



FAIRFIELD GONZALES
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

the place to connect

Parent/Guardian Handbook

Camas Early Years Centre

2.5 – 5 years

Fairfield Gonzales Community Association



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Our neighbourhood of Fairfield Gonzales is located on the traditional, unceded (never surrendered) territories of the Lkwungen (Songhees) peoples. Recognizing the violence of this colonialism is a first step toward healing individuals & communities and is a critical part of demonstrating respect for the Indigenous peoples of British Columbia, the traditional stewards of this land. Our Centre acknowledges this is a current, active state requiring thought, respect and participation, rather than a token note of past history.

WELCOME

Welcome to the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association's (FGCA) Camas Early Years Centre. We are excited that you will be joining us and look forward to creating positive relationships with you and your child. Please familiarize yourself with the information contained in this handbook as it introduces our childcare programs and philosophies.

The flowering camas lily has a star-like, periwinkle bud and grows 60cm tall. The Coast Salish peoples have harvested the onion-like bulbs and steamed them in pits. When the bulbs cook, they develop a healthy sugar called 'inulin'. Cooked camas bulbs are said to taste a bit like baked pears and can be eaten whole or dried and pounded into a flour. Harvesting was a seasonal social and cultural activity and a time of reunion. Camas flowers represent the little humans who root us in our community.

EXECUTIVE TEAM'S NOTE

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Camas Early Years Centre management we warmly welcome you and your family to our Early Years program. All of us are dedicated to nurturing exploration, individuality and creativity and we look forward to fostering healthy relationships, building strong community and creating happy memories.

CONTACT INFORMATION

CAMAS EARLY YEARS CENTRE

Lead Educator

Tel: 778 533 6325 (program cell phone)

Email: camas@fairfieldcommunity.ca

EARLY YEARS COORDINATOR

Debbie Banerjee

Tel: 250-382-4604 ext. 103

Email: eyc@fairfieldcommunity.ca

CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kristina Wilcox

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FAIRFIELD COMMUNITY PLACE

Tel: 250-382-4604

Fax: 1-250-382-4613

Email: place@fairfieldcommunity.ca

Website: www.fairfieldcommunity.ca

CAMAS EARLY YEARS CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

The principles of the [Early Learning Framework](#) guide our practice at Camas. We believe that relationships are the foundation of our work; this includes connections with the children, families, educators, and the land on which we learn.

Through these relationships, the children at Camas will feel safe, secure, and supported. We strive to meet the needs and interests of each individual child while creating a unique community of creative and curious learners (children, families, and educators).

Camas is an outdoor-focused program. We will spend as much time as possible outside and encourage the children to observe, experiment, and explore their environment. We believe that the outdoor environment provides unique learning opportunities and nurtures us in a way that no other environment can. We see the environment as the “third teacher” and believe that environments contribute to our well being. We carefully consider inside and outside spaces, the materials within these spaces, and the rhythms and flows when co-creating our days with the children. Throughout the day, there will be opportunities for climbing, music, stories, sensory play, dancing, art materials, and messy play both indoors and outdoors. You can expect your child to get dirty!

We recognize that family is the most important educator in a child’s life and we strive to work empathetically with all families and honour the diversity of the families that we serve. We want to continually learn about and improve how we create belonging and community within our program.

The Camas program is inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy where children and educators collaborate on learning together through play. These learning experiences are made visible through narrations and other documentation. Our play space is creative and collaborative and the environment is thoughtfully crafted to support the emerging interests of the children.

Camas is an inclusive space that welcomes all children; all members of our community benefit when we include everyone.

OUR EDUCATORS

Camas is staffed with three full-time educators and one part-time educator.

Our dedicated educators possess a wide range of skills, interest, and education, and are required to meet the following FGCA and VIHA licensing standards:

- Appropriate certification and documentation (E.C.E license and/or E.C.E. Assistant documentation)
- Standard First Aid and CPR C
- Criminal Record Check and three character references

As a large employer, the FGCA is fortunate to be well-resourced for backfilling absent regular staff. We make attempts to ensure the same faces are appearing in program; however, it is important to note that this is not always feasible. As individuals are added to our sub list, we will provide a brief description and photo of the individual via email. If an individual is subbing, their bio and photo will be posted in the program space the day of.

All staff are required to spend a minimum of two full days of shadow-training in program before they are scheduled as an in-ratio educator.

As well, we welcome students from various Early Childhood Education programs to complete their required practicum experiences with us. Our staff supervises the students at all times while in the program. All students are required to have a clear Criminal Record Check before participating in our program.

