

## **STANDARDS FOR SUMMER DAY PROGRAMS**

**This version replaces the Standards For Summer Day Programs dated March 2016**

For copies of this document, and future updates and/or corrections, please contact

Toronto Children's Services

10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Metro Hall, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 3C6

Tel: 416-392-3651 Fax: 416-392-4227

<https://www.toronto.ca>

## STANDARDS FOR SUMMER DAY PROGRAMS

Summer day programs for children shall be designed to provide opportunities for the social, physical recreational, cultural, and educational development of children. Programs should provide a safe and welcoming environment. Programs must strive to remove barriers that would prevent the full participation of all children, regardless of race, ethnicity, class, gender, ability, and family income.

To this end, summer day programs shall:

- operate with flexible hours, whenever possible, to accommodate the needs of parents/guardian
- be affordable, with sliding scale fees
- be sensitive and responsive to local community needs (e.g. language needs, culturally appropriate programming, accommodation for special needs children, etc.)
- include a variety of programming to address physical activity, artistic, recreational, social, educational and life skills needs of participants
- utilize, not duplicate, existing community resources by acting as a base from which children can be taken to other activities
- reflect a community development approach by working with parents/guardians and community groups to identify service needs and monitor community trends
- ensure that staff working with children have the necessary training and supervision to provide high quality child care and programming

## STAFF

Hiring for summer programs should be based on employment equity practices to avoid discrimination based on race, ethnicity, physical ability, age, gender, class, or sexual orientation. The staff team for summer programs should fairly reflect the community served. Agency policies regarding Vulnerable Sector Checks (VSC) apply to Summer Day Programs.

Senior Program Staff should have:

- proven previous experience working with children in a supervised group setting
- supervisory and administration experience

Senior staff must be at least 18 years of age although consideration may be given to a 17-year-old who has considerable experience working with children.

Junior Program Staff should have:

- some previous experience working with children in a supervised group setting
- All staff should have clear and specific written job descriptions. Regular supervision and a written evaluation by qualified senior staff should be conducted with all program staff.

Staff shall receive all mandatory benefits (WSIB, CPP, and EI) and employing agencies must follow all legislated labour practices. It is recommended that health information be available on file for all staff.

### **CHILD/STAFF RATIOS**

The following are the minimum ratios. Whenever financially possible, or when the special needs of children demands extra staffing, these ratios should be improved upon.

- 4 - 5 year olds: one staff for each five children (1:5)
- 6 - 12 year olds: one staff (junior or senior) for each eight children (1:8)

A ratio of one senior staff person for eight junior staff should be maintained.

Leaders in Training (LIT's), volunteers, and any student placements should be used to supplement, not replace, staff and are not to be left alone with children.

It is further recommended that additional supervision be required for outings/field trips e.g. adult volunteers, parents/guardians

### **SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN**

Children must be supervised at all times to ensure safety. This supervision may vary according to the ages and individual needs of the children.

### **STAFF TRAINING**

It is the responsibility of each program to ensure that all summer staff has received appropriate training prior to their working with children. Minimum training period of one week are recommended. Such training should include:

- orientation to agency/program mandate, policies and practices
- certified first aid training; a minimum of emergency first aid or CPR
- child safety precautions, guidelines re: allergies or medical needs
- health and food related illnesses, food handling
- emergency procedures, reporting of serious incidents
- program planning
- behaviour guidance philosophy and procedures
- conflict resolution
- child abuse protocol
- procedures for outings and trips including agency and City of Toronto expectations regarding water-based activities
- Equity and Human Rights: anti-racism/anti-discrimination/anti-harassment training

## PROGRAM

There must be written planned activities, which are appropriate to the ages and abilities of the children. These activities must offer choice and variety (e.g. individual, small group, large group, quiet, active, etc.). There must be sufficient equipment/materials available to carry out the plans.

## SPACE/FACILITIES

It is the responsibility of each program to ensure that the children are cared for in a healthy environment with access to water, toilets, a telephone, fire extinguisher, and complete first aid kit(s).

There must be procedures for regular cleaning and maintenance of the facility, and routine checks to ensure safety (e.g. procedures and containers for syringes found on premises). Fire drills must be practiced and there should be one drill per session or one drill every two weeks, with a record kept of all drills.

There must be adequate space available for program activities and provision for shelter in inclement weather.

Recognizing the dangers of second hand smoke as well as the importance of positive role modelling, smoking by staff and volunteers in front of the children must not be permitted.

