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## **Ages**

Ultimate School-Agers (USA) school aged program is licensed for ages 4-12 years.

## **Full Day Care**

On P.A. Days, Christmas Break, March Break and summer holidays USA will provide full day care for school-aged children.

## **Transportation**

We provide vehicular transportation to and from schools. We have an insured school bus for transporting purposes.

To follow in the footsteps of the Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO) and to support the health and safety of the children, Ultimate School-Agers (USA) will be cancelling bus transportation service on days where inclement weather is observed or predicted to cause road weary conditions depending on conditions outlined below being met.

Upon bus service cancellation being reported by STSCO for the areas of Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, Peterborough Victoria Northumberland Clarington Catholic District School Board as well as Durham District School Board our bus service will be cancelled for the drop off and pick up of students from schools.

When a bus cancellation is made by only one STSCO area. USA's Bus Driver and Supervisor will research for exact information pertaining to our area and a decision will be based on all available information at the time made.

A cancellation will be posted to our Facebook page by 6:30 AM (or as soon as cancelation made by STSCO) of the day of concern. Parents are invited to contact the center for updated information. A note will be added to the communication book with details of the cancellation.

As we view our Parents as our Partners, USA will remain open to assist those parents that have no other options for school drop off and pick up.

## **Hours of Operation**

USA is open from 6:15 AM to 9:00 AM and 2:30 PM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. On days where full day care is required due to school closures, i.e. PA days, the hours of operation will be 6:15 AM to 6:00 PM. Our 6:00 PM closing needs to be respected and should you pick your child up past the 6:00 PM closing you will be required to cover charges associated with staffing and building tenancy after hours. Special permission can be granted for pick up as late as 6:30 pm in the event that parents require this accommodation. However, due to staffing etc. this request needs to be 5 days in advance of the date required. Failure to respect closing time will result in the removal of your child from the program. See the Fees Table below for details.



## Programs

We offer a plethora of choices for children: physical activities, a wide range of creative activities, STEM based learning and Digital/Multi-media activities. These areas will change according to children's interests and programming while still meeting all Ministry Regional and Health department requirements.

## Fees

Please note the following:

- There is a minimum of three (3) days per week required for registration.
- Payment is due PRIOR to the period your child is enrolled, prepaid a minimum of 2 weeks
- Normal Payment amounts must cover a minimum of 2 weeks and be in groups of weeks – for example payment for 4 weeks versus payment by 1 month.
- See the FEE TABLE for more details on school year fees (summer holiday fees are released separately and change from year to year depending on program offerings)
- You are able of pay via e-transfer (EMT a.k.a. email money transfer), cash or cheque. Failure to pay your fees on time will result in denial of care, and in the interest of fairness to other parents, without exceptions.

## Toilet Training

We do not have the facilities to support School-Age children who are not toilet trained. Your child needs to be toilet trained to be in our School-Age program.

## Food

An early snack, will be included prior to 8 AM, afternoon snack will be included after school.

Full day care will include two snacks and lunch. You are able of pay via e-transfer (EMT a.k.a. email money transfer), cash or cheque. Failure to pay your fees on time will result in denial of care, and in the interest of fairness to other parents, without exceptions.

## Electronics Policy

The purpose of this section is to outline Ultimate School-Agers' (USA) policy toward handling electronic devices in our program. Common devices that fall into this category are cell phones, portable gaming devices, recorders, tablets, laptops and personal media players. Please note that the above is not to be considered a full and exhaustive list of all devices covered under the policy.

BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)



- On days treated as PA days for School Agers we allow them to BYOD from home. All games on the device must be rated “E” for everyone.
- The use of recorders by non-child care staff of any kind is not allowed in the center
- **Laser pointers are not allowed on site.**
- Children will be given the opportunity to use their device for 1 hour after lunch in what is quiet time.
- Children are unable to share or watch others play on devices.
- All devices must be kept in our electronics bin upon entry to the centre and will be returned when the child is leaving for the day.
- Ultimate School Agers staff has the final right of refusal if devices or materials do not follow our outline, that is, being rated “E” upon inspection by staff.
- Electronic media is only used by staff and children to extend the child’s topic of interest.
  - For example, if children are interested in butterflies, staff may use an electronic device to further their research.
- Multimedia is used to enhance learning. Staff and children use technology to experience, experiment, design and create.
  - For example, children are taught how to make movies or children learning about coding.
- School Age children may use electronic devices to record their own learning.
  - For example, School Age children may take a picture of an event or situation and record what is happening in the picture.

