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Inuuqatigiit

Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families

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TUNNGASUGITSI



## PARENT HANDBOOK for EARLY LEARNING

Sivummut Head Start  
Tumiralaat Childcare Centre  
OCDSB Kindergarten

5/19/2019

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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Sivummut Aboriginal Head Start Program, extension 217

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**Executive Director**

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**DNT Transportation, Sue** 613-744-4254

Please call to inform the Manager of Early Years and Sue at DNT for your children's absences and all changes to transportation routines

## ABOUT THE INUUQATIGIIT

### WELCOME

Welcome to Inuuqatigiit – Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families’ Early Years program, home of Sivummut Head Start, Tumiralaat Childcare Centre and the OCDSB Kindergarten. We are pleased that you have chosen to enroll your child in our program and hope that we meet all your needs and expectations. Your family is very important to us and we strive to provide the best care and early learning experience for your child.

This handbook introduces you to the Early Years (EY) programs so that you and your child will have a positive experience. You will find information about policies and procedures that have been developed to ensure that the children are safe and well cared for at all times. Please read through it carefully and ask any questions that you may have. You will be required to sign that you have read, understood, and promise to comply with the policies detailed in this handbook.

### HISTORY OF EARLY YEARS AT INUUQATIGIIT

Sivummut Head Start started in March 1997 under the umbrella of Tungasuvvingat Inuit. Tungasuvvingat Inuit was the program sponsor until April 30, 2006. In August of 2005, Inuuqatigiit was established because parents of Inuit children wanted to have a stronger role in programs for their children and the INUUQATIGIIT took over Sivummut on May 1, 2006. The half-day program is offered to children 18 months – 5 years of age.

The Tumiralaat Child Care Centre is a second program that is licensed for full day, year-round child care for Inuit children ages 18 months to 6 years. It is a fee-based program. Since its opening in 2008, Tumiralaat has focused on children’s early learning based on Inuit values regarding the development of self, family, community, resilience, learning, and respect for the environment. It was created to support parents who are studying or working fulltime.

In response to the Ministry of Education’s (MEDU) full day learning initiative, the INUUQATIGIIT furthered its partnership with the OCDSB to offer a full day Kindergarten program on INUUQATIGIIT premises. In September 2010, the INUUQATIGIIT and OCDSB welcomed 15 Inuit JK/SK students into a culturally based Kindergarten program at INUUQATIGIIT. Since opening, the group size was raised to 18 students. The classroom is overseen by RE Wilson Public School in Vanier.

On June 1 2019, the parents of families of all Inuuqatigiit programs voted to adapt the agency’s new name of Inuuqatigiit – Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families, herein referred to as “Inuuqatigiit”.

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Inuuqatigiit Board of Directors is voted in by the Inuuqatigiit membership (parents/guardians) at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) each year. Parents/guardians of children in our programs are encouraged to become involved as board members.



The majority of the Board of Directors must be of Inuit descent and the majority of the Directors must be parents/guardians of a child enrolled in Inuuqatigiit program. The Board of Directors meets monthly and parents/guardians are welcome to attend any meetings.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Each parent/guardian enrolled in an Inuuqatigiit program is a member of Inuuqatigiit and therefore has a right to vote at the Annual General Meeting. At this meeting the Board of Directors report on the past year, the financial report is presented by an auditor, and new members of the Board are elected. It is important that parents attend the AGM.

## INUUQATIGIIT MANDATE

Inuuqatigiit serves Inuit children, youth and their families.

## INUUQATIGIIT VISION

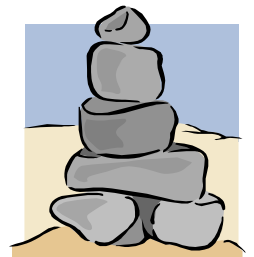
Strong culture, strong families, strong community.

## INUUQATIGIIT MISSION

In partnership with parents and the community Inuuqatigiit fosters strong and proud Inuit children, youth and families.

## INUUQATIGIIT VALUES

Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit are the values that are understood to be *“the Inuit way of doing things: the past, present and future knowledge, experience and values of Inuit society”*.



Inuuqatigiit reflects these values in the way we work:

- i. *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq: We show respect and a caring attitude for others.*
- ii. *Tunnganarniq: We welcome others and are open in communication and interactions.*
- iii. *Pijitsirniq: We recognize that each person has a valuable contribution in serving our community.*
- iv. *Pilimmaksarniq: We learn from each other and through experience.*
- v. *Piliriqatigiingniq: We work collaboratively toward common goals.*
- vi. *Aajiqatigiingniq: We respect and consider different perspectives when making decisions.*
- vii. *Qanuqtuurungnarniq: We find solutions and use our resources effectively*
- viii. *Avatimik kamattiarniq: We respect and nurture our relationship with the environment.*

## EARLY YEARS PROGRAMS

### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION LICENSE

Sivummut Head Start, Tumiralaat Childcare and the Kindergarten are licensed by the Ministry of Education (MEDU). The programs must meet the standards of The *Child Care and Early Years Act* for health, safety, fire protection, ratios, programming, staffing and building specifications. Annual inspections are completed by a Program Advisor from the MEDU and the City of Ottawa Public Health Unit to ensure that all standards are met.

Part of the MEDU's licensing requirements states that we must have a certain number of qualified and registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) in our programs. As such, we seek to hire qualified Inuit whenever possible, but we **MUST** meet the standard for early childhood educators.

### AGE GROUPS SERVED

Sivummut Head Start and Tumiralaat serve children between 18 months – 5 years of age. The Kindergarten is offered to eligible children aged 4 and 5 years to a maximum of 18 children. Children can be eligible for Kindergarten at 3 years of age if they turn 4 by December 31<sup>st</sup> of that year.

### DAYS/HOURS OF OPERATION

Sivummut Head Start operates from September to June, with specific start up and closing dates determined each year. The program runs from Monday to Thursday from 9:00 am – 11:30 am for the morning group, and from 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm for the afternoon group.

Tumiralaat runs 5 days a week throughout the year. It closes only at the Christmas break and on statutory holidays. Its operating hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

The Kindergarten classroom follows the yearly schedule of the OCDSB. Classes run from 9:15 am to 3:15 pm.

### CLOSURES

**All EY programs are closed for the following statutory holidays:**

- Labour Day (September)
- Thanksgiving Day (October)
- The 2 weeks around Christmas and New Year's (same as OCDSB calendar)
- Canada Day (July 1)
- Family Day (February)
- Good Friday (March/April)
- Easter Monday (March/April)
- Victoria Day (May)
- Civic Holiday (August)

**Sivummut is also closed:**

- March Break (same as OCDSB calendar)
- July and August
- Up to three additional professional development days set by Sivummut.

**The Kindergarten is closed:**

- March Break (same as OCDSB calendar)
- July and August
- OCDSB Professional Development (PD) days throughout the year, which are determined each OCDSB calendar year.

**PHILOSOPHY**

We believe that children deserve a nurturing and caring child-centred environment that supports the Inuit culture and language. We believe that you are your child's first and most important teacher. Our program supports the whole family as children are celebrated for the unique and special people that they are. We work in partnership with families to ensure that children receive the best care and early education possible.

**PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

The EY programs are built around the following 6 program components of the Aboriginal Head Start Initiative:

**a) Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement is a key component of the EY programs. All parents are invited and encouraged to participate in the programs in a variety of ways: i.e. volunteering with the children, providing cultural expertise and resources, or becoming a member of the INUUQATIGIIT Board or Parent Council. During intake, the level of participation a parent can make and how best he/she can contribute to the programs is discussed.

**b) Culture & Language**

Inuit culture and language is a critical component of EY programming. The programs strive to increase Inuktitut language skills and knowledge of traditional Inuit ways; accumulate children's books and play materials which are reflective of the Inuit culture and language; make traditional play items available; expose the children to Inuit drumming, dancing, singing, sculpture, artwork; and offer parent resources that are reflective of Inuit culture.

**c) Education**

Early Years programs provide a learning environment for preschool children that promotes play-based and developmentally appropriate activities. All activities foster early childhood development in the following developmental domains: language acquisition, motor skills, school readiness, social & emotional skills, self-help, creativity and cultural skills/knowledge. Outdoor play is promoted as a way to challenge children's abilities and connect them to the environment. Cultural themes and values are integrated into programming and care routines.



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#### **d) Health Promotion**

Early Years programs integrate health promotion concepts and practices into daily activities and interactions with children and families. Staff in the programs promote healthy parenting and nurturing skills for preschool children; foster respect, acceptance and tolerance of self and others; teach healthy oral and general hygiene habits; facilitate regular well-child check-ups with qualified health professionals; and assist families in accessing additional services e.g. dental.

#### **e) Social Support**

Early Years programs provide a variety of social supports and resources to a child's family through individual supports and referrals such as housing, substance use, counselling, family violence, stress management, training and careers.

#### **f) Nutrition**

Early Years programs promote healthy nutrition by providing a variety of fresh and healthy snacks and meals including traditional country food on a regular basis. Weekly menus are developed in accordance with the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* and are provided to parents.

### **PROGRAM STATEMENT**

Inuuqatigiit Early Years Program Statement integrates *Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit* (Inuit traditional knowledge) and the 6 *Aboriginal Head Start* components with key elements of *How Does Learning Happen* (Ministry of Education). We are committed to supporting young Inuit children's learning, development, health and well-being in a loving, caring, holistic and cultural context that promotes the preservation of the Inuktitut language. Inuit view children as unique gifts to a community. Through a process called Innunguiniq, which relies on interconnectedness and relationships, children develop their capacity **to live a good life** and contribute to their community. **See Appendix A for the full Program Statement.**

### **EARLY YEARS' PARENT COUNCIL**

You may join Inuuqatigiit EY Parent Council, if you are a parent of a child (or children) enrolled in Sivummut Head Start, Tumiralaat Child Care, or Kindergarten, and can volunteer 2 hours every 2 months. This is a fantastic opportunity to provide input into early years' programs.

#### **Becoming a Parent Council Member allows you:**

- To guide the development and progress of EY programs and make suggestions for improvements;
- To be aware of how the Aboriginal Head Start's six components are included in the Inuuqatigiit EY programming;
- To provide advice and input into how to further incorporate the six components into EY programming;
- To support and advise the Manager of Early Years in program development and evaluation;
- To participate in the hiring process of EY staff;

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- To promote the inclusion of culture and language in EY programs;
- To provide input into the Sivummut Annual work plan; and
- To provide input into the development or revisions of operational policies.

To learn more about the Parent Council and how you can join contact the Early Years Manager, 613-744-3133, ext. 228; or email [earlyyearsmanager@inuqatigiit.ca](mailto:earlyyearsmanager@inuqatigiit.ca)

## STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

We often have students doing placements (e.g. Early Childhood Education or Co-Op) in our programs. On occasion, we will also have volunteers in the programs. All students and volunteers are assigned specific duties and are supervised by Inuuqatigiit Early Years staff so that the individual has a consistent point of contact to discuss duties and expectations, ask questions and receive feedback and guidance.

ECE students normally have assignments where they need to practice observing children to better understand their development, learning and interests and apply these to program planning. Students do not use children's names in their observations and understand the importance of confidentiality. If you are concerned about your child being observed by a student, please speak to the Manager of Early Years to discuss.

All volunteers and students, including parents are not permitted to supervise or be left alone with a child (other than their own) or group of children without staff supervision during their time Inuuqatigiit.

### ***More specifically, all volunteers (including parents) and students must:***

- i. be visible to staff always;
- ii. not accompany a child, other than their own, out of a program room;
- iii. not be alone with a child, other than their own, anywhere else in the building (including outside);
- iv. not take a child, other than their own to the bathroom;
- v. not be counted as part of the staff:child ratio; and
- vi. not step in to replace a staff should that staff be called off the floor to attend to a sick child or other matter.

All volunteers and placement students are required to review, sign as acceptance of compliance and practice Inuuqatigiit policies and procedures and they must have a Vulnerable Sector Check completed and be suitable to work with children.

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## OBSERVATIONS

Observing in early learning environments is crucial in determining skills, abilities, interests and needs of children and in examining the effectiveness of programs. EY staff are observing the children all the time. Recording what is seen is the key to ensure that everything is remembered and shared with parents either informally or formally. Staff use different ways of recording what they are observing of children's development e.g. photographs, work samples, anecdotes. Observations also provide information on where children are at and what their interests are so that programming is relevant to individual groups of children. Staff are encouraged to observe children from a perspective of cultural strength and awareness.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned for the children on a regular basis. Examples of possible trip destinations include: museums, Cosmic Adventure, a tree farm and community parks. Parents and volunteers are encouraged to attend field trips. Parents must sign a permission form for field trips during registration. Children may walk to some destinations but often take a school bus.

# INTAKE & REGISTRATION

## INTAKE & REGISTRATION

To participate in an EY program, children must be of Inuit descent. On occasion, exceptions may be made to accept other Aboriginal but non-Inuit children into the program e.g. an Aboriginal sibling to an Inuit child. Exceptions are made on a case by case basis with the approval of Inuuqatigiit Executive Director and Board of Directors.



To apply for a spot in an EY program, parents/guardians must complete an Inuuqatigiit Early Years Intake Package. This information is important, and it helps staff get to know each individual family. Early Years Programs do **NOT** operate on a 'first come, first served' basis. Priority is based on the needs of the family. Children with special needs are encouraged to participate in the program providing adequate resources at Inuuqatigiit are available. Should there be a waitlist, parents will be notified by the Manager of Early Years once their child has a spot in the program. Once a spot has been given to a child, we will work closely with you to make sure that all forms are completed to ensure that we stay within our licensing requirements. For example, you must show proof of your child's up-to-date immunization before attending the program. Completing all the intake forms can be overwhelming but we will guide you through the process step by step.