ATTENDANCE

Camas Early Years Program is a full-day, Monday-Friday program. Part-time spaces are not available at this time. We believe children benefit most from consistency and regularity. The running of a childcare program is like a well-oiled machine and inconsistency creates chaos and disruption to all participants. Therefore, the following is required:

1. A minimum, regular attendance of four days per week
2. Communication with the program is required should your child be arriving late (**after 9:30am**) or being picked up early (**before 3:30pm**)

If your child is not regularly attending program and we feel that the program is not being utilized for its full-time availability, management will take the following steps:

- 1) Bring it to your attention in an informal way (email, phone call, check-in at pick-up/drop-off)
- 2) A formal notice will be provided outlining expectations for attendance
- 3) Termination care

Absentees (when your child will not be attending our program)

If your child will be absent from program, please phone or text the program cell phone by no later than **9:00am** on the day of. Parents should leave a detailed message stating your name, your child's name, your child's program space and the date of absence. If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please email the Lead Educator (camas@fairfieldcommunity.ca) with the appropriate details (child's name, dates absent).

If you are running late (**after 9:00am**), notice of the group's whereabouts will be posted in the program space. Alternatively, you can call the program phone (778-533-6903) ahead of time and we can inform you of our whereabouts. We are often at either Porter Park (the truck park) or at Waterworks.

PROGRAM CLOSURES

**Please speak to the Lead Educator for a list of exact closure dates!*

Professional Development closures:

The FGCA is committed to quality care for families; to offer this care we need time devoted to active learning by way of staff meetings and professional development opportunities. For us, this conveys the importance we place on thinking about growing, our program, and your children.

Camas closes **5** days per year for full-day professional development and has **7** early pick-up days per year. Our 'year' runs September- August.

Holiday Closures:

Camas is closed for one week for winter break, one week in the spring, and one week in the summer (three weeks per year). These week closures typically coincide with Christmas/New Year's, the second week of the SD61 Spring Break, and the British Columbia Day long weekend.

Camas is closed on all statutory holidays. FGCA observes the following STATUTORY holidays:

New Year's Day	Canada Day	Remembrance Day
Good Friday	BC Day	Christmas Day
Easter Monday	Labour Day	Boxing Day
Victoria Day	Thanksgiving Day	Family Day
National Day for Truth & Reconciliation		

PROGRAM DETAILS

Days of care: Monday-Friday

Hours: 8am-5:30pm

Location: 1330 Fairfield Road (portable behind main building)

What to Bring

Please make sure that all clothing and personal items are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Change of clothes: Please bring two changes of clothing (top, pants, underwear, and socks) in a labeled large ziplock bag when your child starts with us.

Waterproof bag: Please include a waterproof bag in your child's pack. We will use this to send wet and soiled clothing home.

Food: Lunch and snacks need to be sent each day (no lunch required on Fridays). Please send a water bottle (these will be kept at the centre and washed and sanitized daily).

Outside wear: Items required throughout the year: rain and winter coat with a hood, rain and winter boots, muddy buddies (rain pants or suit), hat and mittens. We will have extra muddy buddies and spare warm clothing for each child in our program should personal clothing get too soiled or wet.

Bedding: A child-sized blanket and/or sleep sack, any personal items needed to rest (i.e. stuffed animal or special blanket), and a pacifier (x2) if required.

Sunscreen: Please provide sunscreen for your child. Camas will keep some hypoallergenic, tear-free and child-friendly sunscreen at the centre which can be used should your child run out.

Diapers **if your child is not yet toileting independently:* We ask that families provide at least one week's worth of diapers at a time on an ongoing basis. Often families find it convenient to bring their supply once a week and/or large bulk quantities to store in our diaper change area. When your child is getting low on diapers, you will receive a text requesting more.

Wipes **if your child is not yet toileting independently:* Please send your child with a week's supply of wipes at a time. If your child runs out of wipes while in program, Camas will provide hypoallergenic wipes.

Diaper cream **if your child is not yet toileting independently:* Please provide a cream to be administered to your child should they develop a rash. This will be applied if the area looks inflamed and irritated after a diaper change.

**Other times may be added to this list at the Lead Educator's discretion*

Food and Drink

A daily snack is provided each day and lunch on Fridays. In addition to this snack, it is expected that every day your child will be sent with:

- a full lunch (Mon-Thurs only)
- snacks
- a water bottle

**** IMPORTANT:** all food must be pre-cut into appropriate and manageable serving sizes before packing them into your child's lunch bag/container.

We promote healthy eating and nutritional habits. We recognize that families have childrens' best interests at heart, and we do not set limits around what order a child consumes their own lunch. We respect a family's decision of what to pack for lunch and we respect a child's decision of what to eat. We take a holistic approach to healthy eating by sitting to eat lunch together, by eating until we are full, and by giving thanks to the food that sustains us.

The children decide when they want a snack throughout the day as they learn to listen to their bodies' needs. Snacks and lunch may be eaten inside or outside depending on the flow of the day. We have a microwave available for heating food, and a bottle warmer.

If your child has a food allergy, we will work with your family to ensure your child is as safe as possible while in our program and will develop a specific care plan. In the case of a severe nut allergy, Camas will adapt to fit the needs of the children in our care and a notification will be sent home to families.

Quiet/naptime

Quiet time is between 12:30pm and 2:30pm (give or take 30min) every day. Children who nap will be provided with their own cot and cot cover. Parents are asked to send their own bedding (blanket & pillow) and any personal items needed to rest. Please label these items.