### **Immunization**

The Durham Region Health Department requires all schools to keep a record of immunizations. Because we are a school-aged program we do not require a copy of your child’s immunization records.

### **Teacher’s Strike**

In the event of a Teacher’s strike USA will be equipped to offer full day care to school-aged children.

### **Communication**

Our primary goal is to provide a wonderful atmosphere for your child but our secondary and equally important goal is to have open communication with you, the parent. All of the staff will be open to communicating with you regarding any comments, questions or concerns you may have and we ask that you provide the same openness with us if we need to talk to you. Please remember that we may not be able to talk to you when you drop off or pick up your child because we are in program but let us know if you would like to talk and we can come up with a mutual agreement for the time of communication. We ask that you speak with your child’s classroom teacher first with any concerns you may have. If you are still having concerns or require more conversation on your concern a meeting will be set up with your child’s classroom teacher and the supervisor.



If necessary, the director will be called in to deal with any on-going concerns. If your concerns are with staff or the supervisor, please feel free to contact the director immediately.

### **Sickness**

As we want to ensure a healthy environment for all, we ask that your child not attend if they are feverish, short of breath, vomiting or diarrhea. If your child comes to the program with those symptoms, we will notify you immediately and you must make arrangements to have your child picked up. Your child must remain free of fever, vomiting and/or diarrhea for 48 hours or more before they will be allowed to return to our program.

### **Medication**

USA will only administer prescription medication. All medication needs to be clearly marked with the child's name, doctor's name, the medicine's name, dosage, date of issue and expiry date. We will not accept medicine that is in a container other than the initial prescription container. We also will not administer non-prescription medicines such as Tylenol or Advil unless prescribed by a medical Doctor, in its original package and a note accompanies it. If we feel your child requires these medicines, we will inform you and ask you to take your child home.

### **Allergies**

We are a nut free program. Please ensure your child does not bring any foods to our program. If your child handles food with nuts before coming to USA please have them wash their face and hands thoroughly. We thank you for your understanding concerning allergies.

### **Head Lice**

We have a strict no nit policy. Should we find any nits or lice on your child they will be sent home immediately and not allowed to return until a staff member inspects their hair to ensure there is no trace of any lice and/or nits. After a case of head lice has been reported we will examine each child for lice and/or nits and inform the parents. If you do find lice and/or nits on your child please inform us immediately.

### **Late Pick up Fees**

The staff of USA understands there are times when you may be delayed. We ask that you respect that the staff have lives outside of USA, therefore if you pick your child up after 6:00 pm (without prior approval) you will be charged a late fee. See the Fees Table for more details.



## Emergency Management Policies and Procedures

Ultimate School Agers has Emergency management Policies and Procedures in place for the health and safety of all. You are able to request a detailed copy from staff should you wish to review these in detail. Courtice Community Centre is the emergency evacuation Centre for USA. If a situation arises forcing us to leave USA, we will evacuate to Courtice Community Centre. Once we have arrived safely there and know the children are in a safe location we will notify the first contact on your child's emergency contact list via cell phone for you to pick your child up immediately. If first contact is not available we will then continue through your list of contacts, until we reach someone to pick up your child/ren.

## Accident Reports

Even though the children are under constant supervision accidents can happen.

- For a minor injury staff at USA will administer first aid and fill out an accident report the parents will be asked to review and sign.
- If the accident is a little more serious staff will call the parent and together we can decide on the medical attention
- A serious injury will require immediate medical attention and you will be notified immediately.
- All Serious Occurrences will be reported to the Ministry of Education and be posted for 10 days.

