the late fee.** If a parent/authorized individual fails to inform the centre one hour before centre closure that they will be delayed, the child may be released to their emergency contact. If no authorized person can be reached, the child/children will be released to the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The late pick-up fee(s) will be charged on the next invoice and shown separately. Esikidz timestamp of sign-out will be used to indicate actual pick up time.

Child Care Cancellation/Termination of Care

Parents are required to give one-month notice, **in writing**, if they wish to cancel days or terminate care. Parents are responsible for paying for care until the one-month notice has been honored.

Statutory Holidays and Other Closures

ECLC is closed for all statutory holidays. Parents will not be charged for these days.

In the event of a SD#8 school closure due to heavy snowfall, the childcare centre will also be closed. Centre Director will contact families via Childcare App and email to notify them as soon as possible of any unplanned closures.

In addition, the Centre will be closed for 3 to 4 professional development days per year. Parents will be informed of such closures at least 2 months in advance and will be required to pay regular fees on these days as it is to the benefit of your child that educators remain current and inspired in their field.

Once a month ECLC has early dismissal for Staff meeting/professional development.

A Yearly Closure Calendar is available in advance via the Parent App under Media & Documents (Updated every September)

Vacation

The parent will not be reimbursed for vacation. If the parent gives two months' notice regarding vacation time, the Centre will make every effort to find a child (from within the existing child care enrollment) for the term/portion of the vacation. If the Centre is successful, the parent will be credited 100% of the fee. If the Centre is unable to find a short term replacement, the parent is responsible to pay for the care space.

Sick Time

The parent will not be credited fees for any time that their child is sick. The parent is responsible to pay for the care space. If the parent expects their child to be away for a longer period of time due to critical illness or injury, the centre will make every effort to find a child to temporarily fill the space. However, if no replacement can be found, the parent is responsible to pay the fee for the space.

Absence

In the event of absenteeism, the parent is responsible for full payment of fees. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the Centre to advise of absences.

Childcare Software

ECLC uses a childcare software system called Esikidz. This is a B.C. based company and no documents are shared across international borders and all sensitive information meets FOIPA standards. Upon enrollment, parents and other caregivers can download the Parent App. Each family is given 1 account sign-in to share. On the app families can view/pay invoices, update

their child's file in real time, view other important updates for the programs. Parents are also able to view and send messages to their educators via this app. Parents are **required** to sign their child in/out each day via the Parent App with their unique signature. If a parent/caregiver does not have access to a smart phone, Educators will assist them to sign in/out with the staff IPAD.

Health Care & Safety Policy

Our goal is to implement and maintain high standards of hygiene so that the spread of illness is kept to a minimum. To this end we have a strict health policy that requires all ECLC families to follow diligently.

Health Precautions

All staff members follow universal precautions in order to prevent the transmission of germs and/or disease. Some examples are:

- Washing hands with soap and hot water before preparing food and after using washroom.
- Using gloves when encountering bodily fluids.
- Cleaning surfaces that have had contact with bodily fluids with Virox or Oxivir (accelerated hydrogen peroxide) solution or the approved dilution of bleach/water solution.
- Regular washing and disinfection of toys.

Wild Fire Smoke

It is not uncommon for our region to experience prolonged poor air quality due to wildfire smoke during the summer. Staff at ECLC will closely monitor the Air Quality Health Index Rating for our region using the AirVisual App and following IH Guidelines. Staff may choose to limit outdoor playtime to reduce smoke exposure. Alternate gross motor activities will be planned for indoors in lieu of.

When to Keep Your Child At Home

There are three important issues in determining when a child is too ill to attend. This requirement is based on:

- Protecting other children from communicable disease
- Ensuring the comfort and safety of the child who is ill, and
- The capacity of the program to care for a sick child (we cannot spare one staff to care for one child)

Do not send your child when they have any of the following conditions:

*Chicken Pox *Measles *Scabies *Discharge from the eye *Mumps *Strep Throat

*Head Lice or Nits *Parasite *Tuberculosis *Hepatitis *Pink Eye *Vomiting

*Impetigo *Rash *Whooping Cough *Ringworm *Rubella *Hand/Foot/Mouth

The following is an additional list of conditions for which you are asked to keep your child at home:

