

	POLICY TITLE	CATEGORY
	Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures: Child Care Centres, Before & After School Programs	Programs
	APPROVING BODY OR POSITION	APPROVAL DATE
	Director, Programs	October 2025
	PRIMARY LEGISLATION / REGULATION REFERENCE(S)	
	Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)	

Purpose

This policy and the procedures will help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care in our child care and school age programs.

This policy will provide Educators, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre outside of their typical schedule, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Scope

This policy applies to all potential and existing Family Day employees who work directly with children, including students and volunteers who are over eighteen (18) years old. All Family Day Educators, Students and Volunteers will ensure that any child receiving care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization to the child care centre allowing them to be released to such person.

Family Day Educators will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual.

Parents are expected to inform the child care program if their child will be late or absent from the program from expected schedule.

- A parent/guardian may request that a child who is 10 years old or older be released from child care without supervision. Parents/Guardians must provide written and signed authorization and instructions for the release of the child including the time of dismissal on the Authority and Release – Unescorted Form.
- A parent/guardian may request that a child who is 10 years old or older be authorized to pick up a younger child from care. Parents/guardians must provide written and signed authorization and instructions for the release of the child including the time of dismissal on the Authority and Release - Escorted Form.
- Where a parent/guardian provides written instructions for the release of their child from care without supervision, the parent/guardian is aware that the child care is no longer responsible for that child upon their dismissal.

Procedures

1) Accepting a child into care

When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, The Educator in the room must:

- Greet the parent/guardian and child. Ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the Educator must confirm that the person is listed on the child's pick-up list in the PORTAL, or child's profile. If the individual is not listed, the Educator must ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., a signed note, email, or text message).
- Document the change in pick-up procedure in the centre communication book.
- Sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child does not arrive in care outside of the child's typical schedule, or is not picked up as by closure of the centre, Educators must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below

2) Where a child has not arrived in care within their typical schedule

Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre within their typical schedule and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up the prior day), the Educator in the classroom must:

- For children in the Infant, Toddler, Preschool programs and Kindergarten and School Age children attending full day, the Educator will notify the Supervisor/Designate and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 12:00 pm. Educators/Supervisor/Designate shall contact the parents/guardians by calling and leaving a detailed message. If no response is received, an email or text message will be sent to the parent/guardians advising them of the child's absence. After 30 minutes, if they do not successfully connect with the family, they must follow up again with a second phone call/text message or email. All attempts to contact parent/guardians and any actions taken are documented
- For school age children attending the before and after program, the Educators will notify the Supervisor/Designate, and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian. All attempts to contact parent/guardians and any actions taken are documented
- For school age children attending the after-school program, educators will notify the centre Supervisor/Designate. They will contact the parent/guardian by calling and leaving a detailed message. If no response is received, an email / text message will be sent to the parent/guardian requesting confirmation of absence. All attempts to contact parent/guardians and any actions taken are documented
- If the Supervisor/Designate/Educator are unable to confirm a child's absence as per the procedure above, they are to contact the child's emergency contact to assist in reaching the parent/guardian. All attempts to contact the child's emergency contact and any actions taken are documented

Once the child's absence has been confirmed, the Educator shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the centre's communication book.

3) Releasing a child from care

Educators must only release a child to:

- A parent or guardian – the child's parent or guardian
- Authorized individuals – an individual with written authorization from child's parent/guardian on file
- Unescorted departure – a child for whom a signed "Authority and Release Form – Unescorted - Child Care Centres and Before & After School Programs" is on file, permitting the child to leave the centre unescorted.

➤ **Where the Educator does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual), the Educator must do the following:**

- Confirm with the Centre Supervisor that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
- Where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

➤ **Where a parent may tell you not to release a child to the other parent**

Unless a court order has been provided prohibiting the parent from seeing or picking up the child or children, a child or children cannot be withheld from the parent. A court order may also state what days and times the parent can see/pick up the child or children.

➤ **If a parent asks you not to release a child to the other parent but does not have a court order saying so, follow these steps:**

- Tell the parent that you cannot stop the other parent from picking up their child, unless you see a court order that says this. Only a court of law can take away a parent's right to be with their child.
- If the parent is still concerned that the other parent may come, the Supervisor will set up a meeting to discuss this concern and how it can be resolved.
- If the parent tells you that the other parent may be abusing the child, please follow the procedures in the Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Policy, including calling the Children's Aid Society in your Region.

➤ **Where the parent has a court order stating when each parent may have the child, but the parents want to switch days.**

In this case, ask for a written note telling you who should pick up the child each day. If a parent comes on a different day, follow these steps:

- 1) Tell the parent who has come to pick up the child that you must call the other parent to make sure that it is okay to release the child.
- 2) Call the parent who is supposed to pick up the child on that day. Ask for permission to release the child to the other parent. You must get an email / text message permission note or a message on the voice mail from this parent agreeing to the change. **Do not release** the child until you receive the email/text or phone message.
- 3) If the parent insists on taking the child without permission, or begins to get upset, angry, or threatening in any way, release the child to them and call 911.
- 4) If you know that there is a restraining order, condition of bail, or prohibition order that does not allow the person to be near the child, call the police immediately when that person arrives at the centre. You cannot let a parent visit a child if you know there is a court order against this, even if the other parent says it is okay.
- 5) Call the Children's Aid Society if the child tells you that someone who is not allowed to be near the child has been visiting or seeing the child.
- 6) Notify your Supervisor/Designate.