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## WAIT LIST POLICY

The following procedures are followed to maintain a fair, flexible and transparent wait list system for parents applying for spots in the licensed EY programs:

- i. If a program is at capacity, parents may place a child(ren) on a waiting list. Fees are not charged for the purpose of putting a child on a wait list.
- ii. Children waiting for a child care spot with Tumiralaat must register with the City of Ottawa's centralized registry.
- iii. Children on the Inuuqatigiit wait list are prioritized based on need rather than first come first serve. Families who are in need of support have priority for enrollment in EY programs.
- iv. Families are required to complete a Family Information Form, which assesses their need for programs and services. The "need factors" that are indicated by a parent on the Family Information Form are transferred to a confidential form called the Family Assessment Table. To further ensure confidentiality, a number is assigned to each family and only intake and the Manager of Early Years know which number is linked to which family.
- v. The Family Information Form/Family Assessment Table is a tool for prioritizing children on the wait list for enrolment. Children are placed on the wait list according to the number of "need factors" indicated on the Family Information Form.
- vi. Full time children are chosen to fill spaces before part-time children, regardless of their needs assessment score.
- vii. Parents on the Inuuqatigiit Board of Directors do not have priority on the waiting list unless considered "in need".
- viii. Since the wait list is managed by need rather than first come first served, a child's general status on the wait list is shared with parent as requested in a manner that protects their personal information and that of other parents on the wait list who may receive a spot before others due to family need.
- ix. When there does not exist a waiting list for the next available space in **Sivummut only**, part-time options may be utilized. A child may be enrolled in Sivummut on a part-time basis (e.g. 2 days/week), at the discretion of the Manager of EY, providing there is not a child on the waiting list wanting a full-time space. Children enrolled in Tumiralaat must attend full-time.
- x. Once enrolled in Sivummut, part-time children will not be asked to forfeit their space when a full-time child places their name on the waiting list, regardless of the child's needs assessment score.

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## INCLUSION

We are committed to providing high quality programs and services to Inuit children and their families including those with disabilities and special needs. We strive to give children and their parents the same opportunity to access our services and benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other clients. Our goal is to provide services to clients with disabilities with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity at the forefront. We will work closely with Children's Inclusion Support Services (CISS) to ensure and promote quality programming and care for children with special needs. Further, we rely on input from parents and professionals involved with a child to develop an Individualized Support Plan to be followed by staff.

## KINDERGARTEN SELECTION PROCESS

Given that there is a maximum of 18 spaces in Inuuqatigiit Kindergarten program, Inuuqatigiit has identified the following criteria to be used in allocating Kindergarten spaces. Decisions regarding Kindergarten placements are made keeping each individual child's needs and development at the forefront while considering the structure, expectations and outcomes of each program.



1. Children must be of Inuit descent.
2. Children who are currently enrolled in Inuuqatigiit JK program will automatically continue in the SK group of the Kindergarten program.
3. Children who are currently enrolled in Inuuqatigiit preschool programs who are of eligible age for SK will automatically be offered a spot in the Kindergarten program.
4. Children who are currently enrolled in Inuuqatigiit preschool programs and are eligible for JK will have priority for all remaining spots in the Kindergarten program.
5. When there are more children of eligible age than there are Kindergarten spots, the following factors will be considered by Inuuqatigiit when offering Kindergarten spots to children currently enrolled in Inuuqatigiit preschool programs:
  - the child's overall development (behavioural, cognitive, social) and the expectations for each program;
  - the suitability of the respective program in meeting the unique needs of each child;
  - the needs of the child in terms of preparedness for Kindergarten; and
  - the needs and wishes of the family.

Recommendations for Kindergarten placement at Inuuqatigiit will be made by the Manager of Early Years taking into account wishes from a child's parent and input from preschool educators. We recognize that some decisions mean a child will not be placed in the Kindergarten classroom. All information considered in making a decision will be kept confidential at all times.

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## FEES & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

There is no cost to participate in Sivummut Head Start because the program is funded by the Aboriginal Head Start Initiative of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). The goal of this program is to create a beneficial and supportive learning environment for Aboriginal pre-school aged children and their families that is culturally appropriate, and to give children an educational 'head start'.



Tumiralaat Child Care Centre is funded through the Ministry of Education under the management of the City of Ottawa and is a fee-based program. Daily childcare fees are set by the City of Ottawa—not Inuuqatigiit.

The child care fee covers many costs of the program, including: food, transportation, program supplies, diapers, staff wages, property maintenance, family and social events, and monthly field trips.

How much a parent will pay for a spot in Tumiralaat depends on family income. Parents can apply for a fee subsidy with the City of Ottawa. This subsidy means that you get help paying for the child care spot from the City of Ottawa. How much of a subsidy a family receives is decided by the City of Ottawa and depends upon the family's income assessment for the prior taxation year.

Before you begin your subsidy application on-line, you must have the following ready to go:

1. Proof that you live in Ottawa e.g. lease agreement; and
2. Be working a certain numbers of hours, or looking for work or going to school fulltime or be an Ontario Works recipient; and
3. Have a copy of last year's Canada Revenue Agency Notice of Assessment (NOA), or be willing to complete the most recent year's income tax return; and
4. City of Ottawa's Rights and Responsibilities Form

If you are not working or attending school fulltime assistance may still be possible. In the best interests of your child, if there is a special need, medical, social/emotional, developmental or behavioral issue, you may also be able to get a subsidy.

The City of Ottawa will look at all the information and decide whether you will receive a subsidy or not. Depending on family income, some families will pay the full amount for child care, others will not pay at all, and some will pay a partial fee. Tumiralaat Child Care does not make this decision.

It is very important that you report any changes in your family to ensure that you and the City of Ottawa each continue to pay the correct amounts for your child's spot. Changes that could affect your subsidy include a new job, a pay raise or pay decrease, an increase or decrease in your working hours, losing a job, leaving school, etc. If you are not sure, please come and speak to Manager of Early Years.

Parents must renew their child care subsidy once a year with the City of Ottawa. Parents who do not renew their subsidy can lose their financial assistance. If you do not qualify for a subsidy, or if your subsidy expires, you are responsible for paying the full fee for your child care space directly to the City

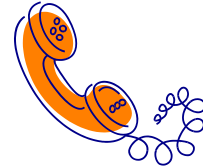
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of Ottawa. Parents must pay whether their child attends each day, or not, as it costs Inuuqatigiit to hold the space for your child.

To apply for a spot in Tumiralaat and a child care subsidy please go to the City of Ottawa registry and waitlist <http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/social-services/daycare/apply-daycare>

## EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

In situations where we are unable to contact you (parent/guardian) your family must have an alternate emergency contact that is named for our files. This must be a trusted friend or family member. This person must be easily available to support your family. This person must know that you have chosen them as your emergency contact. This person may be called should your child become unwell during the course of his/her day or your child is being dropped off at home and you are unable to make it home on time.



## PRIVACY POLICY

Inuuqatigiit recognizes the right of all clients to privacy and confidentiality. Inuuqatigiit aims to protect the personal information of its clients (children, youth, siblings, parents, guardians) at all times. Our Privacy Policy ensures Inuuqatigiit compliance with the federal *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)*.

### Guiding Principles:

- Privacy and confidentiality are important to establish and maintain trusting and lasting relationships with parents, guardians and partner agencies.
- Privacy and confidentiality are the cornerstones to ensure that personal information is only accessible to those authorized to have access.
- Confidentiality acknowledges respect for an individual's right to privacy.
- Confidentiality assumes that those who pledge to safeguard confidential information will do so.

Information collected from parents is for use by your child's program, and only released with the consent of the parent. All files are maintained in a locked cabinet and parents have access to their child's (under 16 years of age) records within 10 business days of requesting it.

We are obligated to break confidentiality under the following circumstances:

- A client is in danger of seriously hurting himself/herself;
- A client is in danger of hurting someone else;
- There is good reason to believe that a child under 16 is being harmed or will be harmed. This information must be reported to the Children's Aid Society.
- If a client is considered by law to be unable to make informed decisions about himself or herself.

