



**PARENTS' HANDBOOK**  
**REKSAP Centres For Early Learning**  
*Updated December 2023*

Thank you for taking the time to read the Parents' Handbook. We hope that you and your child(ren) enjoy REKSAP Centres For Early Learning.

The Educators and Board of Directors of REKSAP Centres For Early Learning would like to emphasize how important it is for you, and your child(ren), to have a positive experience in the Centre. It is our goal to help each child develop to their fullest potential. We appreciate working with our parents to meet the needs of our families, keeping the interest of the children in mind always. If, at any time, you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to ask the Educators in person, or by telephone at \* Regina 613-828-8743 \* Severn 613-828-3039. Please accept our warm welcome to your family.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

- a) REKSAP = REKSAP Centres For Early Learning
- b) Digibot = Digibot Management System
- c) CWELCCS = Canada-Wide Early Learning Child Care System
- d) TODS = Toddler
- e) PRE = Preschool
- f) KGT = Kindergarten
- g) SA = School Age
- h) RECE = Registered Early Childhood Educators
- i) HDLH = How Does Learning Happen
- j) ELECT = Early Learning for Every Child Today
- k) OPH = Ottawa Public Health

## 1. PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY/LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

REKSAP Centres For Early Learning provide a safe, well-supervised facility with a comfortable atmosphere in which the daily program meets the needs and interests of the participating children. The program goals are to provide both individual and group learning opportunities in both indoor, and outdoor, environments. The curriculum is designed to allow flexible, spontaneous activities based on the children's interests. Following the [Early Learning for Every Child Today](#) (ELECT) and [How Does Learning Happen](#) pedagogy, our Registered Early Childhood Educators provide a stimulating, educational, play-based environment which guides the children's learning, enhances their knowledge, and meets their individual developmental needs.

### From How Does Learning Happen:

**Children** are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential. They grow up in families with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. Every child should feel that they belong, is a valuable contributor to their surroundings, and deserves the opportunity to succeed. When we recognize children as capable and curious, we are more likely to deliver programs, and services, that value and build on their strengths and abilities.

**Families** are composed of individuals who are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience. Families love their children and want the best for them. Families are experts on their children. They are the first and most powerful influence on children's learning, development, health, and well-being. Families bring diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. Families should feel that they belong, are valuable contributors to their children's learning, and deserve to be engaged in a meaningful way.

**Educators** are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience. They are knowledgeable, caring, reflective, and resourceful professionals. They bring diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. They collaborate with others to create engaging environments and experiences to foster children's learning and development. Educators are lifelong learners. They take responsibility for their own learning and make decisions about ways to integrate knowledge from theory, research, their own experience, and their understanding of the individual children and families they work with. Every Educator should feel they belong, is a valuable contributor, and deserve the opportunity to engage in meaningful work.

## 2. LICENSING

REKSAP Centres For Early Learning are licensed under the Child Care and Early Years Act of the provincial Ministry of Education. REKSAP is required to meet all the regulations of this Act, and Health and Fire Regulations set forth by Ottawa Public Health, and the Ontario Fire Marshall.

The Program Advisor, from the Ministry of Education, monitors adherence to standards for safety, staff training, program quality and compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act.

## 3. CENTRE PERSONNEL AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Staff – Full-time staff of our Centre, are Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE). Part-time staff have training and/or experience appropriate for their position.

Board of Directors - The Board of Directors that operate the Centre consists of parents, community members, Principals of Regina School and of Severn School, and REKSAP's Executive Director. Board meetings follow a monthly schedule, and an Annual General Meeting is held each year, at which time new members can be elected. All Board meetings are open, and general discussion is encouraged (within time limits), although only Board members have voting privileges. Board meeting minutes and by-laws are available upon request, at the Centres.



#### 4. HOURS OF OPERATION

Our program operates from Monday to Friday annually. **Ages: 18 months - 12 years of age**

From September to June, we offer an early morning program starting at 7:30 a.m. The children are then accompanied to the school playground (weather permitting) where a teacher (from Regina/Severn School) is present until school commences. The 6-12 (Regina) and 6-12 (Severn) year-old children return independently to the program room where the Educators are waiting to greet them. An Educator meets the 4 and 5-year-old Kindergarten children at the Kindergarten classroom and transitions them back to our rooms. Our Centres close at 5:30 p.m.

Full-day programming is available during the March Break, PA Days and Summer Holidays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Please note: hours of operation may change due to staff shortage due to illness/capacity within the sector.

We observe the following **Statutory Holidays/Days closed:**

New Year's Day	-January
Family Day	- February
Good Friday	- March/April
Easter Monday	- March/April
Victoria Day	- May
Canada Day	- July
Civic Holiday	- August
Professional Development	
Day for RECES	– Last day of the summer August/September (no fee charged to parents)
Labour Day	- September
Truth and Reconciliation Day	- September (taken during winter holiday, in lieu of)
Thanksgiving	- October
Remembrance Day	- November (taken during winter holiday, in lieu of)
Christmas	- December 25
Boxing Day	- December 26
Winter Holiday Break	- between Christmas and New Years (no fees charged to parents)

#### 5. SAFE ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL POLICY

All children must arrive by 10:00 a.m. at REKSAP or will not be accepted for that day. If your child has a doctor's appointment, etc. please call to verify in the case an exception needs to be made.

##### Safe Arrival & Dismissal Policy

**Effective January 1, 2024**

**Version 1.2 (2023-12-20)**

##### *1. Accepting a child into care*

When accepting a child into care, program staff must:

- greet the parent/guardian and the child;
- if shared by (or discussed with) the parent/guardian, document any one-time change to pick-up procedure during the child's check-in process on DigibotGO;
- check-in the child on DigibotGO.

##### *2. When a child has not arrived in care as expected*

When a child does not arrive at the centre, and the parent/guardian has not reported the absence in advance via the parent portal, program staff will receive a notification on the DigibotGO staff app requesting confirmation that the child has not arrived. This notification will be triggered as follows:

- **For school-age programs in the morning:** 15 minutes before transition to school
- **For school-age programs in the afternoon:** 15 minutes after transition from school to childcare



- **For infant, toddler and preschool programs:** 180 minutes (3 hours) after the centre opens

If program staff does not confirm the child's absence within 10 minutes and/or if their DigibotGO device is offline, the site supervisor will be required to confirm the child's absence. Once the child's absence has been confirmed:

- **Level 1** – Authorized parents/guardians will receive a notification asking them to confirm the child's presence or absence.
- **Level 2** – If parents/guardians do not confirm the child's absence within 20 minutes, the site supervisor will personally attempt to contact each person listed on the child's emergency contact listing in the sequence identified in the child's file. If the supervisor is unavailable, the incident will be referred to a designated SADP lead.
- **Level 3** – If no parent/guardian or emergency contact can be reached, the site supervisor will contact one of the SADP leads designated by the organization. This SADP lead will determine next steps based on the situational factors. In the event that no SADP lead is unavailable, site supervisors will make a co-decision regarding next steps.