- Difficulty in breathing – wheezing
- Fever of 37.8 C (100 F) degrees or more in the previous 48hrs
- Infected skin or eyes, or an undiagnosed rash
- Diarrhea or vomiting in the last 48hrs
- Known or suspected communicable disease
- Parents are also required to keep a child at home if the child is not well enough to take part in any of the regular programs (outdoor play) and activities of the daycare.
- If your child cannot actively participate without symptom numbing medication (ie: cold medication)

When a Child becomes Ill at ECLC

A staff member will phone to ask you to come and pick up your child if they become ill. Your child will be made as comfortable as possible and closely supervised by staff. They may be isolated from other children to prevent the spread of any illness. If you are unavailable, we will contact the emergency contact person listed on the registration form. Please note that it is ultimately the staff's decision as to whether an ill child can remain in the centre.

If your child has been sent home ill during the day it is **expected that they will stay home the following day** to fully recover. If your child has been sent home due to vomiting or diarrhea, or fever it is **expected that they will stay at home for 48 hours** after the last episode.

Communicable Disease

If your child has a communicable disease, please inform staff. A note will be posted to inform other parents of the risks and symptoms associated with the disease. Before the child may return, parents must provide a physicians' note, including that the child is **free from symptoms and risks** associated with disease.

Medication Outside of Centre Hours

Please notify staff of any medication given to your child outside of childcare. If your child must be taken for emergency treatment, and you cannot be contacted, this information may be of critical importance.

Emergencies

Medical

- If **First Aid treatment** is required, staff qualified in First Aid will administer treatment.
- If **medical attention** is required, staff qualified in First Aid will attend to the needs of the child, while another person contacts the parent or, in the case that the parent cannot be reached, the child's emergency contact will be called. If neither the parent nor the child's emergency contact can be reached, staff will contact the child's doctor. If the doctor cannot be reached, arrangements will be made to transport the child to the medical facility.

A staff member will accompany the child for support, and give all known medical information to the doctor. Staff will continue to try to contact the child's parent/emergency contact.

- If emergency medical attention is required, qualified staff will administer First Aid while another person will call and request an ambulance and contact the child's parents or, if necessary, the child's emergency contact or doctor.

*For all of the above situations, staff will complete Accident/Illness reports or Incident reports (as applicable).

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

In an emergency situation, the children's well-being shall be the primary consideration. Staff members shall, to the best of their ability, take steps that may be reasonably required to provide the children with appropriate care and attention for the duration of the emergency or until children are transferred to the care of a parent, authorized alternative, or emergency personnel. It is impossible to predict the precise nature of an emergency or the appropriate emergency response. Staff members shall, to the best of their ability, consider all eventualities when preparing for emergencies.

Designated Safety Areas

- Evacuation Assembly point A – Located at LV Rogers Secondary School in the courtyard.
- Secondary assembly point – Hume Elementary School
- If neither area is deemed safe for evacuation, centre staff will escort children along View St. and down to the Nelson & District Community Complex.

Unauthorized Person on the Premises

All visitors to the centre, excluding parents/guardian of the children enrolled in the centre, must check in with the centre staff. For the safety and security of children and staff, visitors will not be permitted to wander around ECLC property. Any unauthorized persons will be asked to leave the premises. If necessary, staff will contact local police for assistance.

GUIDANCE

With regard to guidance, Kootenay Kids' goal is to encourage and assist children to develop positive relationships and strengthen social skills as well as emotional intelligence.

Guidance used in Kootenay Kids' programs shall be in accordance with BC Child Care Regulations.

"Preventative guidance" is the most important element of our program. All staff must use the following techniques in attempt to achieve the above goal;

- develop a respectful relationship with each child
- provide a warm, nurturing, secure atmosphere
- plan a balance of activities that are age appropriate
- reinforce appropriate behaviour
- develop classroom 'agreements' alongside the children to foster democracy within play

From time-to-time inappropriate behaviour will arise. Staff should deal with this by using positive, supportive and attachment theory techniques such as;

- using natural or logical consequences
- modeling - children learn through imitation
- diverting or changing children's activities
- acknowledging children's feelings and helping them to express them in an appropriate way

Any form of discipline that could harm a child in any way, physically or emotionally, is PROHIBITED in any Kootenay Kids' centre. Such forbidden disciplinary techniques include, but are not limited to:

- corporal punishment on the part of staff, a parent/guardian, or another child/group of children
- deliberate harsh or degrading measures that would humiliate a child or undermine a child's self respect
- locking child care facility exits for the purpose of confining a child
- using a locked room or structure to confine a child who has been withdrawn from other children
- denying a child basic needs such as food, clothing, bedding.
- We do not practice 'time outs.'