➤ **Where a parent/guardian has completed the Authority and Release Form – Unescorted - Child Care Centres and Before & After School Programs to allow the child 10 years of age or older to leave the child care center unescorted.**

Where a parent/guardian has provided written authorization for their child to be released from care without supervision, one Educator in the program must be responsible for dismissing the child from care. Prior to dismissing the child from care, the Educator shall review the written instructions for release provided by the parent/guardian on the Authority and Release Form – Unescorted Child Care Centres and Before & After School Programs and release the child at the time set out in the instructions. The Educator shall document the time of departure from care and include their initials on the attendance record.

- **Where a parent/guardian has completed the Authority and Release Form – Escorted – Child Care Centres and Before & After School Programs, to allow their child to be picked up by another child 10 years of age or older.**

Where a parent/guardian has provided written authorization for their child to be released to another child 10 years of age or older, one Educator in the program must be responsible for dismissing the child from care. Prior to dismissing the child from care, the Educator shall review the written instructions documented on the Authority and Release Form – Escorted Child Care Centres and Before & After School Programs. The staff shall document the time of departure from care and include their initials on the attendance record.

4) Where a child has not been picked up and the Centre is closed

If a child is not picked up by closing, and no one has called to say they will be late, follow these steps.

(Please Note: Do not follow this procedure if ☐ the parent has given you a reasonable explanation for being late. An example of a reasonable explanation would be there was a bad accident on the road, and the parent is stuck in traffic.)

- 1) Wait 15 minutes for the parents to arrive. After 15 minutes try to contact parent(s)/guardians at all available phone numbers and leave messages and text messages.
- 2) Telephone the alternate pick-up person or emergency contact. If that person is not there or you get a voice mail leave a message with your name and phone number. Ask the person to call you back and let you know if they can pick up the child.
- 3) Notify your Supervisor or the backup Supervisor covering, or the Program Manager for your area.
- 4) If an alternate pick-up person you have never met responds to your call, ask them for identification before you release the child. Leave a message on the parent's telephone to let them know who has picked up their child and at what time this occurred.
- 5) If no one has arrived one hour after closing time, call the Children's Aid Society. If you get an answering service, leave your name and phone number and a Children's Aid worker will call you back. Tell the Children's Aid worker that you are a child care centre staff and that you are unable to reach anyone to pick up the child.
- 6) Wait for a Children's Aid worker to arrive. This may take several hours. Do not go out or drive the child anywhere. When a Children's Aid worker or police officer arrives at the centre, ask for identification before letting them in.
- 7) If the parent arrives before the Children's Aid worker arrives, release the child. Call Children's Aid to report when the child was picked up. Also, let the Children's Aid Society know the reason given as to why the parent was late.
- 8) Document the following in the communication book:
 - How long the child stayed with you past the pick-up time;
 - The reason the parent gave you for being late;
 - The name of the Children's Aid worker or police officer;
 - Any instructions that the police or Children's Aid gave you;
 - What happened when a Children's Aid worker or police officer came to the centre;
 - Inform your supervisor/Program Manager of what has happened.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED APPENDICES:

- APPENDIX A | Authority and Release Form – Unescorted - Child Care Centres and Before & After School Programs (Oct'25)
- APPENDIX B | Authority and Release Form – Escorted - Child Care Centres and Before & After School Programs (Oct'25)



**FAMILY
DAY**

Authority and Release Form – Unescorted Child Care Centres and Before & After Programs

I, _____, a parent of/or the legal guardian of
Parent/Guardian name

_____, hereby authorize the said
Child(ren)'s name(s)

child(ren) to ☐ leave / ☐ arrive _____
Name of Child Care Centre / Before & After School Program

Unescorted at _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM to _____

By bus at _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM to _____
Name of School

Returning at _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM to _____
Name of Centre/Before & After Program

I hereby release and relieve Family Day Care Services and the Child Care Centre / Before & After School Program, from any and all responsibilities for and in respect to the said child(ren) after leaving the Child Care Centre / Before & After School Program as herein before set forth, or until their return to the Child Care Centre / Before & After School Program.

Dated in _____ this _____
name of city/town date

Signed and delivered in the presence of:

Parent/Guardian signature

Witness signature

Parent/Guardian signature

Witness signature



**FAMILY
DAY**

Authority and Release Form – Escorted Child Care Centres and Before & After School Programs

I, _____, a parent of/or the legal guardian of
Parent/Guardian name

_____, hereby authorize the said
Child(ren)'s name(s)

child(ren) to ☐ leave / ☐ arrive _____
Name of Child Care Centre / Before & After School Program

with _____ at _____ ☐ AM / ☐ PM
Name of Person Escorting Child(ren) Time

to go to _____.

I hereby release and relieve Family Day Care Services and the child care centre from any and all responsibilities for and in respect to the said child(ren) after leaving the child care centre as herein before set forth, or until their return to the child care centre.

Dated in _____ this _____
Name of city/town date

Signed and delivered in the presence of:

Parent/Guardian signature

Witness signature

Parent/Guardian signature

Witness signature