### *3. Releasing a child from care*

Staff supervising the child at the time of pick-up must only release the child to a parent or authorized contact listed on the child's Digibot contact listing available in the DigibotGO staff app or on the child's printed emergency card. During the first three (3) interactions between a staff member and a parent/emergency contact, the DigibotGO staff app will require the staff to confirm the person's identity:

- by checking with another staff member, or;
- by checking the person's photo identification.

If the person is not listed as an authorized contact for pick-up, the educator must obtain authorization in person or verbally (by telephone, walkie-talkie, intercom, etc.) from the site supervisor or an SADP lead to release the child to this person. In this case, an automated email will be sent to parents/guardians to document the interaction and remind them to add the emergency contact via the portal.

### *4. When a child has not been picked up upon centre closing*

If a child has not been picked up 15 minutes prior to the centre closing time, program staff will receive a DigibotGO notification to confirm that the child is still present. If staff does not confirm the child's attendance within 10 minutes and/or if their DigibotGO device is offline, the site supervisor will be asked to confirm the child's attendance. Once it has been confirmed that the child is still on site:

- **Level 1** – Authorized parents/guardians will receive a notification asking them to confirm that they are on their way.
- **Level 2** – If parents/guardians do not respond to the notification within 20 minutes, the site supervisor will personally attempt to contact each person listed on the child's emergency contact listing in the sequence identified in the child's file. If the supervisor is not available, the incident will be assigned to a designated SADP lead.
- **Level 3** – If no parent/guardian or emergency contact can be reached, the site supervisor will contact one of the SADP leads designated by the organization. The SADP lead will determine next steps based on the situational factors. In some cases, these next steps can include contacting one or more external agencies for guidance. In the event that no SADP lead is unavailable, site supervisors will make a co-decision regarding next steps.

### *5. SADP Incident Reports*

Every time SADP steps are engaged, regardless of level, an SADP incident report will be generated. Incident reports will require an electronic signature from the site supervisor as well as a parent/guardian. At the centre's discretion, several high-level incidents may result in further warnings and/or termination of childcare services.

### *6. Dismissing a child from care without supervision*

Staff will only release the child to a parent or authorized contact listed on the child's Digibot contact listing available in the DigibotGO staff app or on the child's printed emergency card. Under no circumstances will children be released from care without supervision.



### 7. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/guardians agree to:

- report their child's absence in advance via the parent portal;
- maintain their child's updated emergency contact listing via the parent portal;
- notify program staff of any punctual changes to their child's daily drop-off or pick-up procedures.

### 8. Program Staff Responsibilities

Program staff agrees to:

- adequately and accurately complete the child's check-in and check-out process;
- complete SADP attendance validation when prompted;
- complete identity verification when prompted.

### 9. Disclaimer

The purpose of this policy is to implement procedures to ensure the safe arrival and departure of children. It relies on the participation and collaboration of parents/guardians, program staff and management staff to function optimally. In addition, the organization uses several Digibot technological tools and features to support the implementation of this policy. Some factors may affect the implementation of these procedures, the accuracy of the information dispatched and/or the triggering of these automated processes - including power outages and/or network failures, equipment malfunction and manual oversights or errors. The childcare centre and Digibot will not be held responsible in the event of such a situation. Furthermore, as this policy stems from brand new requirements of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (Regulation 325/23 section 5, Regulation 137/15 section 50), the childcare centre and Digibot reserve the right to modify the policy at any time with reasonable notice.

### 10. Definitions

- **Site supervisor:** designates the site's Program Supervisor;
- **SADP Team Lead:** designates the centre's Executive Director.

Absences must be reported using the Digibot Attendance Tool (Absences and Vacation tab in the parent portal) – if your child is sick, please list the symptoms in the comments section.

If the Digibot Attendance Tool is not accessible, parents can report their child's absence using the following:

- Digibot Chat
- Email: [regina@reksap.ca](mailto:regina@reksap.ca) or [severn@reksap.ca](mailto:severn@reksap.ca)
- Phone: Regina – 613-828-8743 or Severn – 613-828-3039

Parents are to notify the centre if their child(ren) will not be attending REKSAP that day.

**Kindergarten and School Age:** Both REKSAP and the school (Regina Street Alternative School or Severn Avenue Public School) must be notified.

## 6. CHILD PICK-UP/RELEASE

Children must be picked up by the parent(s) prior to the closing time of the centre. According to the law, both parents have equal access to their child, and to the information about the child's development, health and welfare. The only time the Executive Director/Program Supervisor or staff can deny access of a parent to a child is when there is a written separation agreement, or a legal court order.

No child will be released to a person other than the parents without advanced written permission, or a phone message/Digibot Chat message to the program. **Picture I.D. is a requirement for identification and must be shown/provided upon pick up of a child(ren).**

When dropping off and picking up, please accompany your child to, and from, the REKSAP Centres For Early Learning rooms.



**The Executive Director and staff will not release a child to a person if there is reason to believe the child is in any danger. Children will not be released to a person who is under 16 years of age. All permanent changes in Permission of Release must be made in writing in Digibot.**

## **7. LATE PICKUP POLICY**

The hours of operation for REKSAP Regina/Severn are from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Parent(s) picking up their children after 5:30 p.m. will be considered late and must sign the Late Book.

After three signatures in the Late Book, parents will be given a First Notice letter that requires the parent(s) to state the reason for late pickups.

Parent(s) who are late a second time will be given a Second Notice letter and the problem will be referred to the REKSAP Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may request that the parent(s) attend an upcoming board meeting to discuss the problem of late pickup.

A third infraction of the late pickup policy may, unfortunately, result in your removal from the REKSAP program.

## **8. ADMISSION**

Those wishing to apply for a space in our centres must register with the Ottawa Child Care Registry and Waitlist managed through the City of Ottawa. You can contact them by telephone at 3-1-1 or <https://onehsn.com/Ottawa>.

Our Centres will review applications in order of the Ottawa Child Care Registry and Waitlist date and these applications will be processed internally, giving priority to those children who are registered at Regina Alternative School or Severn Avenue Public School and/or have a sibling already in our centre.