## Prohibited Practices

No licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving child care at a child care center it operates or at premises where it oversees the provision of child care,

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



## Parents Issues and Concerns

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

### Definitions

*Licensee:* The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care center it operates (i.e. the operator).

*Staff:* Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

### Policy

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care center 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, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff 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 Ultimate School-Agers staff 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.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 1 business day. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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 center maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party. This is maintained by a group of internal staff policies and constant review of the supervisor and director to ensure adherence at all times.





If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor. Furthermore, the parent/guardian has the option to escalate further to the director if they have a concern the issue has not been dealt with appropriately.

A copy of the memo below will be given to every new parent.

Memo:

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: [www.ultimateschoolagers.com](http://www.ultimateschoolagers.com)

Family UID # \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment questions:**

Step 1) Check the parent handbook located under "Our Programs & Signup" Section of our website ([www.ultimateschoolagers.com](http://www.ultimateschoolagers.com))

Step 2) Check out the FEES QUERY tool under "Parent Resources" Section of our website and use you UID number for a total and daily breakdown of fees

Step 3) Email Garreth at [director@ultimateschoolagers.com](mailto:director@ultimateschoolagers.com)

**Classroom/child concerns:**

Step 1) Talk to your child's teacher

Note: School Agers Staff Names 6 and under Staff Names

Step 2) Email or call Kim (RECE Supervisor) - [supervisor@ultimateschoolagers.com](mailto:supervisor@ultimateschoolagers.com) or [289-685-2343](tel:289-685-2343)

Step 3) Email Garreth (Director) - [director@ultimateschoolagers.com](mailto:director@ultimateschoolagers.com)

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.

1320 Airport Blvd  
Oshawa, Ontario  
L1H 7K4

Phone: 905-433-1551  
Fax: 905-433-0603

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*. For more information, visit <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childsaids/reportingabuse/index.aspx>



**Procedures**

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program Room-Related E.g.: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the classroom staff directly or the supervisor (eligible to escalate to director after discussion with the supervisor).</p>	<p>Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised  or arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 1 business day. Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p>
<p>General, Centre- or Operations-Related E.g.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the supervisor (eligible to escalate to director after discussion with the supervisor).</p>	<p>the date and time the issue/concern was received; the name of the person who received the issue/concern; the name of the person reporting the issue/concern;</p>
<p>Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the individual directly or the supervisor (eligible to escalate to director after discussion with the supervisor). All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>the details of the issue/concern; and any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.  Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p>
<p>Student- / Volunteer-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or the supervisor and/or director. All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 1 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.  Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>



### Escalation of Issues or Concerns

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to The Site Supervisor either, verbally or in writing at [supervisor@ultimateschoolagers.com](mailto:supervisor@ultimateschoolagers.com). A parent may also escalate an issue to the site director at [director@ultimateschoolagers.com](mailto:director@ultimateschoolagers.com) but only after discussing the matter with the supervisor to ensure proper communication protocol is followed and address the matter in a timelier manner.

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.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labor, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

### Contacts:

Durham Children's Aid Society: 905-433-1551

Durham Region Health Department: 905-668-7711

The Regional Municipality of Durham

Social Services Department

Children's Services Division: 905-666-6238

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or [childcare\\_ontario@ontario.ca](mailto:childcare_ontario@ontario.ca)

**Serious Occurrence Notification Postings:** The Ministry of Education has implemented a revised Serious Occurrence Policy. It is mandated that all centers post a Serious Occurrence Notification Poster stating a Serious Occurrence has occurred. This notification will state our name, the date posted, the date of occurrence, the type of occurrence, a description of the occurrence, the action taken by us, any updates and a signature.

### Holidays

USA will be closed for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas week. Everyone is asked to pay partial fees on these days regardless of your scheduled day - see the Fees Table for details. You are not required to pay for Canada Day or Civic Holiday. You are required to pay a family fee, not per child, for Christmas, Boxing Day and New Year's Day – see the Fees Table for details. You are entitled to take two weeks' vacation during the school



year at – see Fees Table for details. Should you take beyond the two weeks then full payment must be made. You are required to give us two weeks written notice if you are using any of the two weeks at half price.