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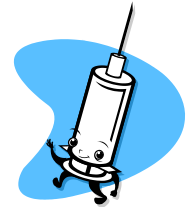
- The information has been ordered or subpoenaed by a court of law.
- In cases of required reporting to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.

Parents will be given the full Inuuqatigiit privacy policy during intake and are required to sign an Inuuqatigiit Privacy Consent Form at that time.

## **CHILDREN'S IMMUNIZATION**

Under the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, children who attend Inuuqatigiit Early Years Programs must have up to date immunization. As part of the registration process and **before** admission into the program, the child must be immunized as recommended by the City of Ottawa. During registration, parents will complete the immunization form for their child. These are sent to the City of Ottawa and if a child is missing a required dose, the parents and Inuuqatigiit will be notified. The child must get the missing dose as soon as possible or he/she cannot attend the program.

Parents who refuse to have their child immunized based on religion or conscience or under direction from a doctor must complete and sign an exemption form and/or provide documentation from the doctor.



## **CLOTHING & POSSESSIONS**

We encourage you to dress your child in casual and comfortable clothing that can get dirty. Children are involved in art, water, sand activities and outdoor play on a regular basis. Your child will need to bring a change of clothing and a pair of indoor shoes that will stay in the program. Your child will have a cubby to keep his/her belongings. Please try to label all your child's belongings with his/her name so they don't get lost or mixed up. Please be aware that if a child comes in with items that have not been labeled, Inuuqatigiit staff will attempt to do so but will not be held responsible for items that go missing.

We also ask you to provide your child with a backpack or similar bag to carry his/her belongings to and from Inuuqatigiit. This will ensure that you receive all communications from us and that any items that need to be transported from home to Inuuqatigiit and back again can do so without becoming lost.



Naturally children will also grow out their clothing. If you have noticed that they are requiring larger clothes/shoes at home, please send in a new set of the appropriate size to replace the smaller clothing. Inuuqatigiit staff will send the outgrown clothes home. When your child first starts to attend he/she may bring a comfort toy to assist with separation anxiety, such as a stuffed animal or blanket. Once settled in the routine and it is felt that the child can manage without it, we encourage you to keep these items at home. There are plenty of things for your child to play with in the program, so we ask that all other toys and games be left at home. This includes all electronic devices, such as cellphones, and game consoles. Inuuqatigiit does not take responsibility for toys that do not return home if they are brought in for any reason.



## ATTENDANCE AND TRANSPORTATION

### YOUR CHILD'S ADJUSTMENT

This may be your child's first experience in a group setting, on their own away from you. Each child will have a unique reaction to separating from their parent or caregiver. Our goal is to make your child's entry into the program as comfortable and positive as possible. The staff are aware of and sympathetic to difficult separations and they are there to guide and support you and your child.

When a child first begins attending our EY programs, the following are ways to make this transition easier for both you and your child:

- your child may wish to bring a stuffed toy or blanket for comfort and familiarity;
- you are encouraged to stay with their child to ease the adjustment period;
- explore the program space with your child showing all the play areas and materials;
- talk about the program routines with your child so he/she knows that you know them to;
- encourage your child to explore on their own but don't pressure him/her to do so;
- be patient with the adjustment period – every child is different; and
- create a goodbye ritual that will help your child say goodbye to you and know when he/she will see you again.

If you are unsure of whether or not you need to come with your child, feel free to discuss it with us to help you decided what is best for your child.

It is highly recommended that you attend the Parent Orientation Meeting & BBQ in the fall. This will be a time for the parents to meet the teachers, transportation company employees and become acquainted with the program goals, objectives, policies and procedures. You will be given important information regarding the year's activities and it gives you an opportunity to ask any questions that you may have. Chances are someone else is wondering the same thing.

### ATTENDANCE

It is expected that parents and children participate in the program on a long-term and consistent basis to receive full benefit and learning. It is important to inform us if your child will be absent for any reason and it is your responsibility to call **DNT Transportation (613-744-4254)** to let them know. Extended absences from the program are understandable for vacation, illness, travel and emergency situations but we ask that you remember to let the staff know so we can continue to be of support. In situations of low attendance, where no explanation has been provided, a staff member will arrange to meet with you to discuss support and how attendance can be improved. If your child is absent for 2 days without explanation the staff will make every attempt to contact you, including a possible home visit to ensure that any necessary support can be provided.

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Children enrolled in Tumiralaat Child Care are entitled to no more than 36 absent days per year, from the beginning of each January to end of December. If your child is not able to attend our program for some reason, we are only able to hold a spot for that child for two weeks providing you have enough absent days remaining. After the two-week period is up the spot maybe given to a child on the waiting list.

## ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

If you are dropping your child off at Inuuqatigiit please help him/her get undressed and bring him/her to the program room. Please be sure to tell the teacher that you are dropping off your child. Likewise, when picking up your child, please tell a staff that you are leaving with your child. Under no circumstances is a child to be left unattended in the cubby room or anywhere else in the building or outside in the play yard.

## TRANSPORTATION

Inuuqatigiit make every attempt to provide transportation to all children in EY programs, when funding allows. The children are driven to and from Inuuqatigiit DNT Transportation. Parents must follow the transportation policies of DNT at all times. Depending on the home address of the child, it may be impossible to provide transportation.



As this service is a privilege not offered in most other preschools or child care centres, it is vital that parents/guardians and staff work together to maintain effective communication regarding any changes in transportation routines. If there is a change of address, Inuuqatigiit must approve the transportation availability for the new address and then you are responsible for calling DNT to make the arrangements. Inuuqatigiit will then confirm with the transportation company. Frequent changes will not to be tolerated.

The transportation company will provide you with a scheduled time for pick up and departure. Your child's driver will wait for 3 minutes after the scheduled time for pick up at your home before departing. Please respect the pick-up and drop-off times arranged for your family so that all families can be sure of a safe and timely ride for their children. The transportation company will make every effort to arrive at your home for pick-up and drop off of your child at the scheduled time but asks for your patience as traffic and other unexpected circumstances may arise.

As safety is our first concern, we ask that children not be given food to eat while on the van to prevent choking. Any child's behaviour that poses a threat to the safety of the driver and/or children on the van may lose the transportation privilege.

Please report any concerns or issues with the transportation service to the Manager of Early Years as soon as possible.

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## CHILD RELEASE

The program staff must be notified when someone other than you is picking up or dropping off your child at Inuuqatigiit or from the bus. The alternative person's name must be on your child's intake forms and the person must show identification. Staff and drivers will not release a child to an adult without prior approval from you. Staff and/or DNT drivers will not release a child to a perceived unsafe situation such as an adult that is displaying any type of intoxication.

## DISCHARGE FROM PROGRAM

In a situation where a child's needs are not being met by the program, a meeting will be arranged between parents and staff to discuss future direction and options. A plan of action will be developed to support the family and the child.

# HEALTH & SAFETY

## IF YOUR CHILD IS SICK

Your child **should not** be brought to the program if he/she has:

1. a temperature over 100 F/38C\* (must be 24 hrs without fever)
2. vomiting\*
3. diarrhea\*
4. bacterial pink eye (must be on antibiotics for 24 hours prior to readmission)
5. rashes that cannot be identified or that have not been seen by a doctor
6. impetigo (red pimple-like blisters on the skin) (must be on antibiotics for 24 hours prior to readmission)
7. severe cold, sneezing and running nose
8. bronchitis or pneumonia
9. head lice (see below)
10. strep throat (must be on antibiotics for 24 hours prior to readmission)
11. any other communicable disease that is listed in the City of Ottawa's guidelines.