Applicants will be contacted by telephone/e-mail when a space is available. Should an applicant turn the space down, they may choose to remain on the Ottawa Child Care Registry and Waitlist.

The Executive Director/Program Supervisor will meet with parent(s) to discuss the program, contents of the Parent Handbook and review all required registration forms. The child and families' needs are discussed as well as the program's ability to meet their needs.

1. Parent fills out all required forms on Digibot once registration is confirmed. We work together with parents to ensure the needs of their child(ren) are met effectively and that they benefit fully from positive learning and social experiences within the centres. Full co-operation, and open and honest communication is expected. The following forms and accompanying policies are explained.
2. All forms are reviewed by the Executive Director/Program Supervisor upon completion. Withheld information is cause for discharge.
3. Toddler and Preschool children. The child's first two days in the centres will be from 9:00am to 11:00am allowing for a gentle introduction to a new environment. Parents are encouraged to spend some time with the children in the program. Close communication should be developed between the parents, the Educators, Program Supervisors, and the Executive Director.

### **Capacity**

REKSAP – Regina: 15 Toddlers, 32 Preschool, 52 Kindergarten and 60 School Age

REKSAP – Severn: 16 Preschool, 52 Kindergarten and 60 School Age



## 9. DISCHARGE

The following is a list of conditions that may necessitate the premature discharge of a child from the childcare program:

- a. Failure by a parent, or parents, to meet their financial obligations over a period of time.
- b. Intentional disregard by a parent to comply with the policies and procedures outlined by the childcare program.
- c. Behaviour exhibited by a parent that is considered to be abusive or harmful (physically or emotionally) to the children, staff members, other parents, or the childcare environment.
- d. Lack of co-operation and open communication with the staff (and the Board of Directors) of the Centre.
- e. Withholding information about the child(ren)'s needs, health, or physical wellness at admission and/or while enrolled at the Centre.
- f. Physical or emotional treatment of a staff member by a parent, or a child, which results in the staff member feeling intimidated, harassed, threatened, or abused.
- g. Inability of the centre to meet a child's needs. (i.e., may need Program Assistant – CISS)

## 10. WITHDRAWALS

REKSAP Centres For Early Learning requires two weeks written notice of withdrawal.

Payment of two weeks fee is required in lieu of written notice.

For Option 2 registrations:

- Option 2 registration follows the school year (September to June).
- Before and after school care is available on instructional days only.
- All Option 2 registrations end on the last day of school, each year.
- Should you wish for your child(ren) to attend REKSAP at a future date, please log in to your City of Ottawa Child Care Registry and Waitlist account, and create an application for each child.
- Families will be contacted based on spaces available and in the order of application date to the waitlist.
- Parents must re-apply for Option 2 **each** school year as spaces are subject to availability, and not guaranteed.

### Website:

<https://onehsn.com/Ottawa>

### Help Line:

1-888-722-1540

## 11. FEES and CWELCCS (Canada-Wide Early Learning Child Care System)

1. Childcare fees are due on the first of the month.
  2. Pre-Authorized Debit form will need to be filled out on Digibot.
  3. If payment is not received by the 15th of the month, it is overdue, this will result in 2 weeks written notice of withdrawal of your child(ren) from the program.
  4. Fees [www.reksap.ca](http://www.reksap.ca)
- \*\*There will be a \$50.00 administration fee for N.S.F. pre-authorized debits/cheques (non-base fees).
5. Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System

REKSAP Centres For Early Learning are enrolled in the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCCS); we will be following the City of Ottawa and Ministry of Education's guidelines.

## Eligibility for Reduced Fees

Eligible children are entitled to a childcare fee reduction retroactive to April 1, 2022, up to a minimum of \$12.00 per day. Children aged 0-5 are eligible. In addition, children are also eligible if they are six (6) years old, up until a cut-off date determined as follows:

- If the child's sixth (6th) birthday falls between January and June, the child remains eligible until June 30th of that calendar year.
- If the child's sixth (6th) year birthday falls between July and December, the child remains eligible until the end of the month of their sixth (6th) birthday.

Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCCS) reduction applied to: Toddler, Preschool and Kindergarten rates.

### Base fees April 1, 2022, are as follows:

- Toddler - \$60.33/day
- Preschool - \$45.45/day
- Kindergarten - \$26.01 (option 1)

The first rate reduction of 25% retroactive to April 1, 2022, will be based on these base fees and further reductions will also be calculated using these base fees. Any reduction in rates will be updated on Digibot in your 'Billing' section and on our website.

### Our current rates, with the fee reductions applied, as of January 1, 2023, are as follows:

- Toddler - \$28.51/day
- Preschool - \$21.66/day
- Kindergarten - \$12.29/day (option 1)

## 12. CHILDREN'S HEALTH

If your child contracts any communicable diseases, we ask that you notify the centre. Children who are ill, and could pass the illness onto the other children, are required to be removed from the centre until they are no longer contagious. Parents must notify the Executive Director/Program Supervisor/Educators immediately if their child has been hospitalized for at least 24 hours while enrolled in our centre. When your child returns to the centre, they must be able to participate in all areas of the program including outdoor activities and be symptom-free without the use of medication.

On arrival at the centre, or during the day, the Executive Director/Program Supervisor/Educators may judge that a child is "not well enough" to attend the centre:

- appearance of a fever
- vomiting or diarrhea
- congested cough or cold
- complaints of a bad headache or sore throat
- a suspicious rash or weeping sore
- red or runny eyes/ears

In such cases, the child will either not be accepted into the centre, or the parent(s) will be notified that the child must be picked up as soon as possible.

## Allergies

\*If your child has allergies of any kind, please advise the Executive Director/Program Supervisor/Educators. All allergies



must be documented on the appropriate registration and medical forms.

### **Lice/Nits Policy**

If a child has lice (live bugs) they must be picked up immediately to be treated and to prevent further spreading.

1. Notice to Parents about Head Lice/Notice of Withdrawal will be completed and given to the parent.
2. The child must be treated immediately for nits/lice and the process must be repeated within 7-10 days.

Notice of Head Lice Treatment must be completed, signed, and returned after each treatment upon the child's return to the program.

### **13. MEDICATION**

We are required by law to obtain written permission to administer prescription medication. If your child requires medication, forms must be completed with parent's signature.

All medication must be in an original container as supplied by a pharmacist. The container must be clearly labelled with the child's name, name of the medication, the dosage of the medication, date of purchase, an expiration date of medication and clear instruction for the administration and storage of the medication. All medication must include the possible side effects and treatment.