Discussion concerning child guidance is encouraged between parents and staff. Open communication is key to achieving the common goal of providing a stable and nurturing environment for the children.

Role of Staff in Physical Activity

- Encourage children to be physically active indoors and outdoors at appropriate times
- Provide 30-60 minutes of planned physical activities at least 2 times daily for children aged 3 and older.

- Provide outdoor spaces that support children to explore and experience the natural environment.
- Provide safety procedures and risk management strategies when implementing physical activity.
- Ensure that all rough and tumble and risky play is well supervised and all children involved are willing participants.

Active Play/Screen Time Policy

ECLC recognizes the importance of physical activity for young children. Implementation of appropriate physical activity practices supports the health and development of children in care, as well as assisting in establishing positive lifestyle habits for the future.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children in care are supported and encouraged to engage in active play, develop fundamental movement skills and to have limited screen time. Our centre encourages all children to participate in a range of daily physical activity opportunities that are appropriate for their age, that are fun and that offer variety.

Adequate physical activity promotes bone health, is protective against obesity and is beneficial for child social, psychological and fundamental movement skills development. Through active movement a child becomes stronger, coordinated and can explore the capabilities of their body. For babies, providing opportunities to move freely helps to develop their senses, promote good posture, strength and balance, and teaches them about their bodies and the world around them.

Fundamental movement skills are the building blocks for more complex and specialized skills that children need throughout their lives so they can competently and confidently play different games, sports and recreational activities. Fundamental movement skills include running, catching, jumping, kicking, galloping, leaping, hopping, dribbling a ball, side-stepping, striking a ball, underarm rolling and over arm throwing.

In order to promote physical activity and provide all children with numerous opportunities for physical activity throughout the day SKC will:

- Encourage a least restrictive, safe environment for infants and toddlers at all times.
- Provide a designated safe outdoor area for infants (ages 0-12 months) for daily outdoor play.
- Provide toddlers (ages 1 through 2 years old) with at least 60-90 minutes of daily outdoor active play opportunities across 2 or 3 separate occasions.
- Provide children (30 months to school age) with at least 90-120 minutes of daily outdoor active play opportunities across 2 or 3 separate occasions.
- Increase indoor active play time so the total amount of active play time remains the same, if weather limits outdoor time.
- Provide a variety of play materials (both indoor and outdoor) that promote physical activity.

Screen Time Limitations

- Not permit screen time (e.g., television, movies, video games and computers) for infants and children two years and younger.

- Only permit minimal use of screen time (ipad, computer, projector) to enhance a learning opportunity with visuals or with specific programming (e.g. Moe the Mouse – Speech/Language Program) for children 30 months to 5 years.

Physical Activity and Guidance

Staff members do not withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., not being permitted to play with the rest of the class or being kept from play time), except when a child's behaviour is dangerous to him/herself or others. Staff members never use physical activity or exercise as a consequence for unacceptable behaviour. Play time or other opportunities for physical activity are never withheld to enforce the completion of learning activities or academic work. Our centre uses appropriate alternate strategies as consequences for negative or undesirable behaviours. See Guidance Policy in Parent Handbook for more details.

Appropriate Dress for Physical Activity & Mess!

ECLC requires that all children come to the centre ready to play! Please bring your child ready to play and have fun each day. Your child will participate in both indoor and outdoor play. Therefore, play clothes and shoes which can get dirty and allow for free and safe movement are most appropriate. We expect parents to provide children with appropriate clothing for safe and active outdoor play during all seasons. For safety, open toed shoes, sandals or flip-flops are less desirable for everyday use and a definite no for field trips. In Winter please provide a warm jacket, snowsuit or snow pants, hat, waterproof mittens and winter boots. In Spring and Fall, provide a jacket or sweater as well as a rain jacket, pants and boots. In Summer, provide light clothing, swimsuit, towel, sun hat and sunscreen. Please label all outer garments with your child's name.