During rest time, educators aim to make children comfortable and to establish a peaceful environment. Educators practice responsive care and attend to children to meet their individual needs during naptime. Responsive care during nap time might include rubbing a child's back, stroking a child's head, or quietly whispering to comfort a child and to assure them that they are safe and able to relax. During naptime the curtains are closed, the lights are off, and quiet music plays to create an environment that is calm. The children are never left unattended during rest time. Any children who are sleeping are left until they awake or are woken up by the staff around 3:00pm, unless otherwise instructed by the parent/guardian.

We do not force the children to sleep. We feel that if a child needs to sleep, they will fall asleep naturally.

Children who do not nap will be expected to rest quietly on their cot for no more than 45 minutes. Educators will provide books and quiet toys for the nap time. At approximately 1:15pm, those children who do not need a nap will be moved into another room or taken outside to play.

Educators will adjust to the group's napping needs and there may be times when the group splits and there might be one educator left in the space with the napping children.

Outdoor Play

We go outside every day for approximately two to six hours; therefore, it is essential that you dress your child appropriately for all kinds of weather (see 'What to Bring' for more details). If extreme weather is a factor, we will endeavour to be outside but time may be limited to 25-45 minutes. If outdoor play is not an option, indoor active play will take place for the same duration of time. Our primary play areas are non-fenced outdoor spaces: Porter Park (truck park), Teeter Totter Park, Waterworks, school rock area & the front of the school (climbing wall).

Active Play

The Camas Early Years program ensures children are engaging in active physical play for approximately 3.5-4.5 hours per day. During this time children will engage in un-facilitated and facilitated play. Educators utilize this time to encourage fundamental movement patterns, practice skills for injury prevention and promote physical literacy.

Daily Schedule and Routine (subject to change with the flow of the day and children's needs)

Educator shift times

Opening shift: 7:30am-4:00pm

Middle shift: 8:30am-5:00pm

Late shift: 9:30am-6:00pm

General routine

8:00am: Camas opens. Admittance before 8:00am is strictly prohibited

9:30-12:00pm: Outside play; morning snack is offered

12:00-12:30pm: Lunch

**If weather permits, children will stay outside to eat lunch

12:30pm-2:30/3:00pm: Quiet/naptime

*1:15-2:30pm: Non-napping children partake in alternative activity

2:30/3-3:30pm: Afternoon snack is offered
3:30-5:00pm: Outside play
5:00-5:30pm: Indoor play
5:30pm: Camas closes

Gradual Entry

We want to create a positive transition experience for your child and we believe that a gradual entry process will facilitate this. As this may be one of the first experiences your child has away from their home, it is essential to familiarize your child gradually with care. We believe it is best to slowly increase the time your child spends away from you in the centre to allow your child to build secure relationships with us.

We also want you to feel comfortable leaving your child with us. A gradual entry allows you to have the time to observe our program, get familiar with our spaces and routines, and ask any questions that may arise over time.

The following is an example of what gradual entry might look like. We will work with each family to design a process that best meets their needs. This gradual entry happens typically one to two weeks *before* the child's first week of care.

For children new to our program:

Day 1-Joint visit (approx. 1 hour)

Arrive together and play in the indoor/outdoor space for up to an hour. Parents and educator will go over an orientation to the program. Parent does not leave.

Day 2-Joint & independent visit (approx. 1 hour)

Arrive together in the morning and stay together in the indoor/outdoor play space for an hour. Parent/guardian will say goodbye and leave for up to one hour.

Day 3-Joint & independent visit (approx. 3 hours)

Arrive together in the morning and stay together in the indoor/outdoor space for up to a half an hour. Parent leaves for two to three hours. Child will have open snack with peers and may transition to another program space.

Day 4-Independent visit (half day)

Parent and child arrive together in the morning. Parent stays for 15 minutes to settle child and then leaves. Child will have snack and may transition to a different play space. Early pick up at 3:00pm

Day 5-Independent visit

Parent and child arrive together around 9:00am and child can stay for a full or shorter day. Pick-up will be around 4:00pm

*****PLEASE NOTE:*** For children who may be transitioning from Huckleberry Infant-Toddler Centre to Camas, the gradual entry process will look different. The lead educators will provide a detailed plan.

Gradual entry may be extended if the staff feels that the child needs more time to be comfortable with the program.

Planned Outings/Offsite Trips

We are committed to including children as active and engaged members of the community. As such, we plan trips in the community to expand upon the children's interests, or to include children in appropriate community initiatives. On such occasions, we will communicate our intentions to families via email in advance of an outing. A minimum of 24 hours' notice (for larger trips, two weeks' advance notice) will be provided and will inform you of the time, destination, route, safety plans, and details of the trip. Some examples of out trips include a visit to the art gallery or government house and exploring local beaches.

FGCA programs utilize public transit for excursions outside of a walking distance.

If you are running late on an out trip day, please be prepared to meet us at our destination or en-route. We always invite families, or extended family members, to join us on these excursions.