We store all medication in a locked, metal container in the fridge or cupboard, with the exception of EpiPens and inhalers.

**Note:** The responsibility for the administration of medication involves certain elements of risk. Unexpected consequences including, but not limited to, illness, adverse reactions or other complications may occur as a result of the administration (or non-administration) of any medication. Physical reactions resulting from the medication can occur without fault on either part of the student of REKSAP, or its employees or Board of Directors. By requesting and consenting to the administration of medication by REKSAP to your child, you are assuming the right of an expected reaction occurring. It is understood that the chances of such a reaction may be reduced by carefully following the instructions provided by you and/or the pharmacy (as per physician's prescription) at all times. If you consent to the administration of the medication to your child by REKSAP, you must understand that you, and not REKSAP, bear sole responsibility for any physical reaction that might occur.

### **14. FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are an important part of the program planning in an early learning program. They are designed to meet the children's developmental needs, and to enhance the projects/activities which the children enjoy in their daily program.

The Child Care and Early Years Act requires programs to inform parents of all field trips in advance, and to allow parent sufficient time to sign a consent form to permit their child(ren) to participate on each individual trip.

The Child Care and Early Years Act is also very specific in its requirements of Child/Educator ratios, which thus dictates full participation in those field trips planned for the entire enrolment.

Should circumstances (i.e., health, etc.) prevent a child's participation in a field trip, it is the parent's responsibility to arrange alternate care. For field trips in which the entire group of children is to participate, it is impossible for the program to provide alternate care and still meet the Child Care and Early Years Act regulations. According to City of Ottawa guidelines, parents are charged fees on an enrolment basis, thus fees cannot be reimbursed for such days.

For field trips, transportation (if required) will be by chartered bus. Special permission for children to participate will be required on such occasions. **Children cannot be dropped off, or picked up, during the field trip.**

### **Mandatory - Police Check for all Volunteers**

\*\*\*\*Volunteers - Any individual who is engaged in the childcare program and interacts with children in care, but is not paid by the licensee, is considered a volunteer.

The following are examples of volunteers who require a vulnerable sector check:

- Parents assisting on an occasional or recurring basis with childcare programming, such as excursions, field trips, etc.
- Form online [www.reksap.ca](http://www.reksap.ca)

## 15. CHILD GUIDANCE AND PROHIBITED PRACTICES

Educators' roles are multi-dimensional. The Educators, first and foremost, use a warm, responsive, and inclusive approach, building positive relationships with children, families, colleagues, and communities. Educators are reflective practitioners who learn about children using various strategies. They listen, observe, document, and discuss with others, families, in particular, to understand children as unique individuals. A solid understanding of child development is essential for Educators to apply the pedagogical approaches that are detrimental to quality early learning centres. Critical reflection, when used by Educators, promotes best practices in early learning.

The environment is the context in which learning takes place. From the aesthetics of the space, to the type of furnishings and materials available, to the organization of time, the environment communicates a powerful message and contributes to shaping the actions that can be taken within it. Children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems, and make meaning from their experiences – especially when the spaces contain interesting and complex open-ended materials that children can use in many ways; this includes areas for quiet activities as well as physical activity (i.e., body breaks). Flexible scheduling allows for longer periods of uninterrupted play with fewer transitions resulting in calmer and more engaging experiences.

Children thrive in programs where they can engage in vigorous physical play in natural outdoor spaces and playgrounds that present manageable levels of challenge. It is important for these environments to be safe, however, it is also important for them to provide children with interesting opportunities for a reasonable degree of risk taking. Educators are knowledgeable and allow every child the opportunity to participate, and adaptations to the program or physical accommodations are made to promote the well being and engagement of each child.

### *Monitoring*

1. Compliance and contravention are monitored closely, and staff must sign off twice a year (October/November and April/May) stating that they are adhering to policies and procedures. Summer staff not returning in September must have theirs completed by the end of August.
2. All staff must read, date and sign all policies of the centre as a condition of employment, and annually thereafter.
2. Regular classroom, playground and field trip observations of staff, students and volunteers interacting with the children will be conducted by the Executive Director/Program Supervisor of the centre. Observations are done on a daily/casual basis, with their awareness of the process. Meetings with individual staff are held to assist and support staff in developing critical reflection skills. The Executive Director/Program Supervisor will provide support to guide staff where necessary.
3. Staff evaluations take place within the first three to six months for every new employee and are conducted annually thereafter. All reviews are documented.
4. Collaborative inquiry practices are discussed at regularly scheduled staff and team meetings, and strategies developed together. This is a means to question theory and practice, discuss ideas, test theories, and share ideas. A written record is kept of all meetings.
5. All records related to the signing and reviews of policies will be retained at the centre for a minimum of three years.
6. A written record of all monthly staff meetings is kept on file and signed by all staff.

### *Prohibited Practices*

48. No licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving childcare at a childcare centre it operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of childcare,
- (a) corporal punishment of the child;
  - (b) physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, 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;
  - (c) locking the exits of the childcare centre or home childcare 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;
  - (d) 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;
  - (e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
  - (f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will. O. Reg. 126/16, s. 34.

### *Contravention of Practices*

All adults, while at the childcare centre, are **required** to comply with the program's policies and the requirements set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act. Failure to comply with the Child Guidance and Prohibitive Practices policy may result in:

**For Staff, Students and Volunteers:**

A verbal warning, a written warning, termination of placement for students and volunteers, termination of employment for staff.

**For others, including parents:**

Verbal warning, other action deemed necessary by the childcare centre Board including, but not limited to the person not being allowed on the premises.

The following information may be considered by the Executive Director and Board of the childcare centre in determining which action is necessary.

- 1) The seriousness of the offense.
- 2) The risk, or harm, to the child.
- 3) The frequency of the occurrence.
- 4) Previous disciplinary action taken.

Where action is necessary, it will be taken immediately by the Executive Director of the centre in the case of staff, students and volunteers, parents and others, and by the Board in the case of the Director.

## **16. NUTRITION**

### **Lunch**

**Lunch is provided for all toddler and preschool children.** The menu is posted for three weeks in advance on the Parents' Bulletin Board, on the REKSAP website, and on Digibot. The Ministry of Education, the agency responsible for licensing programs, and Ottawa Public Health, oversee the menus. *Under special circumstances*, where a child in the toddler or

preschool program has needs requiring food to be brought from home, consultation must take place prior to approval being granted from the Executive Director. A specialized plan for the child outlining their needs will be written, signed and kept on file. Reviews of the plan will be based on the timeline set by the Executive Director. Any changes made to the plan will be done in writing and in consultation with the family, RECEs, and the Executive Director, and be reflective of medical advice (where applicable). All staff must read and sign off on the plan in accordance with REKSAP policies. Any foods brought into the Centre must comply with all current food allergy restrictions and REKSAP’s nutrition policy.