### **Photographs**

There may be occasions when USA or a news photographer may take pictures of your child. USA puts your safety first and we will not allow any photographs of your child to leave our location unless we have your permission.

### **Trips**

During full days, we may take a field trip somewhere. You will be advised of the trip in advance and informed of all the details. We may require some parent volunteers as well. We will reach our destination by taking a bus. Please advise us of any concerns you may have. Each time we leave our destination will be posted with a map outlining our route.

### **Sunscreen/Bug Repellent**

Because our summer program will feature a lot of outside time it is essential your child wear sunscreen/ Bug Repellent and a hat. You can provide sunscreen/ Bug Repellent clearly labeled with your child's name. Please ensure your sunscreen is a water proof sunscreen with an SPF of no less than 30 that offers protection from UVA and UVB rays. We also offer a summer pack that includes sunscreen, speak to staff for more details.

### **Smoking**

USA is a smoke free facility and no person is allowed to smoke or hold a lit cigarette or smoking/vaping product on our premises.

### **Spare Clothing**

USA recognizes that there are times when children may need a change of clothing. You know your child best and may feel a change of clothing is essential.

### **Custody**

USA needs to be informed upon enrolment if any custody arrangements have been made regarding your child. If after enrolment the child's situation changes resulting in a change of custody we need to be informed immediately. USA needs to have a copy of the Court Orders of Custody Arrangements. USA wants to ensure the safety of your children so if the non-custodial parent will be picking the child up we need a written form



signed by all parties involved prior to pick up. Any contravention to the court order will require police assistance.

### **Parent Involvement**

USA wants you to feel involved in the care your child receives. Please feel free to talk to any staff member and offer suggestions or concerns. Maybe you have a special skill or interest you would like to share with us.

### **Volunteering**

All volunteers will receive a volunteer package. Before volunteering everyone must have a current Criminal Reference, Check including vulnerable sector check. Those people volunteering for a singular event, i.e. a field trip, will only require a Criminal Reference Check. Those volunteering on a more recurring basis will require a TB (Tuberculosis) test. Volunteers must never be alone with the children and are not to be included in ratios at any time. Staff are still responsible for supervision.

### **Criminal Reference Checks**

If you would like to come and volunteer with us we ask that you have a CRC with vulnerable sector clearance that has been processed within the last six months or have an employer sign that you have one on file (this must include an offence declaration) Durham Regional Police on Taunton in Whitby will accommodate on the spot reference checks.

### **Absenteeism**

Should your child be away from USA you must call us directly. Do not expect the school to inform us. It is your responsibility. If your child does not need to be picked up at school you need to call us no later than 2PM to ensure we are not delayed in locating your child. You are still required to pay for a scheduled day even if your child is away.

### **Respect of Staff, Handbook policies and integration in the program**

USA will make all reasonable efforts to help your child fully integrate into the program including a staged approach. A refusal of service (cancellation of contract) will be authorized by the Director as a last resort in instances where if the following policies are not followed. Those reasons are:

The child does not adapt to his or her environment within a reasonable time period.

The child requires more attention than the other children in his or her group, thereby depriving the other children of the care that they need.



The parent does not make an effort to pick up his or her child when the child is sick, or the parent brings the child to the Centre knowing the child is sick (noncompliance with the health protocol.)

The parent regularly makes late payments or submits cheques with insufficient funds. *The policy stipulates that in the case of unpaid fees, a written notice must be sent, followed by a warning letter, and then by a final notice cancelling the child's registration at the Centre.*

If the parent does not report a same day change in schedule (e.g. due to illness, etc.) before 2PM that day so that the supervisor (or designate) can make the attendance adjustments.

If you are more than 10 minutes late three times within the month.

Refusal to respect the program handbook rules, policies and procedures.

Actions deemed prejudicial to USA's staff or to the children in its care.

Physical or verbal violence towards a member of the staff, a child, other parents or any other person on site (immediate termination).

