

PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

1. OVERVIEW

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), this Upper Canada Child Care (UCCC) policy supports communication and partnership by working to address parent concerns in a manner that enables people to continue to work together with a sense of fairness, respect, comfort, and clarity about what is expected and acceptable.

2. REVIEW

- 2.1 All employees must review this policy prior to commencing work. A written record must be signed and dated by those participating in the review.
- 2.2 Subsequent policy review, and a written record of the review may be required at the discretion of UCCC.
- 2.3 This policy is reviewed annually by the organization to ensure that it is current and meets requirements.
- 2.4 Records of reviews are to be kept on file in a secure location for at least three years from the time of entry.

3. SCOPE

This statement of policy applies to all employees, students, and volunteers.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

- 4.1 **Employees** are responsible for:
 - 4.1.1 addressing family concerns in a prompt, respectful, and transparent manner according to this policy; and
 - 4.1.2 striving to maintain records (e.g. information, data, documentation) in a timely, and accurate way, without falsification.
- 4.2 **Supervisors** are also responsible for:
 - 4.2.1 addressing concerns if classroom educators are not able to successfully address concerns.
- 4.3 **Assistant Supervisors or Designates** are responsible for:
 - 4.3.1 assuming all duties of the supervisor in the absence of the supervisor.
- 4.4 **Regional Directors** are responsible for:
 - 4.4.1 addressing concerns if supervisor has not been able to successfully address concerns.
- 4.5 **VP Child Care Program** is responsible for:
 - 4.5.1 responding to parents who are not satisfied with the response or outcome of a concern and have escalated the issue verbally or in writing.

5. POLICY

- 5.1 All issues and concerns raised by parents are taken seriously by UCCC and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address concerns and achieve a mutually agreeable resolution as quickly as possible, understanding that exceptions to legislated or organizational policies are not possible.
- 5.2 Parents are encouraged to bring forward concerns, verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be communicated verbally, or in writing upon request. Responses provided must respect and maintain confidentiality of all parties involved.

- 5.3 An initial response to each concern will be provided to the parent(s) within two business days. Formalized steps will be taken to attempt to satisfactorily resolve the concern, and the parent(s) will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.
- 5.4 Concerns will be addressed in a fair, respectful, and impartial way.
- 5.5 Every concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of those involved unless information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities, or a Children's Aid Society (CAS)).
- 5.6 Upper Canada Child Care maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated from any party. If at any point a parent, provider, or employee feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor or regional director.
- 5.7 **Reporting Abuse or Suspected Abuse**
 - 5.7.1 Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.
 - 5.7.2 If a parent expresses concern that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.
 - 5.7.3 Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the 'duty to report' requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.

6. PROCESS

- 6.1 **Parents Reporting Issues and Concerns:**
 - 6.1.1 **regarding classroom or program** (e.g. daily schedules, sleep arrangements, toilet training, program activities, feeding arrangements, child conflicts, etc.), contact:
 - 6.1.1.1 classroom educators directly; or
 - 6.1.1.2 supervisor, if classroom educators are not able to successfully address concerns.
 - 6.1.2 **regarding general operations of the centre** (e.g. childcare fees, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.), contact:
 - 6.1.2.1 supervisor directly; or
 - 6.1.2.2 regional director, if supervisor has not been able to successfully address concerns.
 - 6.1.3 **regarding employee or supervisor conduct**, contact:
 - 6.1.3.1 individual involved; or
 - 6.1.3.2 supervisor or regional director if resolution is not found.
 - 6.1.4 **regarding the conduct of students/volunteers**, contact:
 - 6.1.4.1 educator directly involved in supervising the individual; or
 - 6.1.4.2 supervisor.
- 6.2 All issues or concerns about the conduct of employees/students/volunteers that puts a child's health, safety, and well-being at risk must be reported to the supervisor immediately. In the case of concern for a child's welfare, CAS must also be contacted as per section 5.7.
- 6.3 **Employees Responding to Issues and Concerns**
 - 6.3.1 Address the issue or concern at the time it is raised or arrange a meeting with parent(s) within five business days.
 - 6.3.2 Document concerns in detail including:
 - 6.3.2.1 date and time the concern was reported;
 - 6.3.2.2 name of person who received and/or reported the concern; and

- 6.3.2.3 details of the concern and any steps taken to resolve the issue and/or information provided to the parent regarding next steps.
 - 6.3.3 Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.
 - 6.3.4 Ensure the investigation of the issue is initiated by the appropriate person within two business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. (Document reasons for delays in writing).
 - 6.3.5 Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent who raised the concern either verbally or in writing if requested. Written responses may be provided either in letter format or through electronic communication. Written communication with respect to concerns should include all parties involved in the resolution process where appropriate, and unless there is a risk of a breach confidentiality.
- 6.4 **Escalation of Issues or Concerns**
 - 6.4.1 Where parents are not satisfied with the response or outcome of a concern, they may escalate the issue verbally or in writing to:
 - Vice President Child Care Programs
 - info@ucccc.ca
 - 289-982-1113
 - 6.4.2 Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch:
 - Ministry of Education, Licensing Child Care Help Desk
 - Childcare_ontario@ontario.ca
 - 1-877-510-5333
 - 6.4.3 Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (local Public Health department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

7. ENFORCEMENT

An employee found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 8.1 Policy Review Acknowledgement Form