**Kindergarten and School Children Requirements for Bagged Lunches (food from home)**

To reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents, REKSAP Centres for Early Learning is a peanut/nut free environment. Signs are posted to inform parents the school building is a peanut/nut free environment. Staff may check children’s lunches to ensure no peanuts/nuts are contained but it is the responsibility of the parent. Should an item be found that contains nuts/restricted allergens, the item(s) will be bagged and sent home with a note to the parents. A replacement item will be provided from the Centre’s kitchen.

-To avoid other allergens, children are not permitted to share their food with other children in attendance. Parents must consult with the staff before supplying food to the Centre (i.e., birthdays).

-It is the responsibility of the parent to check the Centre’s snack menu which is posted on the Parent Information Board, REKSAP website, and Digibot.

**Bagged lunch Requirements:**

- Be nut-free, observant, and compliant, of any additional restrictions of the program.
- Child’s name **must** be clearly written on each container/sandwich bag.
- Ice packs and a thermos must be used to ensure food safety.
- Should a child’s lunch be forgotten/not meet nutritional requirements, a lunch/supplement will be provided from the Centre’s kitchen and parents will be informed.
- Parents of children with food allergies/restrictions may be required, by the Centre, to supply alternatives dependent upon the nature of the allergy. All food items supplied by the parent must be labelled and kept in a sealed container labelled specifically for their child. A copy of the Centre’s menu with restricted foods highlighted will be kept on file and made available to staff to reference. This will be discussed with parents at time of enrolment, or upon suspect or diagnosis of an allergy or sensitivity.
- The Centre will provide a tray for the child to use at **all** snack and mealtimes. The tray will be clearly marked with the child’s name and allergy/restrictions written on the tray or on a label. Thorough cleaning and disinfecting of the child’s eating area will be implemented at all snack and mealtimes. Further safety measures will be determined on a case-by-case basis (i.e. for severe allergies, an additional personalized tray wrapped to be removed by child at snack/meal times.)

<b>Nutrition Policy</b>	
We have a legislated obligation to develop a policy on children’s nutrition that is consistent with the Ministry’s guidelines. Bag lunches from home should include a variety of foods from the following chart:	
<b>Food Groups</b>	<b>Amount Offered (attendance 6 hours per day)</b>
milk and milk products	250 – 375 mls
meat and alternatives	60 – 90 mls
bread and cereals	450 mls or 2 ½ slices
fruit and vegetables	300 mls or 2 ½ whole fruit
The Centre will routinely provide nutritious morning and afternoon snacks, as well as a noon-time drink and	



supplements, as necessary. The menu will consist of dairy products such as milk, cheese, yogurt, whole grain breads, cereals and crackers, a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables. On occasion, our menu will include meat and alternatives such as hummus.

The combination of snacks and noon-time meals should be equivalent to the guidelines set out in the chart above. Staff is expected to be vigilant regarding the content of bag lunches and advise parents when there are concerns regarding the nutritional adequacy of the lunches. Children will be limited to one “treat” choice from their bag lunch per sitting.

**\*\*DO NOT SEND OR STORE MEDICATION IN YOUR CHILD’S LUNCH BOX\*\***

**Snack**

Nutritious snacks are served daily, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The snack menu is posted for three weeks in advance on the Parents' Bulletin Board, on the REKSAP website and Digibot. The Ministry of Education, the agency responsible for licensing programs, and Ottawa Public Health, oversee the menus.

Should circumstances (i.e., allergy) prevent a child from having a particular snack, the program will provide a substitute, to the best of our abilities. Any additional substitutions will be the responsibility of the parent and must comply with all allergy restrictions in place at the Centre.

Parents must consult with the Executive Director/Program Supervisor before supplying food to the Centre (i.e. birthdays).

**Food Guide**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canada-food-guides.html>

**Healthy Lunch ideas**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/tips-healthy-eating-tips-families/healthy-school-lunches.html>

<https://www.foodnetwork.ca/back-to-school/photos/easy-school-lunches-to-pack-for-kids/>

<https://canadianfamily.ca/food/101-easy-kid-pleasing-school-lunches/>

**Allergies**

\*If your child has allergies of any kind, please advise the Executive Director/Program Supervisor/Educators. All allergies must be documented on the appropriate registration and medical forms.

**Sanitary Practices: Allergy Alert clean-up**

- Tables **over and under**, chairs, and floor must be sterilized.
- Children with food allergies will have a tray labelled with their name and allergies, in permanent marker or with a label. Child will use tray at all snack/mealtimes. Further safety measures will be determined on a case-by-case basis [i.e. for severe allergies, an additional personalized tray wrapped to be removed by an Educator (tod/pre), or the child (kgt/SA) at snack/meal times.]
- **All lunches must be thoroughly checked for allergens.**
- Staff will ensure snacks are served using separate utensils for each item to avoid cross-contamination of allergens (eg. One set of tongs for fruit and another set of tongs for crackers)
- **All lunch/snack tables must be sterilized in the same fashion.**
- **After snack/lunch, each child/staff must wash their hands.**

## 17. PERSONAL ITEMS

We ask parents to encourage their children to keep their toys at home. The exception is for Show and Tell. Please note that REKSAP will not be held responsible for personal items.

Children should wear clothing that is comfortable. There are outdoor periods each day (weather permitting) and we ask that the children be dressed accordingly.

It is advisable for parents to label their child(ren)'s belongings. For your child's protection, please place labels on the inside of their shoes, clothing, lunch boxes and knapsacks.

## 18. FIRE REGULATIONS

The centre adheres to the fire regulations as set out by the Ontario Fire Marshall, and the Ottawa Fire Department.

### Fire Procedure:

1. A fire drill must be conducted monthly.
2. First Educator takes attendance list and emergency file and goes to appropriate exit.
3. Second Educator, checks bathrooms, turns lights off, closes door and goes outside.
4. "Rendezvous Points"
  - a) Front sidewalk
  - b) Playground
5. In case we are unable to go back into the building:

Regina - The Voyageur Apartments (across the street from school)

Severn – School Days \* Woodroffe Highschool – Non-Instruction School Days \* Metro @ Lincoln Fields

\*\*further information posted in each room.

## 19. ADHERENCE TO POLICY

If there is consistent disregard to policy by the parent(s) of child(ren) enrolled in the program, the Board of Directors can require that the child(ren) be withdrawn from the program.