**\* Child must be free of symptoms for 24 hours prior to returning to the program.**

If a child is sent to the centre with any of the above conditions, the parent will be contacted and asked to take the child home. If a parent is unreachable, the child's emergency contact will be contacted to pick up the child.

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## LICE

Head lice is a common childhood occurrence that is not dangerous but very annoying. Lice are spread through head to head contact and contact with infected items such as brushes. We do everything we can to prevent lice from spreading in the programs, but it is inevitable. We follow these procedures for lice:

- i. If a child in the program is identified by a staff as having lice, all parents will be notified by a letter with information about checking for and treating lice. The letter will go home with all children that day.
- ii. The parent of the child will be called to inform them of the finding and discuss treatment options.
- iii. Children will be sent home from the program if lice are found and they must complete one of the required two treatments before the child can return.
- iv. Staff will treat a child with lice with dignity and care at all times.
- v. At times, parents may require support with treatments and advice. Inuuqatigiit\_staff may assist parents with treatment expense in some cases.
- vi. After the first treatment, the affected child may return to the program. Staff will check the child and if a live louse is found, they will not be able to stay in the program. This will continue until the child is deemed louse free.
- vii. Parents are reminded that it is necessary to complete the second treatment to properly treat the lice.
- viii. If a child or family has a problem getting rid of the lice, they may be referred to City of Ottawa Public Health or other resources for support.
- ix. Inuuqatigiit staff should be aware of how lice spreads and take necessary precautions at all times.
- x. If head lice occur in more than one child in the program, all soft toys and dress up clothes are removed from the program until all children are lice free.

## MEDICATION

It is recommended that all prescription and non-prescription medication be given to the child before and after the program. However, when a doctor has prescribed that the medication be given during program hours, the medication administration policy will be followed.

New medications that your child has not taken before should be given to the child for the first 24 hours at home before it is given at Inuuqatigiit. Prior to any medication, prescription or non-prescription, the medication permission form must be completed and signed by the parents. DNT drivers should keep medication forms in their vehicle. Parents must hand deliver medication and signed form to Inuuqatigiit staff or DNT driver or who will then give it to staff. To protect all of the children in the program, please **DO NOT** put medication into the child's backpack.

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## **YOUR CHILD'S MEDICAL NEEDS**

If your child has one or more chronic or acute medical conditions that he or she needs additional supports, accommodations or assistance for we need to know so that we can provide the best possible care and support for him/her. Examples of medical needs are asthma, diabetes, seizures or a concussion. For example, a child with diabetes may require that a staff check the child's blood sugar levels with a glucose monitor several times a day. Your child will need an individualized plan developed in consultation with you and any regulated health professional who is involved with your child's care and who you feel should be included in the consultation. We will work together with you to gather the information and complete the form. This form will be reviewed and updated with you on an annual basis.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

All program staff is trained in First Aid and CPR. If a child is injured while attending the program proper procedures will be followed. If a child requires medical attention 911 will be called or the child will be taken to the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO). If a child is taken to CHEO it is helpful for the Inuuqatigiit to have the child's OHIP number on file. Parents will always be contacted as soon as the staff is able to do so, ensuring the health safety of the child first.



## **FIRE DRILLS & EVACUATION**

We do monthly fire drills with the children so they are prepared in case of a true evacuation. If it is necessary to vacate the building due to fire or other emergency, the children will be taken to 224 McArthur, or alternatively, 230 McArthur Avenue. Once children are safely settled at this location, parents will be notified.

## **EMERGENCY SAFETY PLANS**

While it is uncommon, there may be times where an emergency poses a threat to the safety of children, staff, parents and guests at Inuuqatigiit facilities. Should a situation arise where staff feels that they or others are in danger, we have lockdown, shelter in place and secure building procedures to follow that are in keeping with those of the Ottawa Carleton District School Board. Just like the schools, we practice these drills twice a year. You will be informed of approximate dates when we will be doing these drills. We will notify parents by telephone, text, social media or letter home when there has been a true emergency and we have either had to evacuate, lockdown, shelter in place or have a secure building. Our priority is the safety of the children, so you will be contacted as soon as we feel everyone is safe.

## **SLEEP SAFETY**

Toddlers and preschoolers in programs for more than 6 hours must have a rest period that is not longer than 2 hours long. Children can sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on their individual

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needs. To ensure the safety of toddlers and preschoolers during rest period and periods of sleep the following procedures will be followed:

- i. Staff will do a visual check of each sleeping child every 30 minutes. Checks are conducted by being physically present beside the child while the child is sleeping and looking for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours, e.g. change in skin colour, change in breathing, signs of overheating.
- ii. Staff will respond appropriately to observations of distress or concerns e.g. wake child, call for help, remove blankets, etc. All Inuuqatigiit emergency procedures will be followed e.g. first aid, informing parents, documenting incident, reporting serious occurrences, etc.
- iii. Visual checks will be recorded on the Sleep Log located in each room where children sleep;
- iv. The group attendance will be brought to the sleep room (if separate from play space) to keep record of the children present in the sleep room.
- v. There must be sufficient light in the sleeping area or room to conduct the visual checks;
- vi. Children are assigned to individual cots;
- vii. Parents will be consulted respecting a child's sleeping arrangements during intake; transitions to a new room or upon a parent's request;
- viii. Inform parents about the sleep policy in the parent handbook and during intake;
- ix. Parents will be informed of any significant changes in a child's sleeping patterns or behaviours. Staff will consult with the parent about making any necessary adjustments to the way that child is supervised during sleep.

Please let us know if your child has specific requirements for sleep or positioning while sleeping.

## **PLAYGROUND SAFETY**

Outdoor play is a regular and important part of our program. The staff will provide an outdoor play area that is safe and clean always. We follow a thorough playground safety policy that includes daily, monthly, seasonal and annual playground inspections to ensure your child's safety during outdoor play. In sunny weather children will be encouraged to wear hats and sunscreen. The program will provide sunscreen. Parents must give permission for the staff to apply it. Children should arrive dressed appropriately for all kinds of weather.

## **SERIOUS OCCURRENCES**

**The *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* defines serious occurrences as:**

- a. the death of a child who received child care at a child care centre,
- b. abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a child care centre,
- c. a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a child care centre,
- d. an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or

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- e. an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the child care centre; (“incident grave”)

We are required to report all serious occurrences to the MEDU to ensure that we are accountable to the public. To increase transparency for parents, the MEDU requires that all serious occurrences be communicated to parents through a Serious Occurrence Notification Form that is posted for 10 days beside the program license for parents to see. All information regarding the identity of the child or staff involved in the incident is anonymous on the notification form. If you want more information about serious occurrences, please come and speak to the Manager of Early Years. We are happy to provide additional information.

## WELL-CHILD CHECKS

Once a month, a health practitioner comes to do a ‘well-child check.’ You must give permission for your child to participate. The following areas of child health are checked: weight, height, hair, ears, throat, heart, and lungs. A brief written report is made during each well child check and you are given a copy of the report.

## DENTAL SCREENINGS

Several times a year, a City of Ottawa dental hygienist or other dental hygienists will conduct dental screenings with your permission. Children’s overall oral health is screened, fluoride treatments are provided and recommendations for follow up with a dentist are provided. City of Ottawa hygienists will contact you to discuss required follow up.