Screen/Phone Use

Unless there is an identified need, electronics from home are not permitted in program. Educators use a program cell phone to communicate with families as required, take photographs to share with families and for pedagogical narrations, and to communicate with administration as required. We will discuss this with each family; this is not a requirement to participate in our program. We will also use our program cell phone to play music in the program. This phone is separate from personal use and is securely stored.

On occasion, the program will gather together to watch a movie. Movies are limited to a maximum of one every three-months, but rarely happen.

Diapering

Parents provide all supplies needed for diapering. Please send enough for each week. All diaper creams should be in their original containers and a signed permission to administer form is required.

We encourage children to be active participants in their diapering routine. Children are supported to climb stairs to the change table (with educator assistance), find their own diapers and wash their hands thoroughly. Individual ability and awareness is respected. Our approach is relaxed and unhurried and we encourage the children to participate as they are able.

Toilet Learning

Because toilet learning is a major learning experience that occurs when the child is in a full-day child program, our facility should be recognized by providers and parents as a place where toilet learning is guided. Should your child enter program when they are not able to toilet independently, educators will work with families to develop a plan for toileting.

The initiation of toilet learning should always be based on the child's developmental level rather than on the child's age. Initiating toilet learning before the child is developmentally ready can create stress and anxiety for the child and the family, and increase the length of time it takes to train the child.

It is important for the child to begin toilet learning when he/she exhibits signs of interest and readiness. Educators can recognize the signs of readiness by understanding certain cues. Readiness cues include the following:

- The child can express interest in toilet learning
- The child can communicate his/her need to eliminate (urinate/defecate)
- The child is able to pull clothes up and down (on and off)

If you are interested in learning more about independent toileting please speak to the Lead Educator.

COMMUNICATION

We use email communication and will contact you with the email address you provided on the registration form. Important information is sent out via email so please ensure the email you have provided is accessible at all times, even during holiday breaks. If this is not possible, please provide your preferred method of communication.

We will assume that you have received and read our email unless it bounces back as undeliverable. If this occurs, we will notify you by phone.

Emails include: monthly newsletters, billing notifications, and relevant program information. It is the parents' responsibility to:

- Provide accurate contact information
- Read monthly communications
- Inform themselves of important program related information
- Notify the FGCA if your personal contact information changes during the year

Educators will connect with you about any important information relating to your child and their day at pick up and drop off times. If there is ever a need for a longer conversation, the Lead Educator will contact you to set up a separate meeting time. Also, feel free to request a meeting at any time should any concerns or questions arise.

For daily reminders and diaper or clothing restock requests, the educators communicate through texts via the program cell phone. Parents can also communicate any absence and varying pick-up and drop-off times via text as well.

REGISTRATION & FEES

Registration Fees

Camas Early Years Centre is a \$10 A Day ChildCareBC Centre!

Ages: 2.5-5 years

\$200.00/month

- Fees are subject to our participation in the Provincial Government's \$10 A Day ChildCareBC funding agreement. Should this program discontinue, fees will be adjusted.
- As a [\\$10 A Day Childcare Program](#) we are required to provide the Province a limited personal information about the enrolled children for the purposes of determining and auditing the provision of funding under the Program.

Registration Requirements

- Registration package, including:
 - Registration forms
 - Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) form
 - Immunization records
 - Up-to-date colour photo of your child
 - Custody agreement & care plan, if applicable

** Please refer to the Guide to Registration for more details.*

Payment Requirements

Program financials are managed by the Early Years Coordinator and Office Manager. We use email communication to communicate fee changes. Important information is sent out via email; therefore, please ensure the email provided is accessible at all times, even during holiday breaks. If this is not possible, please provide your preferred method of communication.

Fees are due on the **first business day** of each month and are paid by direct withdrawal.

- Withdrawals will appear on your statement as 'Fairfield Community Association or FCA'
- A completed Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) authorization form must be provided prior to your first day of care
- For families wishing to have more than one benefactor (payee) please complete two separate PAD forms
- A VOID cheque must be attached to the PAD agreement. If you are unable to attach a VOID cheque please ensure the financial information is entered correctly. Failure to provide correct information will result in a charge of \$15.00

Here at the FGCA we recognize that there are a number of situations that can cause financial strain. If you need to arrange alternate payment arrangements, please contact the Childcare Coordinator.

Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB/Subsidy)

As a licensed child care centre, we are eligible to accept the provincial [Affordable Child Care Benefit](#) for eligible enrolled children. The following are expectations that our program has for families utilizing child care subsidy:

1. Parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for all fees as registrants in our program

2. Parents will be responsible for fee payments until subsidy authorization has been received by our program
3. Parents are responsible for paying any parent portion remaining after the deduction of subsidy from the program fees
4. Parents are responsible for renewing subsidy

Pre-completed arrangement forms are available at the centre or can be completed & submitted online. Please contact the Early Years Coordinator for a copy of these forms or if you need assistance with the application process. The Child Care Resource and Referral Centre (250-382-7000) is also a great resource.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you are experiencing financial hardship and are unable to access the Affordable Child Care Benefit in a timely manner, please contact us. We are always happy to work with families to remove barriers to accessing care.