Where parent(s) feel that policies are not being followed, the Executive Director is to be notified first. The first notification may be verbal. If action does not seem to have been taken, the second notification to the Executive Director shall be in writing. If, after this second notification has been issued, the problem still exists, the parent(s) involved may approach the Board, first verbally, providing the Board with proof of the second notification to the Executive Director, and if still dissatisfied, a letter shall be written to the Board asking for a solution to the matter. The Board will then review the matter and, as necessary, arrange for statements from the parties involved, and also seek external professional advice. A decision will be made, and all parties concerned will be notified, in writing, of the decision.

## 20. SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS & STUDENTS POLICY

### INTENT

- : To help support the safety and well-being of children in licensed childcare centres.
- : To provide direction to childcare centres regarding the supervision of volunteers and placement students.
- : To require childcare centres to develop and implement a policy for the supervision of volunteers and placement students in their centres.



## REQUIREMENTS

- : Child guidance policies and procedures to be reviewed with volunteers and students before they begin providing care, and annually thereafter.
- : A written procedure for monitoring child guidance practices is in place.
- : Individual plans for children with anaphylaxis and the emergency procedures are reviewed prior to commencement of care, and annually thereafter.
- : Criminal reference checks are required for all *volunteers*.

## POLICY STATEMENTS

- : No child will be supervised by a person under 18 years of age.
- : Only employees will have direct unsupervised access to children.
- : Volunteers and students will not be counted in the staffing ratios.
- : All volunteers and students will be required to read program policies and procedures and to sign an acknowledgement form. Parent volunteers will read and sign Parent Volunteer Form.
- : The expectations of volunteers and students are provided in detail in the personnel manual.
- : The roles and responsibilities of the supervising staff are provided in detail in the personnel manual.
- : The operator is required to review the policy annually.
- : The operator shall ensure that the policy is reviewed with employees before they begin their employment and at least annually thereafter, and with volunteers or students who will be providing care or guidance at the centre before they begin providing that care or guidance and at least annually thereafter.

The operator is responsible for the implementation, review and evaluation of this policy.

### 21. Serious Occurrence Procedures

Serious Occurrence Procedures (M.Ed.) will be followed, as necessary. The Serious Occurrence Notification Form is posted on parent board for a minimum of 10 business days. If the form is updated with additional information such as additional actions taken by the operator, the form remains posted for 10 days from the date of the update.

### 22. Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our childcare centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, Educators, and staff, and foster the engagement of, and ongoing communication with, parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our Educators are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by REKSAP Centres For Early Learning and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Where parents feel that policies are not being followed, the Executive Director is to be notified first either verbally or in writing as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation. The Executive Director will respond to the notification within 3 business days. If the Executive Director is unavailable to respond within the 3 business days, the Program Supervisor will respond in lieu.

If the outcome of the response is unsatisfactory, the parent must then formally state their grievance in writing to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will then respond in writing within 3 business days.

Members of the REKSAP Board of Directors are unable to discuss issues and concerns from parents outside of a formal board meeting as per the signed Conflict of Interest Guidelines for membership of the REKSAP Board of Directors.

If the outcome of the response is still unsatisfactory, the parent involved may ask for the REKSAP Board of Directors to get involved. A letter of explanation from the parent must be sent to the REKSAP Board of Directors at least one week in advance of the meeting. The Board will then review the matter and as necessary, arrange for statements from the parties involved, and will respond in writing within 2 weeks.

If the grievance is not resolved in the two weeks following the Board meeting, the parent has the right to request a special meeting of the Board. The Board will schedule a special meeting within a month of receiving the request and all parties may also seek external professional advice.

At this meeting, a decision will be made, and all parties concerned will be notified, in writing, of the decision.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

### **Confidentiality**

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students, and volunteers, except when 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).

### **Conduct**

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

### **Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child**

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.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the [local Children's Aid Society](#) (CAS) directly.

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*.

## 23. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY and PROCEDURES - Posted in every classroom

\*\*\*Instructional School Days: REKSAP Centres For Early Learning follow the emergency management policies and procedures in accordance with the Ottawa Carleton District School Board.

\*\*\*Non-Instructional School Days: REKSAP Centres For Early Learning follow our own Emergency Management Policy and Procedures

If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' to the childcare centre, the **evacuation site** to proceed to is located at:

REKSAP – Regina: Voyager Apartment 320 Croyden Ave 613-726-0094 (across from school)

REKSAP – Severn: School Days – Woodroffe Highschool – Non - School Days – Metro Lincoln Fields

Parents/Guardians: 1. Will be notified by phone. 2. Further information will be given in person when child(ren) is picked up.

3. Notice may be posted on doors, on the answering machine, and/or posted on website.

## 24. MESSAGE TO PARENTS

We do not require but do welcome parent participation in our daily program. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning has an open door policy and welcomes parents to come during centre hours. Parents may further participate in the program by accompanying the children on field trips, and by becoming members of the Board of Directors, which holds monthly meetings. *Please note:* For health and safety of children, families, and staff, parent participation will be suspended during instances of illness outbreak and/or OPH restrictions.

### Finally:

**We want you to know, to understand, to discuss with us, our program.**

**We want you to look often into our busy, happy, creative centre and see your child at play/learning.**

**We want you to realize the validity of that play and the importance of what your child(ren) are learning.**

**Parents and Educators together can help your child develop their full potential.**

## 25. PROGRAM STATEMENT

### Program Statement

At REKSAP Centres For Early Learning, we believe in quality early learning and care for families and the sense of community. This is created through providing warm, responsive and inclusive relationships. Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) play multidimensional roles within the program. RECEs work collaboratively guided by the 'Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice' set out by the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE). Educators (RECE's and Educational Assistants) at REKSAP Centres For Early Learning have embedded the principles of Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) and How Does Learning Happen (HDLH) into all aspects of the program. These documents provide pedagogical approaches that support children's learning, development, health and well-being. Pedagogy refers to the process of understanding and supporting learning (how learning happens). Through pedagogical understanding of relationships between children, families, environments and Educators; REKSAP Centres For Early Learning optimizes learning and healthy development; thus, supporting belongingness, engagement, expression and well-being. REKSAP plans for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will



be supported and which is inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans.

REKSAP Centre For Early Learning's program is licensed under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) of the Ontario Ministry of Education (MOE). The centres are required to meet all regulations of this Act including health, safety and fire regulations as dictated by Ottawa Public Health, the Ottawa Fire Services, and the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB). The MOE Program Advisor monitors annually the standards for safety, staff training, program quality and compliance with the CCEYA.