## **ADMISSION**

Admission is completed for new children based on a wait list. Ultimate School-Agers is open on an availability basis to all families. Medical and registration forms must be completed and signed off by supervisor before the child starts the program or is placed on our wait list. There will be no cost for a family to add their child to U.S. A's wait list. A parent may contact USA's Supervisor to enquire as to their spot on our wait list and will be maintained in complete confidentiality by Ultimate School-Agers.

## **PRIORITIES FOR ADMISSION FOR CHILD CARE**

### **Child's Age**

1. School child currently attends
2. Siblings of families presently enrolled
3. The Supervisor in consultation with the Director has the right to reassess admission priorities in special or individual circumstances

Children currently enrolled with Ultimate School Agers have first priority in regards to PA days/ Summer Camps, however a space is not guaranteed. Upon withdrawal from the Centre by a family, a new family enrollment date will be based on the date of re-entry into the Centre.

## **SPACE REQUIREMENTS**

All spaces within the child care program must be occupied by a child and cannot be reserved.



## **WAIT LIST**

Families are required to complete the Application Package to be placed on the wait list. Should a family be offered a space with Ultimate School-Agers but are unable to take it at that time, there is the option to either resume a spot at the end of the wait list or to be removed from the wait list. Families presently enrolled must refer to the internal wait list for enrollment changes or sibling enrollment. There will be no charge for parents to add their name to the waitlist. Complete confidentiality will be maintained if parents are seeking to see where they are on the waitlist and the status can be checked by sending an email to [supervisor@ultimateschoolagers.com](mailto:supervisor@ultimateschoolagers.com)

## **CHILD PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM**

The program is planned by trained Registered Early Childhood Educators to incorporate a variety of activities to meet the physical, creative, intellectual and emotional needs of the children. If children are unable to participate in or have access to all facets of the program, parents should discuss this with the Centre Supervisor at admission, if special consideration is to be given. Any special consideration to be made will be confirmed in writing by the Centre Supervisor.

## **ENROLLMENT**

We are committed to providing a range of programs for preschool and School Agers. When the enrollment level in a program is no longer financially viable, the program will be monitored for a three-month period. During this time, if the enrollment level does not rectify itself, parents will be given four weeks' notice of program cancellation.

### **Withdrawal from program by parent or guardian:**

Should you need to withdraw your child from the program you need to give a minimum of two weeks' notice.

USA thanks you for choosing us to provide care for your most precious belonging, you child!

## **Tax Receipts**

Tax receipts will be issued on an annual basis by the end of February the following year.



## Our Mission

Ultimate School-Agers (USA) understands how short childhood is, and for this reason we strive to make an environment that is care free and fun for children. We believe in a pro-active problem-solving approach, thus giving parents the peace of mind that they so deserve.

USA also believes that every child is a unique individual that is competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. By recognizing children as capable and curious, we are able to deliver programs and services that value and build on their strengths and abilities, because they grow up in families with diverse social, cultural and linguistic perspectives. We are committed to working with children, their families and other educators to create a high-quality early learning and care environment that takes a strength-based approach to learning and development where children, parents and educators are co-learners. All of our knowledge and experience as educators combined with parental knowledge regarding their child provides a dynamic environment for the child.

“How does learning happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)” will be the document at the forefront of creating and maintaining our programs. Using the common framework articulated within the document, we strive to support the children to achieve the following goals and will meet the expectations for programs building on the four foundations for healthy growth and development:

FOUNDATIONS	GOALS FOR CHILDREN	EXPECTATIONS FOR PROGRAMS
Belonging	Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.	Early childhood programs cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.
Well-Being	Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.	Early childhood programs nurture children’s healthy development and support their growing sense of self.
Engagement	Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.	Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.
Expression	Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.	Early childhood programs foster communication and expression in all forms.





## Our Overarching Strategies

Our staff have incorporated the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) principles, along with the provincial pedagogy for early learning, to strengthen the quality of our programs and ensure high-quality experiences that promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of children. All staff bring to the program different experiences and strengths making a wonderful team atmosphere. Sharing their wealth of knowledge and working collaboratively, our team will plan for and create a positive early learning environment that will accomplish the following.