Split Family Payments

We require written paperwork indicating the agreement plan outlined by separated or split families. Both parents/guardians are required to fill out the documentation and paperwork to ensure that information is shared. If you have **joint custody** of your child, we expect payments, pick-up persons, and penalty fees to be provided from the parent who is listed first on the registration form; split payment information must be provided at the time of registration. If you have **sole custody** of your child(ren) we expect payments, pick up persons and penalty fees to be your sole responsibility. In the event that your child is unable to attend program due to your account being in arrears, we will notify both guardians.

Late Fee Payment Penalty

If your payment is not received by the first of the month, a late fee of \$5.00 per day will be charged. If payment is not received in full by the fifth of the month your child(ren) may not return until the account is paid in full.

NSF/Returned Payment Penalty

Should your direct debit payment or cheque be returned to our organization as NSF, we require re-payment. Charges will be applied to your account unless payment by cheque or cash is requested. Re-payment must be in the amount of the original fee plus the \$15.00 NSF penalty charge. Upon the FGCA receiving notification from our financial institution regarding NSF we will send a notification to you via email.

Withdrawal and Refund

Families must provide the FGCA's **Early Years Coordinator** with **one month's written notice, received by the first day of the preceding month** to de-register without penalty for care. Alternatively, you will be charged one month's fees in lieu of notice.

To confirm your intent to withdraw, a [de-registration confirmation form](#) must be completed and signed. Please contact the Early Years Coordinator (eyc@fairfieldcommunity.ca) to access this form.

Waitlist

If the centre is full, parents can register their child(ren) on the waiting list. The waitlist is by application only and is managed in the following way:

- Our waitlists close once we reach 40 applicants
 - o The waitlist is reviewed and updated two times a year (January & June). These are the best times to check in to see if the waitlist has re-opened if it is actively closed. All details will be on our website.
- If your family is offered a registered space on or after their desired start date (as indicated on the waitlist application form) and you decline the space, you will be removed from the waitlist. Requests to remain on the waitlist for a future date will be denied.

- Registration priorities:
 1. INTERNAL 1
 - i. A sibling of a child actively attending Huckleberry.
 2. FGCA STAFF children
 3. INTERNAL 2
 - i. A sibling of a child actively enrolled in Camas Early Years Centre.
 4. INTERNAL 3
 - i. A sibling of a child actively enrolled in Fairfield Out-of-School Care or Margaret Jenkins Out-of-School-Care.
 5. EXTERNAL
 - i. A family/child who does not fit into one of the above categories.

At the discretion of senior management, a child may be given priority registration due (but not limited to) financial hardship, economic status, or demonstrated need.

PICK-UP & DROP-OFF

Release of Care

Parents must sign their child in and out of program. Sign-in must include the time and initials and must be done in pen. Your child must be signed out by a responsible adult from the authorized pick-up list. Your child may never sign themselves out, walk home, or leave the premises without being signed out. At the Lead Educator's discretion the FGCA may facilitate play-dates for children; however, our staff will not provide contact information for children or call on behalf of children unless permission from all guardians is given.

Authorized Pick-up

Children may only be released to persons named on the child's registration and emergency form. Authorized pick-up contacts must be responsible adults who are of the legal age of 19. Staff will ask for photo ID and a local phone number.

If you wish to have an individual who is not listed on your registration package pick up your child, we require advanced **written** authorization by either completing 'additional contacts' form, by sending an email or leaving a note with the manager. Pick-up contacts must be responsible adults who are of the legal age 19. If a staff member does not recognize a pick-up person they will ask for photo ID.

If you wish to have more than three permanent pick-up persons please complete an 'additional contacts' form. Forms are available through your onsite manager.

Alleged Impaired Pick-up

The FGCA must take reasonable steps to prevent any person unable to provide care from gaining access to a child. If a staff member believes the child to be at risk, they will offer to call a taxi, relative, or friend to pick up the person and child. As required by law, the FGCA staff may call Child Protection Services and/or the police in the event that a child is taken off premises by an allegedly impaired person.

In the even that staff need to intervene with the pick-up of a child due to concerns with impairment, the FGCA is equipped with taxi vouchers, bus tickets, and extra car seats.

Late Pick-up

Staff will be required to treat every late pick up as if something serious may have happened. Please call ahead if you find yourself delayed. In the event of late pick-up you are required to pay the staff in attendance \$25.00 per quarter hour upon arrival. Staff onsite are not authorized to waive the fee. Three late pick ups will result in dismissal from the program.