REKSAP Centres For Early Learning **promotes the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of children**. Children have a sense of health and well-being when they are confident in their growing abilities. When children are increasingly able to take initiative, face challenges with enthusiasm and persistence, they can cope with, and adapt to, change. Educators understand that children are capable and enthusiastic learners with unique personalities, skills, and interests. Children are encouraged to learn about each other's individual needs and responsibilities (such as food allergies). They then can develop skill sets that are related to their own capabilities and success. Through set boundaries, children know that they are safe and can explore their curiosities with confidence. Proper nutrition provides children with a good foundation, allowing them to explore the world around them. It improves concentration, promotes growth, builds strength, provides energy, and establishes healthy eating habits. Preschool and toddler children are provided with lunch and all children are provided with two snacks chosen from a wide variety of family and cultural preferences; introducing new food items that they might not be familiar with. This provides the opportunity to comfortably try new food. Educators are encouraged to eat with the children, thereby modelling proper nutrition. Following Ottawa Public Health guidelines, children are provided with a positive eating environment.

**Positive and responsive interactions among children, parents and staff** are essential in quality early learning and care. Educators work collaboratively with families and colleagues to plan meaningful learning experiences and support problem solving and decision making. The children, when responded to on a consistent basis, will build strong and caring relationships with their Educators. Children are supported in situations where they need assistance in finding a new way to achieve their goals; allowing for the building of self-regulation skills. Educators guide them when necessary (e.g. giving children time to be persistent when they are trying to accomplish a task, using phrases such as, "I see the task you are working on is difficult. You seem frustrated, is there something you need?") Modelling language and labelling emotions gives the children an example of societal expectations and how to interact with peers. Peer interactions are encouraged and our School Age leaders are requested in all classrooms at different times for various tasks. Children are encouraged to treat peers and Educators in a respectful manner. This is done by responding positively to children's cues; supporting the development of secure relationships. Building rapport with parents and families is of utmost importance. Educators have conversations in person with parents about their children on an ongoing basis and build relationships as set out by the CECE's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

**Encouraging the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and supporting their ability to self-regulate** is a goal REKSAP Centres For Early Learning has. Children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Educators work together to help children develop their sense of self-regulation and recognize their feelings. Time is given to allow children to express themselves so they may feel listened to and to foster listening skills during conversation. Educators guide the children in a variety of ways including restorative justice, logical consequences, redirection, and emotion coaching. Restorative justice, also seen as self-regulation (e.g. when a child hurts another child, they are not asked to apologize; they are to see if the hurt child is okay, what the hurt child needs to feel better, then reflect how the situation could have been done differently) develops empathy. Logical consequence is when the children are an active partner in the process of choosing consequences (e.g. if a child is angered by another child and while walking away, they dump a bucket of toys, the Educators allow that child the time necessary for them to calm themselves, then that child cleans up the bucket of toys). Redirection is used as a child guidance method. It can be used in many ways such as humour, distraction, responsibilities, and challenges; (e.g. a child is throwing cars. "I didn't know these cars had wings, let's take the wings off and make sure the wheels stay on the tracks.", "Let's see how fast the car travels from one

side of the carpet to the other on its wheels.”). When we emotion coach, children learn how emotions work and how to react to feelings in a healthy way. The child feels understood. Educators start by asking the child if they would like to talk about what happened (“No.” is an answer and the situation can be revisited when the child is ready.) The Educator then labels the feeling, “You are feeling sad”. Next, elaborate on the situation that caused the emotion, “You are feeling sad because you wanted a turn to paint, and you are being asked to wait. Painting is fun and waiting is hard.” After that, offer comfort and work together to come up with a solution.<sup>[SEP]</sup>

REKSAP Centres For Early Learning adheres to the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) regarding prohibited practices.

#### Prohibited Practices

48. No licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving child care at a child care centre it operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of child care,
- (a) corporal punishment of the child;
  - (b) 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;
  - (c) locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care 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;
  - (d) 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;
  - (e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
  - (f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will. O. Reg. 126/16, s. 34.

To **foster children’s exploration, play and inquiry**, Educators use observations and pedagogical documentation. With children’s input, the environment is mindfully set up to allow for exploration and engagement providing a safe and appropriate supervision of children based on age, development and environment. A flexible schedule, accessible materials, equipment and furnishings, allow the children to develop the independence to fully and freely explore their environment, while taking risks that Educators feel are acceptable through observation of the individual skill level of each child. They can inquire about items and topics that have been set out according to their interests. Using an interest board that parents and children can see and contribute to, the children guide their own learning. Educators support, research, observe, provide tools, and ask questions. To enrich learning experiences, the Educators as co-learners with children, use verbal guidance and resources such as books, websites, games, personal experience, peers, families, field trips and special events; thus, **providing child-initiated and adult-supported experiences**. This also provides children with a strong base to begin their life experiences.



Reflective practice is used when **planning and creating positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported**. It ensures a quality learning environment for children that respects their abilities, special talents, interests and individual differences. Reflective practice refers to the “systematic, reflective, collaborative process used by early childhood educators to plan, evaluate, make decisions and create and implement change through consideration of relevant literature, current practice learning environments, observations of children’s development, behaviour, social interactions, learning and knowledge of families” (Ministry of Education, 2007). Educators use knowledge of children’s development and meet frequently with team members to discuss strategies, goals, environment and resources to enhance learning through play. Using ELECT and HDLH as a framework for planning allows Educators to evaluate the goals set out for the children. Through collaboration, teams decide how to rejuvenate or modify the environment adapting to the children’s changing and growing interests as well as their abilities. Educators support children’s attempts to take reasonable risks, test limits, and gain a sense of their own abilities through play and social interactions. **Indoor spaces** include our classrooms, where gross motor activities are also available. These may include but are not limited to; boogie boards, body breaks, bouncing toys, mini trampolines and large wooden blocks. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning uses the gymnasium on a regular basis. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning is fortunate to be in an area of Ottawa where there is an abundance of cultural diversity. This enhances our program by incorporating celebrations, decorations, photographs and information from a wide assortment of cultures and gives the children a sense of belonging. Children can educate their peers as well as staff of their family traditions. This allows them to proudly express themselves outside of their family setting.