## NUTRITION

We provide a variety of nutritious meals and snack every day. We include country food whenever it is available. Meals and snacks are prepared in a safe and clean environment to ensure the health and safety of children, staff, parents and volunteers at Inuuqatigiit. Copies of menus are posted for parents to see and a copy is also sent home with the children. Sivummut children receive breakfast or lunch and one snack. Tumiralaat and Kindergarten children will receive breakfast, lunch and two snacks.



## ALLERGIES

It is important that we are informed if your child has any allergies or dietary restrictions. If your child has any allergies, please tell us about this and add it to the registration forms. We will work together with you to ensure your child’s health and safety at all times. Inuuqatigiit is a ‘peanut free’ centre.



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## SMOKING

As per the “Smoke Free- Ontario Act” **smoking is absolutely prohibited** at Inuuqatigiit where children are present, including the playground and parking lot. It is also the policy of the program to promote a non-smoking lifestyle. Under no circumstances will smoking be permitted on the premises, during Inuuqatigiit activities including field trips, social events and workshops, or in front of the children at any time.



## CODE OF CONDUCT

Inuuqatigiit is committed to a safe and caring environment for children, parents, employees, students, guests and volunteers. The Inuuqatigiit Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for all of those involved in the programs and services of the INUUQATIGIIT. All staff, students and volunteers are required to sign the Inuuqatigiit Code of Conduct. Parents sign off on the Code of Conduct during intake.

## CHILD GUIDANCE & PROHIBITED ACTS

Children depend on the adults in their lives to guide them and teach them how to express and manage their feelings, actions and behaviors. We believe that positive child guidance sets an example for children to follow. We encourage children to solve their problems by talking to their friends, sharing and taking turns.

The staff, substitutes, volunteers, ECE and other students, and parents will guide children's behavior in positive ways at all times. The following strategies are considered appropriate:

- i. **Cooperation:** a spirit of cooperation is fostered at all times through positive interactions. Staff work together to provide positive guidance and support to all children.
- ii. **Conflict resolution:** children are encouraged to resolve conflicts on their own unless they require the assistance of a teacher to help express feelings and solve problems.
- iii. **Redirection:** undesired behavior is redirected by a teacher. For example, a child who is disruptive in a particular activity would be redirected by a teacher to another activity.
- iv. **Limits:** boundaries are developed by teachers for the children as a group and for individual children according to each situation.
- v. **Modeling:** staff model positive interactions and positive expression of feelings.
- vi. **Choices:** staff offer choices to children to help them feel a sense of control over their environment.
- vii. **Anticipation:** staff observe individual children and groups of children to watch for frustrations and other feelings that might lead to conflict. Staff intervene when required.
- viii. **Praise and encouragement:** children are praised for what they do well and encouraged to work through difficult situations or conflict.
- ix. **Consequences:** natural and logical consequences are used to help children understand the impact of their actions and behaviour.
- x. **Team approach:** staff discuss concerns and strategies for individual children and ensure a team approach.



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The following acts by staff, substitutes, parents, volunteers, ECE and other students **are not permitted**:

- corporal punishment of the child;
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- locking the exits of the childcare centre premises for the purpose of confining the child or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures.
- use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Parents who refuse to follow the Child Guidance & Prohibitive Acts policy will not be able to volunteer in the program with the children. Staff who do not follow the policy will be disciplined in keeping with the Inuuqatigiit Personnel and Policy Procedures.

## **REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

All staff of Inuuqatigiit and parents are required by the *Ontario Child and Family Services Act* to report any suspected child abuse of the children in their care. This law is in place to ensure the safety and protection of all children. Our goal is to work together with families at all times to ensure the best outcome possible.

## **ALCOHOL & DRUGS**

All parent and community events are non-alcoholic and drug free. Any person who comes to Inuuqatigiit or any other Inuuqatigiit event who has consumed alcohol or drugs before attending is not permitted to stay. No one is permitted to care for a child if he/she is obviously intoxicated.

## **VULNERABLE SECTOR CHECKS**

It is the policy of Inuuqatigiit that all staff, students and volunteers 18 years or older have a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) conducted within 2 weeks of commencing employment and then every 3 years after that. At the end of the first and second years of this cycle the employee will be required to complete an offence declaration that addresses the period from which the original VSC was conducted. **A staff who is waiting for a VSC to be processed cannot be left alone with children at any time.**

All Board of Director members must also complete a VSC. A positive VSC does not automatically mean exclusion from Inuuqatigiit programs. If an individual has a positive check he/she can go through an

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internal review process which will determine a decision about participation based on the nature, severity and date of the criminal record. Confidentiality throughout the review process is ensured.

## **SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN**

Children must be supervised at all times by Inuuqatigiit staff over 18 years of age. All volunteers and students, including parents **are not permitted** to supervise or be left alone with a child (other than their own) or group of children without staff supervision during their time at Inuuqatigiit.

## **WATER TESTING FOR LEAD**

We are required to test the taps at the centre that are used for drinking water and preparing food for the children to ensure that there are no unsafe levels of lead in the water.

## **CONCUSSIONS**

We are aware that concussions for children are becoming more common. We take measures daily to reduce the risk of injury to children attending Early Years programs. While most daily activities are not considered high risk for concussions, concussions can occur in any situation and staff are vigilant in planning and supervising activities to ensure the risk of injury is low. Children are required to wear helmets when they are biking or sledding. Inuuqatigiit concussion policy provides information for staff and parents to follow when a concussion does occur.

# **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF**

## **PARENTS GUESTS & VOLUNTEERS**

Parents are invited to attend Inuuqatigiit aged to interact and play with their own child while assisting them in following the routines and expectations of the program. You may also be asked to share or demonstrate cultural knowledge. As a parent guest, may also assist with some tasks such as wiping tables or clearing dishes during their visit. Parent guests do not have direct contact with children other than their own nor do they deliver a part of the program. Parent guests are not required to complete a Vulnerable Sector Check.



Parents who wish to take on more responsibility in the program as volunteers are required to complete a Vulnerable Sector Check. Parent volunteers are assigned specific duties such as preparing snack, photocopying, sorting art work, etc. All parent volunteers must read and sign off on all related policies.

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## PARENT-STAFF COMMUNICATION

We will keep you up to date about the program and upcoming events through an event calendar, flyers and phone calls. Any information to go home will be put in your child's backpack and we will share information about your child's day in his/her communication book. The communication book is put in your child's backpack so please look for it and read it every day. It is important to know how your child is doing and what events are happening. If you have an immediate concern about your child's care, please speak to your child's teacher or make an appointment to discuss your concern.



## SPECIAL EVENTS

Parental and family involvement is an important part of Inuuqatigiit. Many special events are planned throughout the year to help you and your extended family feel that you belong to the program. Children then experience a sense of community by being part of celebrations and events that include their families and other important people in their lives. Events include the AGM, Inuit Day, Christmas Party, seasonal lunches, Parent Orientation BBQ and Year End Celebration.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION

Evaluation of the EY programs is important and will be done formally and informally during the school year. All EY parents are asked to complete an annual Parent Evaluation that gives us feedback about what we are doing well and what could be improved. You are welcome to voice suggestions and provide feedback of the program to Inuuqatigiit staff at any time.

## PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Our goal is to provide quality child care and early education for your child. If you are concerned about something at Inuuqatigiit, please see the policy and procedure below for addressing your concern.

Concerns are any expression of dissatisfaction about the programs, services or operations of Inuuqatigiit. The subject matter of concerns may be:

- the services or programs we provide
- the way we operate our services and programs
- our policies and procedures
- our rules and expectations
- how staff work with clients

1. Parents who have a concern must inform the Manager of Early Years of their concern.
2. An EY staff member who receives a concern from a parent must direct the person to the Manager of Early Years to discuss the concern either in person or by telephone within 24 hours of receiving the complaint.

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3. The Manager of Early Years will respond to and discuss the concern with the parent in a respectful and confidential manner within 24 hours. The Manager of Early Years will comply with the Inuuqatigiit Code of Conduct at all times. This meeting will allow the manager an opportunity to resolve the concern during the discussion.
4. A parent who feels that the matter was not resolved during the meeting with the Manager of Early Years is encouraged to discuss their concern with the Director of Programs.
5. Upon being contacted by the parent about the concern, the Director of Programs will contact the parent within 2 business days to discuss the concern either in person or by telephone. If the concern is considered a Serious Occurrence, then the parent will be contacted by the Director of Programs within 24 hours. In most cases, the Manager of Early Years will be included in the meeting with the Director of Programs and parent. At the discretion of the Director of Programs he/she may meet with the parent privately.
6. If the parent feels as though the issue was not resolved by meeting with the Director of Programs, then the parent can present the concern to the Executive Director who will meet with the parent within 5 business days. If the parent feels as though the issue was not resolved by this meeting, then he/she can report the concern to the Board of Directors in person or in writing for review.
7. All issues/concerns are expected to be raised by parents/guardians in a respectful manner. Verbal abuse, verbal threats, etc. will not be tolerated. If at any point a parent/guardian or staff feels uncomfortable, verbally threatened, verbally abused or belittled, the meeting/conversation will end, and the Executive Director will be informed immediately of the situation.
8. Concerns brought forward by parents/guardians shall be documented by staff/supervisor and provided to the Executive Director once the discussion or meeting had concluded.
9. A concern about alleged abuse or neglect of a child receiving care at the centre is considered a serious occurrence. The Manager of Early Years will contact the Director of Programs and Executive Director immediately following the meeting with the parent to discuss next steps. All aspects of Inuuqatigiit Serious Occurrence Policy will be implemented. The parent will be informed by staff to contact the Children's Aid Society directly. Staff are also responsible for reporting this information as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.
10. A concern involving staff, volunteer, student or substitute conduct will be investigated and the parent/guardian will be informed when the investigation is complete. Disciplinary information will be maintained in keeping with Inuuqatigiit Privacy Policy.

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## Appendix A

### EARLY YEARS PROGRAM STATEMENT

Inuuqatigiit Early Years Program Statement integrates *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (Inuit traditional knowledge) and the 6 *Aboriginal Head Start* components with key elements of *How Does Learning Happen* (Ministry of Education). We are committed to supporting young Inuit children’s learning, development, health and well-being in a loving, caring, holistic and cultural context that promotes the preservation of the Inuktitut language. Inuit view children as unique gifts to a community. Through a process called *Innunguiniq*, which relies on interconnectedness and relationships, children develop their capacity **to live a good life** and contribute to their community.

*“A good life is considered one where you have sufficient proper attitude and ability to be able to contribute to working for the common good—helping others and making improvements for those to come. This is a holistic child development approach that ensures strength in attitude, skill development, thinking, and behaviour. The specific process for ensuring this result— inunnguiniq—is a shared responsibility within the group. Inunnguiniq is the Inuit equivalent of it takes a village to raise a child.” (Shirley Tagalik)*

#### **Children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential**

Children are the central piece to a family and community and they hold the future in their minds, bodies and spirits. We embrace each child and recognize his/her individual gifts.

#### **Families include individuals who are competent, capable, curious and rich in experience**

Families nurture and teach children to become who they are meant to be. We embrace each family and support them in their role as the most important people in a child’s life.

#### **Educators are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential**

Educators bring a range of professional and life experiences that enriches the lives and experiences of children in their care. What we do today matters tomorrow.

## BELONGING

### **GOALS:**

Every child has a sense of belonging when he/she is connected to others and contributes to his/her world.

Parents/guardians feel a sense of belonging when they are connected to others and contribute to their community.

### **PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS:**

To cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, staff, families and community.

### **HOW?**

#### **❖ Promote and celebrate Inuit culture and language:**

- We promote *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* principles in interactions, activities, teachings and relationships.
- We encourage children and families to be proud of their Inuit heritage.

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- We incorporate traditional play items such as bone games, string games, ulus, drums, amautiit, atigiik, Inuit dolls into children's play.
  - We set up the learning environment with books, print materials and other artifacts that promote Inuit culture and language.
  - We engage Elders and community members to teach and show traditional skills and knowledge.
  - We teach children traditional skills and knowledge such as preparing country food, reading the weather, seasonal changes, sewing, carving and lighting the qulliq.
  - We model and teach children to show respect for Elders.
  - We demonstrate respect for and understanding of traditional naming practices that honour the spirit of loved ones.
  - We accommodate the needs of children whose first language is Inuktitut.
  - We understand the integral role that Inuktitut plays in culture.
  - We support and encourage the learning, retention and preservation of Inuktitut.
  - We share culture and language resources with parents/guardians.
- ❖ ***Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, families, educators and staff:***
- We develop and model caring, accepting, respectful, supportive, trustworthy, responsive and positive relationships with and amongst children, families, educators and staff.
  - We encourage children to do their best to help and care for others.
  - We connect with each child and recognize and value his/her unique spirit, individuality and presence.
  - We accept and respect children and parents/guardians where they are at as individuals.
  - We develop strong bonds with children and take the role of extended family in supporting the family.
  - We foster positive relationships amongst staff and support individual staff in a caring manner.
  - We create a caring learning environment where children play collaboratively and participate together in daily routines.
- ❖ ***Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's unique learning, abilities, perspective and development will be supported:***
- We allow individual children to develop at their own pace, while recognizing and supporting developmental milestones.
  - We develop policies, practices and environments that respect and support inclusion, meaningful participation and a sense of belonging for all children.
- ❖ ***Build trusting relationships and connections with families to promote a sense of belonging at Inuuqatigiit:***
- We understand that a period of adjustment is expected when families relocate to Ottawa from the North and we support them through this transition.
  - We create a welcoming environment where families feel comfortable, get involved, share knowledge and have a sense of shared ownership.
  - We provide transportation services to children to reduce barriers to engagement.
  - We foster an open-door policy for families to be involved.
  - We respect and support individual family values in raising children.
  - We recognize, respect and support the importance of parent-child attachment.
  - We welcome new families with open arms and find ways to connect families with each other.

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- We know the importance of family, extended family and community in the child's life.
- We provide space for CAS parent-child access visits.
- We support bilingual and bi-cultural families by engaging all families.
- We engage adoptive and foster parents to gain their perspective and promote engagement.

❖ **Recognize that each person has a valuable contribution in serving our community:**

- We create a sense of belonging and acceptance where every child is valued by others.
- We see children as a gift to the community and central to the family and community.
- We find ways to integrate the unique perspective of parents/guardians, caregivers and extended family in meaningful and authentic ways.
- We value the many relationships that children form with adults, other children, the community and the natural environment.
- We rely on a strength-based approach to support unique gifts, skills and talents of children, staff and families.
- We celebrate and share the beauty of Inuit culture through children's performances in the community.