If your child remains at the centre after programming ends (5:30pm) and we have not heard from you, we will take the following steps:

1. We will call you
2. We will call the emergency contact and authorized pick-up persons
3. If we are unable to reach a contact within half an hour, we will call the Ministry of Children and Family Development Emergency (MCFD)
4. The MCFD will take the child into their custody until a parent is located
5. A note will be left at the centre stating where your child may be picked up

Custody

We require, with registration, all legal documentation regarding custody and custody orders. The FGCA cannot withhold a child from a parent and will not intervene in custody issues. In the case that we have a copy of a custody order that is not being abided by we will contact all concerned parties. This may include phoning the police and/or the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

If a shared custody agreement exists, we require paperwork indicating the agreement plan outlined by separated or split families. Parents/guardians are required to fill out the documentation and paperwork to ensure that information is shared. If you have **joint custody** of your child, we expect payments, pick-up persons, and penalty fees to be provided from the parent who is listed first on the registration form; split payment information must be provided at the time of registration. If you have **sole custody** of your child we expect payments, pick-up persons,

and penalty fees to be your sole responsibility. In the event that fees are accrued on your registered pick up day you are responsible for paying fees before the child can attend your next registered day.

SAFETY

Injury and accident procedures

Should your child sustain an injury that requires medical attention, we will contact you immediately.

If we are unable to reach you we will call the emergency contact person for direction.

All injuries are documented. Minor injuries, such as bumps, bruises, small scrapes, or surface cuts will be tended to by staff, documented and brought to the parent's attention at pick-up time.

Injuries requiring medical attention will be reported to the parent, Lead Educator, Early Years Coordinator, Executive Director and VIHA licensing.

If the injury requires immediate medical care we will call 9-1-1.

Outside Play

We carry first aid kits with us at all times, as well as attendance sheets and children's emergency forms. It is very important for parents to keep the emergency forms and their registration papers up to date throughout the school year. For additional safety, our playground areas are checked daily by staff as well as inspected monthly by our facility staff and routinely inspected by our Licensing Officer as part of their program review.

Safe Space

The FGCA is committed to providing a high standard of safety for all children; however, planning for the unexpected is essential. On a monthly basis, your child will be familiarized with a safe place (the main office and regular office staff). This space will be utilized in the event that a child is displaced from the group. They will be instructed to go to the office.

We encourage all families to mirror safety conversations at home and to familiarize themselves with the main building and staff.

Supervision

Please note, Camas Early Years Centre utilizes open, unfenced play spaces on a daily basis for a majority of their day. Measures are taken to ensure children are kept safe and are properly supervised; however, if your child is prone to bolting or is unable to stay within set boundaries, this may not be the program for them.

Frequented open spaces on our grounds include Porter Park (Truck Park), Waterworks and Teeter Totter Park.

Face counts: All staff are required to conduct face counts every 5-10minutes.

Transitions: Staff are required to keep a log of transitions between ‘unlicensed’ spaces. Unlicensed spaces consist of any space that is not our fenced yard or indoor program area (i.e. waterworks, truck park, Teeter Totter Park, the beach, etc.). The log includes a record of the specific destination, time of departure, number of children when leaving one space, and the number of children once the destination is reached. During travel, children are ‘sandwiched’ between educators meaning that no child is to be ahead of or behind an educator at any time.

In & out log: Magnetic boards are utilized in the indoor space and fenced yard to identify the location of all children.

Markers: Physical boundary markers are utilized when Camas is playing in open, unfenced areas.

Emergency Situations

FGCA staff is trained to follow the FGCA Emergency Procedures. Procedures are posted in program spaces. Programs are equipped with cell phones and staff will attempt to contact parents/guardians during/after an emergency.

Emergency & Weather Closures

In the event of an emergency (including, but not limited to: unforeseen weather, lack of human resources, natural disasters, health emergencies (includes Island Health mandated closures), power failure, renovations or teachers strike), the FGCA will close. If emergency closure is necessary during operating hours we will attempt to contact you by phone to promptly pick up your child. There will be no refunds issued for emergency closures; however, in the event of a closure lasting more than one month, we will assess our feasibility to provide fee credits. Should the region be experiencing dangerous weather conditions, and SD61 closes, the FGCA will also close. Follow the steps below to obtain the most up to date information:

- Check the [SD61 website](#)
- Check the [FGCA website](#)
- Check your email as the Lead Educator will endeavour to provide written notification

Smoke & Extreme Heat Protocols~ new as of June 2023

1. Monitoring and Evaluation

We will regularly check air quality advisories and weather alerts in the Greater Victoria region to stay informed about smoke, wildfire and heat warnings. The [Air Quality Health Index](#) and [BC Heat Impacts Prediction System \(BCHIPS\): BCCDC](#) will be checked daily.

2. Outdoor Activity Modifications

- a. During periods of poor air quality:
 - i. We may reduce outdoor activities to minimize everyone's exposure to smoke.
 - ii. Outdoor activities may also be postponed or rescheduled to times when air quality is better, as per the air quality index.

- iii. The duration and intensity of the program may be adjusted or canceled as per the advisory to prioritize the safety of the children and staff.
- iv. Staffs ensure that children drink plenty of water throughout the day to reduce the risk of dehydration. Regular reminders are given to the children to take frequent water breaks, ideally every hour.

b. During periods of extreme heat:

- i. Staff will take the necessary steps to adjust program to accommodate the heat. This may include trips to the beach, outdoor water play or indoor play within our air conditioned spaces.
- ii. Play areas with ample shade are selected, and large physical activities are planned for cooler parts of the day to minimize heat-related risks.
- iii. Staffs ensure that children drink plenty of water throughout the day to reduce the risk of dehydration. Regular reminders are given to the children to take frequent water breaks, ideally every hour.
- iv. Throughout the summer, the UV index is monitored and sun protection is applied accordingly.