It is our expectation that children will go outside on at least two occasions EVERYDAY!! If you feel your child is too sick to go outside then they are too sick to be at the centre. We request that you keep him/her home until they are well enough to go outside.

Rough and Tumble/Risky Play

Here at ECLC, we believe in the value of exuberant, boisterous, rough and tumble play to a child's overall development. This vigorous body play allows children the opportunities to use language-both verbal and non-verbal, and learn how to negotiate, take turns, wait, and compromise, sometimes lead and sometimes hold back, and make and follow rules. They are learning about cause and effect and developing empathy. Big body play also supports optimum physical development because it is so vigorous. Since children enjoy it so much they tend to engage in it for an extended amount of time. This style of play incorporates a multitude of physical behaviours that range from running and chasing to tagging and wrestling. By definition, rough and tumble play is when children are willing do the following: Laugh, run, jump, tag, wrestle, chase and flee.

To support the use of big body play, we do the following:

- Provide training to all staff on the importance of big body play and how to supervise it.
- Prepare both indoor and outdoor environments for this style of play.

- Establish classroom and playground agreements with the children to keep them safe and help them know what to expect.
- Encourage staff to use big body games with the children.
- Supervise the play constantly, which means ensuring an adult is watching and listening at all times.
- Model appropriate play, coach children as they play so that they are able to interact comfortably with each other in this way.

Daily Schedule

ECLC will strive to provide a balance of structure and free play, of active and quiet time, and of indoor and outdoor play. We aim to maintain a balance of activities that enhance the development and joy of each child.

Lunch and Snack

Nutritious snacks will be sometimes be provided in the morning and/or afternoon. Parents are responsible for providing lunch and additional snacks for their child. We take into consideration any allergies and diet restrictions, as indicated on the child's registration form, when planning snack time. It is therefore critical that you keep that staff informed of any changes to your child's dietary limitations. **We are a Nut/Peanut free facility.** Please send food ready to eat, ie: grapes cut. Pack a thermos for warm food as we are unable to reheat food. Icepaks **are required** for each child's lunchbag. We employ the Division of Responsibility, as instructed by our Licensing Officer, which means that children can decide which foods from their lunch and how much of their lunch they eat at any given time. Staff will not 'police' eating times; however, will encourage and model what a healthy relationship with food is.

Outdoor Play

We take all children outside to play daily in all types of weather. Please pack and **LABEL** clothing for your child that is appropriate for the weather. In the winter they should have suitable warm outerwear including boots, snow pants, hat, and mittens. In the spring, summer and fall your child will need a hat and sunscreen or raingear, bathing suit. In warmer months sunscreen must be applied before or at drop off by a parent. ECLC reapplies sunscreen every 2 hours as needed.

Sleep/Rest Time

Most children find a full and busy day at ECLC a lot more exhausting than a day at home and benefit from a short rest or sleep. If you find that the amount of time your child sleeps during the day interferes with sleep patterns at home, please let staff know. We will work together to limit their sleep during the day. Please inform staff of the regular going-to-sleep routines that you have. Bring that stuffy or special blanket if it makes going to sleep/ having quiet time easier. The only toys from home that we allow are ones meant for comfort/nap time. ECLC staff will uphold the rights of the child in regard to access to sleep and rest.

Field Trips and Walks

You will be asked to give written permission for your child to attend specific field trips more than 1km from the centre. A notice will be sent for you to sign prior to any planned field trip, informing you of the time and destination. All children will attend unless parents choose otherwise. For neighborhood walks within 1km, no additional permissions outside of

- Before each field trip, staff will visit the location to ensure the environment is both age appropriate and free from any safety hazards
- Emergency cards and first aid supplies are brought along on all excursions
- Extra caregivers accompany children on all excursions
- Parents are always invited to come along, but need to consult with Educators first.