## WELL-BEING

### GOALS:

Every child is developing a sense of self, health and well-being.

Parents/guardians have a sense of health and well-being.

Parents/guardians and children have access to health and wellness supports and services.

### PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS:

To nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self.

To acknowledge that family health and wellness impacts the health and well-being of children.

### HOW?

❖ **Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children:**

- We serve traditional food to children when available e.g. caribou, seal, arctic char, bannock.
- We develop and follow policies and procedures to ensure health and safety of everyone.
- We provide nutritious meals and snacks and establish positive eating environments.
- We pay attention to the physical and emotional states of each child and respond in a warm and sensitive manner.
- We support children in their need to take physical challenges while at the same time promoting safety e.g. using an ulu, lighting qulliq.

❖ **Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time into the day, giving consideration to the individual needs of children:**

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- We provide ample time for outdoor play encouraging children to use materials from the natural environment to extend and challenge their play e.g. rocks, bones, twigs, moss, stumps.
- We provide regular daily opportunities for children to play and explore the environment with their bodies, minds, and senses.
- We plan outdoor activities and experiences that are similar to authentic northern experiences e.g. building an igloo, traditional canvas tent, sledding with sealskins, pulling kamutiik, pretend ice fishing and other games.
- We provide time for rest and quiet play and activities during indoor and outdoor play.

❖ ***Support families and staff in accessing health and wellness supports and services:***

- We recommend formal assessments for children when required.
- We work together with families and other professionals to support children's learning and development needs.
- We connect families and staff to other community resources/services and follow up on referrals,
- We provide monthly well-child checks in partnership with community health services.
- We provide regular dental screenings and hygiene activities in partnership with City of Ottawa.

❖ ***Foster the development of self-care and self-regulation for children, parents/guardians and staff:***

- We promote self-regulation through caring and supportive guidance for all.
- We provide opportunities and time to practice independence, self-help and self-care skills based on each child's capabilities throughout daily routines and activities.
- We plan staff activities that promote self-care and personal well-being.
- We offer parent programs and activities aimed at self-care and personal well-being.
- We support individual efforts with kindness and praise.
- We model and advocate for healthy lifestyles.

## ENGAGEMENT

### GOALS:

Every child is a curious, active and engaged learner who has a love of learning and joy in discovery.

Parents/guardians are active and engaged in their child's learning and education.

Community partners are engaged with our programs.

### PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS:

To provide environments and experiences that engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry.

To encourage families to be engaged in their child's learning and education.

To reach each out to community partners to engage them in our programs.

### HOW?



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- ❖ ***Foster the children’s exploration, play and inquiry and provide a blend of child-initiated and adult-supported experiences:***
  - We plan daily routines with limited interruptions and transitions to provide ample time for children to choose and engage in different types of fun, sustained, complex play and inquiry.
  - We plan curriculum through a wide variety of interesting objects and open-ended materials for children to explore with their senses, manipulate and investigate.
  - We foster children’s interest in and connections with stories and books.
  - We plan monthly field trips to provide fun educational experiences.
  - We understand that play is critical to the development of creativity, imagination, independence, friendships and solving problems and conflicts.
  - We take an active role in play with the children.
  - We recognize that children learn from observation and through experience e.g. beading, sewing, cleaning skins.
  
- ❖ ***Involve local community partners in programs and in supporting children, families and staff:***
  - We work with families and community partners to make flexible program adaptations and provide special equipment and or adaptive devices when needed.
  - We promote an open-door policy and visitors and guests are warmly greeted.
  - We build partnerships with a range of service agencies in the community.
  
- ❖ ***Foster children’s preparation for entry into school:***
  - We plan activities that will help children discover and develop awareness and understanding of key concepts of literacy and numeracy.
  - We liaise with elementary schools and teachers to foster smooth transitions.
  - We help prepare families for their child’s entry into school.
  
- ❖ ***Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with families about the program and their children:***
  - We respect and support different types of families; are inclusive of non-Inuit and adoptive/foster families.
  - We encourage families’ involvement in their child’s early learning and development e.g. sharing information, volunteers, visitors, sharing traditional skills, Board of Directors, Parent Council.
  - We provide a thorough intake process for families that includes visits to centre, registration, Theory of Change questionnaires, parent handbooks and parent orientation/BBQ.
  - We foster a strong sense of belonging and connection to the community through celebrations and events e.g. parent orientation/BBQ, AGM, Christmas Party, year-end celebrations, Inuit Day.
  - We engage in ongoing and regular communication with families e.g. communication books, progress reports, newsletters.
  
- ❖ ***Document and review the impact of these strategies on the children and their families:***
  - We observe and document children’s thinking, learning and development to make it visible to children, families and others.

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- We share information about children's progress through bi-annual progress reports and Parent-Educator interviews.
- We plan curriculum using specific knowledge from observations of individual children in the program including skills, knowledge, needs, interests and learning styles.

❖ ***Support individuals, educators and staff in being life-long learners:***

- We provide professional development opportunities to educators and other staff on a regular basis.
- We encourage educators to reflect on their practice and discuss different perspectives.
- We support the involvement of students in our programs e.g. ECE, Co-op, University.

## EXPRESSION

**GOALS:**

Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.

Parents/guardians feel comfortable expressing their views and communicating with staff.

**PROGRAM EXPECTATION:**

To foster communication and expression in all forms with children, staff and parents/guardians.

**HOW?**

❖ ***Welcome others and be open in communication and interactions:***

- We engage in authentic and reciprocal communication with children and families.
- We practice active listening with children, families and each other.
- We communicate with families using a variety of methods e.g. calls, newsletters, communication books, emails, in person.
- We encourage parents/guardians to share their perspectives, feedback and viewpoints e.g. Parent Council, parent surveys.

❖ ***Encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate:***

- We support and respond to children's different cues and ways of communicating.
- We support individual children of all abilities in expressing themselves and being understood.
- We facilitate communication between children by helping them listen to and express themselves to one another.
- We support children's varying abilities to self-regulate and foster new skills and strategies.

❖ ***Foster children's creativity:***

- We provide time, space and materials to encourage expression through creative experiences.
- We encourage critical thinking and creative solutions.

❖ ***Work collaboratively toward common goals:***

- We recognize and advocate for the rights of Inuit children and families.
- We discuss programs and issues at team meetings and make decisions and propose solutions as a group.

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- We work together to set goals and make plans for the future.
- We encourage children to cooperate and work towards a common goal e.g. block building, tidy up.

❖ ***Respect each other and consider different perspectives when making decisions:***

- We value and respect the cultural knowledge that educators bring to the children, families and program.
- We support parents/guardians in feeling comfortable and safe to share their feelings and experiences.
- We show respect for others’ opinions, perspectives, respective work duties and responsibilities.

❖ ***Find solutions and use our resources effectively:***

- We reflect on and seek to improve our communication strategies with children, staff and families.
- We encourage staff and families to be resourceful and determined in seeking solutions to problems.
- We respect and nurture our relationship with the natural environment e.g. taking care of animals, plants and insects.
- We teach conservation when all parts of traditional food are used e.g. use of seals.
- We teach and model the principles of “reduce, reuse and recycle.”