- 1) Promotes the health, safety and well-being of young children, families and educators.

You will see:

- Well organized environments, with lots of materials that are easily accessible to the children.
- Following Canada's Food Guide, our menu is carefully selected to reflect healthy and kid friendly choices.
- Children and staff washing their hands frequently throughout the day to promote good hygiene and to prevent the spread of illness.
- Snacks are available to the children upon arrival to the program and are set out for the children to serve themselves. Water is available to the children throughout the day.
- At meals, the educators sit with children, where possible, offering conversation and guidance.
- Children serve themselves and are encouraged but never forced to try new foods.
- Gross motor play is offered in our rooms and outside daily; children are encouraged to use their entire bodies to explore the world.
- Positive language that emphasizes accomplishments and efforts.
- Each room is cleaned throughout operating hours. With a thorough clean at the end of the day.
- All visitors are required to sign in and out. The front entrance, is within view of educators throughout the day.
- Educators follow the health and safety guidelines set out by the Ministry of Education and the Durham Region Health Department.

## Healthy Food and Active Play Make a Difference

Additionally, choices between rest and a balance between active and more reflective play are offered on a daily basis. These choices are offered to support positive interactions and assist with healthy development.

- 2) Support positive and responsive interactions between educators, children and families.

You will see:

- During the process to enrol your child at our centre, the Supervisor or designate will provide you with a tour of the facility, introduce you and your child to the Educators and compile information about your child's specific needs, likes and dislikes, and what comforts your child. This will allow staff to build an understanding of your child's individual needs.



- Our Parent Handbook provides the operational details of our programs, hours of operations, fees and payment processes, and outlines our operational policies so families know what to expect when they choose our services.
- It is our job as Educators to provide an atmosphere that makes children feel as though they belong. Ranging from a quick unexpected smile, a friendly wave, asking about their day past, present and future, asking them what they would like to do. Offering them a plethora of choices affords them the opportunity to explore while deciding what they would like to do. Providing a place, they feel they have ownership of and can take pride in.
- Educators use appropriate voices and make all attempts to communicate at the child's level for face-to-face interactions;
- Parents and Educators talking together, sharing information about each child.

### Strategies to Support and Strengthen Positive Interactions

Positive interactions are encouraged and supported by the development of enriched environments where all children belong and where there are a wide range of interesting, intriguing and developmentally appropriate activities options to engage children. Educators are reflective practitioners whose knowledge and understanding of the individual children and child development supports positive behaviors on the part of children, educators and families. The focus on the positive is a key component of our affirming approach.

Questions educators ask themselves:

- How do I engage with children in a way that builds on their strengths as opposed to identifying what they are doing "wrong"?
- Am I learning too? How do I respond when a child asks me something I don't know? Do I redirect the child to something else or do I respond: "Let's find out together!"
- Am I realizing that play is something children do that is intentional and inquiry based; a way for children to express themselves in multiple ways?
- Am I having fun? Is at least part of each day filled with a shared sense of joy that is a wonder of new learning for me and the children with whom I engage? What are the clues that demonstrate that I am engaged and interested in what I am doing?
- Have I planned and created an environment that can be viewed as the "third teacher"?

### Supporting Children to Manage their Behavior

Children benefit socially, emotionally and physically from our positive approach. Educators focus on helping the child understand their feelings and emotions and provide support to help each child learn to regulate their behavior.

- Expectations for children are clearly and positively stated.
- Children are offered choices when decisions need to be made.
- Behaviour Management techniques are appropriate to the developmental level of the child.



- Different approaches will depend on different situations and individual children. Staff are expected to implement a variety of strategies, for example;
  - To act as a mediator to help children resolve their problems
  - To explain why certain behaviours may not be the better choices
  - To make a choice for the child or offer choices of alternative actions.
  - To assist the child in making another choice of activities within the room or yard area
  - To use positive verbal and non-verbal reminders towards positive behaviours

The following are unacceptable behavior management strategies and are not permitted at any time under any circumstances.