REKSAP Centres For Early Learning **provides outdoor play, free play, rest and quiet time giving consideration to the individual needs of the children**. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning ensures that learning happens anywhere at any time! The Regina location is fortunate to have the Mud Lake Conservation Area within walking distance. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning at Regina also has many gardens; including the garden in the both preschool and school age yards. There is an area called The Britannia Garden nearby that the community upkeep. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning at Regina has use of an outdoor classroom in an enclosed courtyard where children are encouraged to learn and explore. The outdoor classroom has natural materials such as stumps, rocks, trees, plants, mulch, wildlife and insects. Our Severn location is fortunate to be near many green spaces and parks. These include Frank Ryan and Elmhurst Parks, both of which have forested areas. The children benefit from these experiences allowing them to explore, observe, document and investigate in an in depth, hands-on approach. All outdoor programming is weather permitting. Toddler and preschool children are outside a minimum of two hours daily. Once kindergarten and school age children arrive from school, outdoor time is flexible, but mandatory. During full-day programming, kindergarten and school age children are outside for a minimum of two hours. On instructional school days, kindergarten and school age children are outdoors, weather permitting, for 30 minutes, as per MOE legislation. Children of all ages enjoy free play, music, story, snack, creative and group games outdoors. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning has multiple safe and stimulating outdoor spaces and toys for toddler, preschool, kindergarten, and school age for intentional active play. These spaces and toys are individualized and adapted, as needed; offering challenges that are within each child’s ability. The health and well-being of active children benefit from a provided rest time, during which their sleep is recorded using a sleep chart that parents can look at daily. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning incorporates a rest time into daily programming. Two hours of rest for toddler and preschool children, one-hour rest for kindergarten children; and school age children have access to quiet areas. Toddler and preschool children can rest on cots with sheets and blankets. Once they have rested, they are able to choose from a variety of quiet activities. Considering sleeping children, different areas of the classroom may be available until the children that are sleeping have woken. Kindergarten children have a one-hour quiet activity time, and may request a sleep mat, should they choose. Quiet activities include creative, reading, puzzles, play dough, file folder games, quiet manipulative toys and Educator-directed games.



**Fostering the engagement and ongoing communication with parents** about the program and their children is of utmost importance. When parents are introduced to the program, they are informed of the use of Storypark as a tool for toddler, preschool, and kindergarten children to document their child's learning. Kindergarten children have portfolios and progress report books that parents are welcome to look at. They are shown each program's bulletin boards with displays of how ELECT, HDLH and the children's interests are incorporated into the rooms. Documentation panels and storyboards displayed, give families concrete examples of what the children are learning within each classroom. Families are encouraged to add family to Storypark and contribute to them. Families are appreciated as unique and diverse. Families are viewed as competent and capable, curious and rich in experience. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning's Educators welcome families upon arrival and invite them into the classrooms. Educators and parents can arrange times when they can meet formally or simply have a quick conversation when dropping off or picking up their children. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning encourages parents to join us for special events. Family members that have skills or talents that they wish to share and will benefit the children, are invited to come in after obtaining a Vulnerable Sector Check, as per Ministry regulations. Our Board is comprised of parent volunteers and community members.

REKSAP Centres For Early Learning is involved with **local community partners and encourages those partners to support the children, their families, and staff**. From parent volunteers, to local performers and grocers, the children are exposed to many rich experiences. This shows the children that when they contribute to the world around them, they have a place in their community; thereby developing their sense of belonging. Parent volunteers help the children gain knowledge of sports, sportsmanship, and belonging to a team. Community partners welcome the Educators, the children and the families as one community. This helps the children to understand why they are there and what the impact and purpose of these places have in the community. This includes having the children follow the same rules as the school has set out for them. The children at the Regina location take walking trips to the local Farm Boy, fire hall, parks and green spaces. There are walks in our neighbourhood to go to the mailbox. The location at Severn also takes walks in the neighborhood to the mailbox, tennis courts, bus stops and forests. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning at Regina is located within Regina Street Alternative School; Severn is located within Severn Avenue Public school. Both centres are very involved with the schools they are in. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning's Educators and children are invited to school events and presentations. Through community partners, the children can discover the many wonderful local people, businesses and areas.

REKSAP Centres For Early Learning **supports staff in relation to continuous professional learning**. It is an ongoing process which extends beyond everyday expectations. Information on workshops, webinars and seminars that are available in our sector is provided regularly. Staff attend workshops that are integral in enhancing the program and knowledge of the Educators. When a staff member attends a workshop, they are given the opportunity at a staff meeting or via email to share what they learned. This allows time to field any questions that anyone may have. Educators are professionals and use each other as resources. Educators encourage one another, sending articles, providing websites, lending books/magazines, and having regular meetings to discuss the programs. Educators support each other as a team. Through building strong bonds, Educators can support the children, the families, and the staff at the centres.

REKSAP Centres for Early Learning **documents and reviews the impact of different strategies** monthly. This is done with both locations meeting as a team and ongoing within partnerships. Staff meetings are set and everyone attends, thereby getting input from the team. Educators discuss any concerns, techniques, questions, and information that have been gathered. The Educators collaborate and discuss the program's strengths, and what needs to be strengthened. Educators are encouraged to bring any new information to these meetings, and all have input on what is discussed. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning builds the program goals and expectations as a team. Everyone works together keeping the four foundations in mind (Belonging, Engagement, Expression and Well-Being). This provides the children, families, and Educators the best chance at success.

All Educators, Educational Assistants, supply staff, volunteers and students are required to read and sign the Program Statement prior to employment and/or prior to being in the program with the children. This will happen not only on an annual basis, but as the Program Statement changes. Reading and signing the Program Statement gives staff an understanding of practices at REKSAP Centres For Early Learning.

All expectations set out in the Program Statement are followed through by every staff member. These are implemented in each classroom setting. Through observation and documentation, supervisory positions ensure staff are implementing the expectations set out in the Program Statement. Ensuring all staff are supported by having discussions at staff meetings and team meetings, as well as keeping documentation will maintain the high standards REKSAP Centres For Early Learning has for its staff.

Educators are required to keep documentation on programming and the children within their programs in support of showing that they understand the Program Statement.

Executive Directors and Program Supervisors will review the sign off sheets annually and support the staff should they have any questions or concerns regarding the Program Statement (including Educators, Educational Assistants, supply staff and students). Educators will review the document How Does Learning Happen and ELECT on a regular basis, reflecting on their roles as Educators within the program and reviewing their documentation on children. Throughout its 30+ years in the community, REKSAP Centres For Early Learning has dedicated Educators who are passionate about early learning and have professional pride. REKSAP Centres For Early Learning are a prime example of quality early learning and care and create a vibrant learning environment. Positive growth and development of both the children, and Educators, are reflected through the solid reputation within the childcare community in Ottawa.