3. Program Interruptions

In the event that the FGCA is unable to provide a safe care environment for children & staff, we will elect to close or shorten program hours. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis. If we are struck with an extreme weather spell or the Air Quality Index is reading at HIGH, please check your email for the status of program. See FAQs for more details.

4. Preparedness and parental involvement

Parents are expected to pack appropriate essentials for summer days which includes, but is not limited to:

- i. Breathable, loose clothing
- ii. Water play clothing/footwear & a towel
- iii. Water bottle
- iv. Cold pack with lunch kits
 - 1. Please label all items inside lunch kits. We may take specific items out of lunch bags to be refrigerated.
- v. Large sun hat
- vi. Sunscreen

In addition, parents and guardians should continually monitor their child for signs of heat exhaustion, heat stroke and smoke related illness.

The following guides are available for families:

- i. [HEAT RELATED ILLNESS](#)
- ii. [SMOKE RELATED ILLNESS](#)

Emergency Parent Handbook

If the FGCA opens for Emergency Childcare, for example during COVID-19, please make sure you have read and understood the Emergency Handbook that can be found on our [website](#).

Missing Child

If at any point during program a child is missing we will do a five-minute area search. After five minutes, we will call 9-1-1. Immediately after emergency services have been dispatched, parents will be contacted.

Alleged Child Abuse

We are required by law to call the MCFD if we suspect any form of child abuse or if a child discloses information to a staff member. The FGCA staff members are not able to discuss details of legal investigations with families.

Medication

Parents must fill out a Permission to Administer Medication form as directed by the Lead Educator.

Medication will be given to the child in the amount and at the time specified by the care plan.

We will ensure that a child's medication is not accessible to any child, except for children who require access to their own medication (i.e. Epi-pens/insulin). Our staff will assist/supervise and document the administration of a child's medication.

Care Plan

If your child requires extra support, or has special medical or behavioural needs, a care plan outlining instructions for specialized care must be created. The plan will be created by the caregiver, parent, and possibly outside resources and will be updated yearly. The Lead Educator may request a care plan and will guide you through the creation of a care plan.

For details about common language used with the children to discuss safety measures, please speak to the Lead Educator.

CODE OF CONDUCT

FGCA Code of Conduct

The FGCA has developed a code of conduct by which we hope to foster positive relations among all. It's understood that all board members, staff, volunteers, participants, and users adhere to the following to guide all behaviour and activities related to the FGCA:

- We will interact with respect, courtesy, objectivity, and inclusiveness
- We will work towards the good of all community members, and not for personal benefit

- We will promote collaboration, cooperation, and partnership with each other and with other groups

We will promote health, wellness and safety for the entire community.

Failure to adhere to our Code of Conduct will result in immediate termination from our program.

Conflict Resolution

The FGCA believes that a successful Early Years program intrinsically relies on the cooperation and cohesiveness of children, their families, the staff, management, the community, and various integral outside resources. In the event of a conflict, the FGCA takes a problem-solving and family-centred approach. We value open communication, mediation, and the FGCA encourages parents to discuss any concerns regarding their child and their child's experience in our programs. Management has an open door policy and will address a parent's/guardian's concerns in a respectful environment. Whenever possible please make an appointment to assist in discussing the matter in a timely fashion.

In the event that an issue is unresolved between the program supervisor and parent, please make an appointment with the Executive Director. If, after meeting all of the above, concerns have not been remedied, parents may contact the Board of Directors.

Discharge

The FGCA reserves the right to discharge based on:

- Inability of the child or family to follow FGCA expectations and policies
- Inability of the program to meet the needs of the child or family
- Refusal to meet with management and/or failure to communicate regarding the care of your child. In the case that your child is discharged from the program we will provide a pro-rated reimbursement with sufficient notice

Discharge

The FGCA reserves the right to discharge based on:

- Three late payments, non-payments, or NSF cheques
- Three late pick-ups
- Inability of the child or family to follow FGCA expectations and policies
- Inability of the child or family to adhere to the FGCA's Code of Conduct
- Inability of the program to meet the needs of the child or family
- Refusal to meet with management and failure to communicate regarding the care of your child

In the event that an issue arises, a mandatory meeting will be set with the onsite manager and either the Early Years Coordinator and/or Co-Executive Director. All written warnings will go on file.

In the case that your child is discharged from the program we will provide a pro-rated reimbursement.

HEALTH

Illness and Communicable Disease

When your child is too ill to attend daycare:

Children in daycare are grouped together at the ages when they are most susceptible to infections. To determine what is a significant illness in a child is difficult for both parents and staff. There are three important considerations when deciding if a child is too ill to attend a program.