## \*\*\*OFF-SITE TRIPS AND OUTINGS

Given that this is an area of risk the City of Toronto has several requirements regarding off site trips. Agency Staff need to pay particular attention to these requirements and Children's Services Consultants will also review the requirements during the Summer Day Visit

- site must be familiar to at least some of the staff and a pre visit is recommended
- all swimming facilities visited **must** have qualified lifeguards with current certification
- first aid kits must be taken on all outings
- information about children (parent/guardian phone numbers, health numbers, allergies, etc.) must be taken on outings
- trip forms (generic or trip-specific) must be signed by parent/guardian prior to trips
- list of who is on the trip must be left at the home site
- staff and children must discuss procedures for lost children prior to each trip
- if return from trip site is delayed, the Agency must be notified
- staff should take extra cash in the event it is needed for emergency taxi fare
- children should carry identification such as the name and phone number of the program rather than the name of the child

## FOOD

Where the length of day warrants it, snacks should be provided either by the parents/guardian or the program. Emergency food supply should be available in the event a child forgets to bring snack or lunch. If parents/guardians are required to provide lunch, they should be given guidelines regarding nutrition and safety when food cannot be refrigerated.

Good health practices must be followed such as washing hands and wiping tables before meals, and guidelines for the handling of food allergies in place. Mealtimes should be relaxed and pleasant.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

Programs must have written policies and procedures on:

- emergencies (this must include the reporting of serious incidents/occurrences to the City of Toronto, see Appendix A);
- behaviour guidelines outlining both acceptable and unacceptable practices;
- child abuse (both the reporting of suspected child abuse and accusations of child abuse against staff);
- anti-racism/anti-discrimination/anti-harassment training;
- children who do not arrive at camp program on scheduled date/time;
- information about trips, outings, overnights if applicable, including generic waiver, or individual waivers per outing, depending on Agency policy;
- Agency staff access to information on children's forms;
- communicating relevant information to parent/guardian; and
- media releases.

## **REGISTRATION**

Registration forms must be designed in such a manner so that staff has sufficient information about a child to ensure their safety. They should not be unnecessarily intrusive and should be written in clear language with translations where needed.

Camp forms should include

1. child's name, date of birth
2. parent/guardian's name, address, phone number, alternate phone number
3. in the event parent/guardian cannot be reached, emergency contact name, phone number and relationship to child
4. emergency medical consent
5. any health information the staff need to know (e.g. allergies, medications, other)
6. information about any special considerations for the child
7. health card number
8. safe arrival/departure information: who normally picks up and drops off child; is there any one who should not be allowed to pick up child;
9. procedure for phoning if child does not arrive at camp program on scheduled date/time

**PROGRAMS UNABLE TO MEET STANDARDS**

If after two visits from City of Toronto staff, a program is still unable to meet standards then a discussion will take place between City of Toronto staff and the agency staff to determine the continuation of the program for the current year and also future funding.

---

**Summer Day Programs, After-School Recreation Care Programs, EarlyON Child and Family Centres, & School Board Operated Extended Day Programs**

Serious incident reports provide an ongoing record of issues reported to Toronto Children's Services. Programs that have no reporting requirement to the Province, continue to report to Children's Services within 24 hours as *Serious Incidents*, using the same categories as Serious Occurrences reported by licensed child care. These programs include:

- Summer Day Programs (SDP)
- After School Recreation and Care (ARC)
- EarlyON Child and Family Centres (CFC)
- School Board Operated Extended Day Programs (EDP)

The serious incidents listed below must be reported to Children's Services within 24 hours.

**Serious Incident Line: 416-397-7359**  
**After Hours Line: 416-397-9200**

To report a serious incident, please contact the Toronto Children's Services Consultant assigned to the program. If the Consultant cannot be reached, please contact the Serious Incident line.

The Serious Incident line, will be staffed to receive calls between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding Government Holidays. Any calls received on the Serious Incident Line will be forwarded to the program Consultant.

Callers to the Serious Incident line after these hours, weekends and on Government holidays will receive a voice message directing them to press '0' when prompted, or call 416-397-9200 directly to be connected to a Toronto Children's Services Consultant. The designate Consultant will respond to the call and provide direction or advice to the caller. They will notify the program Consultant who will also record serious incident reports and complete any follow up within 24 hours of being notified of the incident for these types of programs.

**Serious Incident Types:**

- I91 Death of a child

The **death of a child** which occurs while participating in the program.

- I92 Abuse, Neglect or Allegation of Abuse or Neglect

The **abuse and neglect of a child, or an allegation of abuse or neglect** involving a staff member while participating in the program. In this situation, the Director/Supervisor or Designate must also inform the appropriate Child Protection Agency.

- I93 Life-Threatening Injury or Life Threatening Illness

This type of life –threatening injury/illness occurred while participating in the program

- I94 Child Missing or Temporarily Unsupervised

An incident where a child who is participating in the program goes **missing or is temporarily unsupervised**

- I95 Unplanned Disruption of Normal Operations

An **unplanned disruption of the normal operations** of the program that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of the children.

**Toronto Child Protection Agencies:**

- [Children's Aid Society](#) – 416-924-4646
- [Catholic Children's Aid Society](#) – 416-395-1500
- [Native Child and Family Services of Toronto](#) – 416 -969-8510
- [Jewish Family & Child](#) – 416-638-7800