Toileting

A staff person will accompany children during toileting. Staff will do their best to mirror potty training done at home; however will not use food/toy reward systems for successful training moments. Please ask to see ECLC's Underwear Readiness Policy when your child begins their toilet training. If you think your child is ready for underwear please ask a staff member for a copy of our Underwear Readiness Policy. (*Underwear Readiness Policy accessible via Parent App under Media & Documents*)

Toys from Home

ECLC does not allow toys from home. All materials within our centre have been carefully selected and curated for a unique learning experience. A stuffed animal, blanket or pillow from home for rest time is acceptable, but use will be limited to rest/nap time. Please be aware that we are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Any items brought at this time should be clearly marked with the child's name. We have a strict no battery operated toys at daycare rule.

Guns, toys with weapons, war toys and other toys of destruction are discouraged. Your child will be offered alternate ways to express feelings of aggression, such as discussion, equipment play, and activities. When culturally appropriate (example: play animal hunting) Educators may discuss the use of weaponry within this context with children.

Apprehension by the Ministry of Child & Family Services

In the event that the Ministry should come to apprehend a child, staff members do not have the power to intervene.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report any incidents of suspected abuse and/or neglect to the Ministry for Children and Family or the RCMP.

Suspicion of Abuse/Neglect in Centre

ECLC strives to offer quality childcare. If at anytime you have concerns about our programs please contact the Senior Supervisors of your child's program or the Director.

Appropriate Language and Behaviour

As this is a community-based organization that services young children, all adults coming into the centre must use appropriate language and behaviour. Threatening behaviour by a parent or visitor will necessitate notifying the police. Kootenay Kids Society does not support coercive discipline (e.g. spanking, hitting) and parents will not be permitted to do so at the centre.

ECLC staff also work hard to use positive language in regard to children and who they are. While on site we discourage families from describing their own children and other children as bossy/manipulative/bullies etc. We believe in the power of words to both harm and help children's self-worth and self esteem. Parents, staff and visitors are required to be mindful of their image of the child and the power of how they choose to speak to and about children and themselves. ECLC also models correct terminology for the human anatomy and does not use 'cutesy' terms for body parts etc.

Release of Child

Authorized Persons

Children will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the child's registration form as an authorized person. Staff will also not release a child to anyone who is under 12 years of age.

You are responsible for providing written notification if there is a change in pick up arrangements. If an emergency arises during the day, and someone else must pick up your child, you are required to telephone the centre and speak with a staff member. If the person is unfamiliar to staff, you will have to provide us with the person's name, address, phone number and a physical description. The person will be required to show photo identification before staff will release the child.

Alleged Impaired Pick Up

Upon suspicion that an adult who is picking up a child from our care is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, or is otherwise unable to protect the child, staff members are obligated to request that the individual does not leave the premise with their child. The staff may call an alternate adult to pick up the child as recommended by the parent. If the adult insists on leaving with the child by vehicle, the staff will notify the local police and inform them of the license plate number, direction that the adult has gone, and the address of the family. The Ministry for Children and Family Development will also be notified if staff feels the pick up person is unable to protect the child.

Custody

If a custodial parent does not want a non-custodial parent to have access to their child at the centre, we must have a copy of the custody papers and court orders on file. If a parent who is unauthorized, as outlined on the custody papers, arrives at the child care facility, staff will ask him or her to leave and, if necessary, telephone the police for assistance.

Smoking

The centre fenced grounds and parking lot are non-smoking areas. Parents are asked to extinguish cigarettes before entering the grounds. This includes vaping as well.

Parking

Please be aware that there will be a number of vehicles using the parking lots at the college. Please drive with extra caution. There are designated reserved spots marked with signage for parent pickup/drop-off. If you notice that the walkways or the parking lot require attention/maintenance please inform a staff member. We also ask that all vehicles are not left to idle in the parking lot.

Program Evaluation

We are always striving to improve our programs. Parent feedback is essential to providing service that meets family and community needs. In addition to providing us with on-going feedback, we would appreciate your assistance by taking the time to complete our annual program evaluation questionnaire. We'll let you know when the time comes!

Thank you for taking the time to review this handbook. We are excited to have you as a part of our Kootenay Kids Community. If you, after reading this Parent Handbook or the SKC Registration Forms, have any questions or concerns, please bring them to our attention. Please keep a copy of all forms for your files

Sincerely, The Early Care & Learning Centre Educators

Supply List

The following is a list of items that you will need to provide for your child while they attend ECLC.