1. The protection of 15 other children and staff from communicable disease
2. The comfort and safety of the child who is ill
3. The capacity of the daycare to look after an ill child

Children with the following symptoms must be excluded from program (not attend daycare):

1. Any child unable to participate in normal activities in the early years program
2. Children with gastro-intestinal problems (i.e. vomiting/diarrhea) will be excluded for 24 hours since last bout of vomiting/diarrhea
3. Children with generalized rash and fever where measles, rubella, mumps, or chicken pox are suspected, will be excluded pending diagnosis
4. Children with acute cold symptoms, green or brown runny noses
5. Children with frequent cough: three to five times an hour.
6. Children with a fever (38°C or higher) may return to daycare after 24 hours when the fever has dissipated and no medication is needed to control fever
7. Children with a [communicable disease](#)

If your child presents any of these symptoms while in care, the following steps will be taken:

- You child will be taken to a quiet and comfortable space for the child to rest
- Steps will be taken to make them comfortable (provided with water, cold cloth, etc.)
- An educator will be with the child at all times
- Parent/guardian(s) will be called
 - If, after two attempts to reach parent/guardian(s), we do not make contact, emergency contacts will be called
- Children are expected to be picked up within 30 minutes.
- The Lead Educator or Early Years Coordinator will provide extra support, if needed

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the educators if the child has contracted a communicable disease (chicken pox, impetigo, scabies, etc.). This will enable us to alert others as to the possible health risk. Your child will not be permitted to attend program during this time.

As a licensed program, we are required to report if a medically diagnosed communicable disease has been identified in the early years program. We will ensure that all enrolled families will be notified in such a scenario while protecting the privacy of the child and impacted family as much as feasible in a small program.

When a child returns to the program after having a communicable disease, the FGCA reserves the right to ask for a physician's note stating that the child is well and able to return. Please respect the health of other children and staff in our facility and honour our policy.

Head Lice

If your child contracts head lice, please inform the educators immediately. As a large childcare provider, with multiple childcare spaces, it is important that we control the spread of lice; therefore, we ask that you do not send your child(ren) back to program until they have been lice-free for a minimum of 24hrs and proper treatment has been given. This will also ensure we are able to disinfect all affected areas in a timely manner. For more information please visit [Health Link BC](#).

Sunscreen Policy

In warmer weather, please have your child arrive at the centre wearing sunscreen. If you have not done so, please inform an educator, and we can apply it before we head out for the morning. We ask that families provide sunscreen for your child. The sunscreen should be labelled and should remain at Camas. We will have a basket of labelled sunscreen near the front door during sunnier months. If you are unable to provide sunscreen, please inform an educator and we will accommodate your child. If your child has any skin sensitivities, or allergies to sunscreen, please inform an educator.

Educators will apply sunscreen if the UV is a level three or higher. The educators reapply sunscreen to your child approximately every two hours. When we are outside for long durations, educators will be responsible for reapplying sunscreen.

GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE

The FGCA will ensure that behavioural guidance is age-appropriate, applies logical consequences, and will take into consideration the cultural and individual needs of the child. The FGCA views children as individuals deserving of respect. Our staff supports and encourages children to express their feelings, make positive choices, and work towards solving their own problems. Our guidance policy is based on the below:

1. Role modeling
2. Discipline is based on safety, respect, and cooperation
3. A child is not allowed to hurt themselves or others
4. Children will be given clear, simple, and consistent limits regarding appropriate behaviour
5. Choices will be offered whenever possible
6. Verbal direction and re-direction will be the main means of guidance and discipline

If it is necessary for the child to have time away from the group, the child will be supervised. Under no circumstances will physical, emotional, or verbal punishments be used. The FGCA does not tolerate inappropriate behaviour such as, but not limited to: rude and disrespectful behaviour towards staff, offensive and coarse language, bullying behaviour, verbal and physical aggression or abuse, emotional abuse, malicious behaviour, teasing, cliques, peer pressure, physical discrimination, inappropriate discussion and touching, sexual abuse, theft, unauthorized absence or departure from program, disrespect of others' belongings and FGCA property. Religious, racist or socio-economic discrimination will not be permitted.

Behaviour Management

If a child is having difficulty co-operating in a program the following steps will be taken:

1. Encourage the child to make a positive choice
2. Using age-appropriate language to explain the importance of appropriate behaviour and re-direct the child
3. If child is still non-compliant, offer the choice to (a) follow the expectation or (b) have time away until child is ready to problem solve
4. If undesirable behaviour continues, the Lead Educator, along with the other educators, will discuss and problem solve with the child
5. If the Lead Educator deems necessary, a phone call to parent/guardian will be made. The parent/guardian may be asked to pick up the child immediately
6. A meeting with the Lead Educator will be scheduled to discuss concerns and solutions
7. If the above steps are unsuccessful, a meeting with the Early Years Coordinator and/or Executive Director will be scheduled and a care plan will be discussed.

All of our staff members are trained to document notable behaviour. The FGCA reserves the right to inform parents that alternative childcare arrangements will need to be made if we feel our safety and behaviour expectations are not being met.

We warmly welcome you to the FGCA and hope you and your family make long lasting connections here 😊