- Weather appropriate footwear- sandals, rain boots, snow boots.
- Weather appropriate outerwear- rain jacket/onesie/rain pants, sweater, snow jacket/pants, sun hat or snow hat.
- At least 2 changes of clothing including socks.
- A blanket/sleep sack or comfort item to be only used during rest/nap time.
- Indoor shoes or slippers
- A water bottle or sippy cup to store at daycare for daily use. Bottles and milk can be stored in our refrigerator if needed.
- Please provide your child a nutritious lunch and snacks. Please pre-warm lunches and pack them in a thermos as we are unable to reheat children's lunches. Please ensure food is brought ready to eat, ie: grapes sliced to prevent choking etc. We are a nut free facility.
- A large ice pack for your child's lunch as lunches are not stored in the refrigerator.
- A surplus of diapers/pull ups to be stored at daycare- Cloth diapers are OK as long as a proper wet bag is provided and is retrieved daily.
- A family photo
- A bottle of sunscreen lotion- (no aerosols please) *Applicable only in Summer.*

Our staff will notify you if you are running low on any supplies, or if your child needs a replacement item due to growth or wear/tear. Please label your child's belongings as best you can. All items that come to daycare are subject to messy play including paint, mud etc. It is important that when possible, clothing that is worn to daycare supports your child's independence. Please choose items that are easier for them to learn how to take on/off themselves as well as provide ease of care for diaper changes.

Additional Information for Families

Government Assisted Childcare Programs for Families

- Supported Child Care: Depending on the family's financial situation, funding may be available for children with developmental delays through the Supported Childcare Program. The Ministry may provide extra and/or specialized staff in order to accommodate the needs of all children in care. Children who require extra supports will participate fully in the regular program, with additional support as required. All staff work directly with these children so as to promote inclusion, not segregation.
- Child Care Subsidy: You can call 1 866 866-0800 to find out if you are eligible for Child Care Subsidy for preschool or child care services.
http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/subsidy_promo.htm

Other Kootenay Kids Programs

312Silica Street, Phone: 250 352-6678

- Pregnancy Outreach and Community Action Program for Children: assists pregnant women to have healthier babies. The program offers extra free food and vitamins, individual support and a weekly meeting with a free lunch.
- Life After Birth: assisting parents to make the transition to parenthood during the first year, offering one to one phone contact, one to one help and breast feeding support, weekly mothers drop-in group, home support right after birth and a post-partum adjustment support groups.
- Parent support and education : We offer on going support and education for families of children 0-6 who have questions about; their children’s behaviour and development, parenting and discipline, relationships and coping.
- Indigenous Family Support Program: offers drop-in group for Indigenous children and parents including traditional teachings, drumming, crafts, and snacks. The program aims to promote healthy babies and preschoolers and is a wonderful opportunity for Indigenous families to connect.
- Child Care Resource and Referral: training opportunities for care providers and parents, childcare referrals, tips on choosing quality child care, playgroups, resource library and networking opportunities. Services available out of town by outreach van.
- Pediatric Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy, located #206-625 Front Street: Providing services to children from birth to six years of age where there are concerns regarding physical, sensory, behavioural, and/or cognitive development. Referrals can be from any source with parents consent. Phone 250-505-1171 Fax: 250-505-1172.
- Nelson Outreach Strong Start programs: an early learning, free drop-in program for preschool children 05 years and their parents or caregivers. Offered throughout the school calendar year. For schedules & locations go to www.kootenaykids.ca or phone 250-352-6678.

Other Resources

- Interior Health Authority: for information on Public Health, Licensing, Adult Mental Health, Early Hearing, Speech and Language Pathologists, Nutritionists, Children’s Dental Health, Environmental Health phone 250-505-7200.
- Ministry of Children and Family Development: for information on Social Workers, Child Mental Health and Child Protection phone 250-354-6480.
- Advocacy for Early Childhood Educators: Early Childhood Educators of BC, Ph: (604) 709-6063, office.admin@ecebc.ca www.10aday.ca