- 1) Corporal Punishment
- 2) Harsh or degrading measures that may undermine a child's self-respect and self-esteem;
- 3) Depriving a child of basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing or bedding; and
- 4) Confining a child by locking the exits of the centre or using a locked or lockable space to separate the child from other children.

Any use of prohibited practices will result in immediate dismissal of staff. Should the staff behavior warrant further action, the Children's Aid Society will be contacted and their recommendations will be followed. The College of Early Childhood Educator's will be informed as well as the parents. USA will also file a serious occurrence report and submit to MEDU within 24 hours. According to MEDU the incident will be posted in a conspicuous place for 10 days. Any instructed follow up will also be posted.

- 3) Encourage and enable children to interact and communicate in a myriad of ways with each other, with educators and with their communities.

You will see many different ways for children to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings including:

- Painting, drawing, modeling with clay, play-dough and other art and creative/ sensory materials
- Telling or writing stories;
- Singing;
- STEM activities
- Dancing;
- Talking with Educators;
- Building with blocks and other building materials;
- Conducting experiments; and
- Solving problems.
- Computer/ Multi Media use to communicate with the world outside of their program
- Planned off-site excursions, to promote children's connection to their community.



- 4) Foster exploration and inquiry that is play based. Evidence from diverse fields of study tells us that when children are playing, they are learning.

You will see:

- Children making sense of the world around them through play.
- Play that is supported by caring adults in environments with materials, space and time that encourage complex thinking and aid children to gain essential skills. These skills include creative problem-solving, learning to get along with others, coping with challenges, overcoming obstacles, and learning to focus their attention. These are foundational activities that promote the development of literacy, numeracy and other important life skills.

5) Supporting Healthy Development and Learning

Each child's specific strengths, needs and developmental goals are identified. Educators set goals through individual attention, inquiry play-based learning activities, and positive learning environments in which each child's learning and development is supported. Educator's focus on children's social, emotional, physical, creative, and cognitive development in a holistic way. This approach will be strengthened by:

- Preparing the environment to foster learning and development;
- Building on the children's ideas, questions and theories as observed in play;
- A collaborative approach that incorporates discussion amongst team members about how to support deeper exploration; and
- Inviting and engaging others into a continuing process of program development including parents, the children themselves and other community partners including but not limited to educators within the school system.

- 6) Children learn through exploration, play, and inquiry with the educators as co-learners. Educators have thoughtful conversations with children, which encourages to interact and communicate in a positive way, and promotes their ability to self-regulate.

- Provide both children initiated and adult supported experiences to foster development.
- You will see:
- Weekly program plans posted with a variety of Educator planned activities that will be added throughout the week as the children expand on activities or move forward in new directions.
- All attempts are made to limit the number of transitions during the day; children do not spend a lot of time lining up or waiting for activities to take place.
- Times when the child takes the lead in planning the activity and times when the educator builds on observation to develop and implement activities that support each child to stretch his/her skills and abilities.



- 7) Provide many opportunities for a range of experiences that support each child’s learning and development.

You will see:

- Children actively engaged in activities, usually in small groups.
- Children and staff are smiling, laughing and having fun; playing and learning together;
- Educators observing and making documentation about children to build experiences
- Educators discussing the documentation with the children.
- A focus on learning through play with educators encouraging and supporting questions, answers and problem solving on the part of the children.

- 8) Incorporate a range of different experience modalities including indoor and outdoor play, active play, quiet play, rest and quiet time considering the individual needs of the children.

You will see:

- Well stocked shelves with toys and creative materials available to the children.
- Quiet comfortable spaces for reading or quiet individual activities or rest.
- Children engaged in a range of different activities throughout the day.
- Children taking the lead; actively shaping their play;
- Educators and children listen and learn from each other.
- Educators encouraging children to explore nature, through land-based activities, and their natural environments
- Outdoor activities offered daily.
- We offer children a daily choice of active activities.

- 9) Foster engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.

You will see:

- Educators seek out opportunities to talk to parents about their children’s needs.
- Opportunities, both planned and informal for parents and educators to share ideas about how best to support each child.
- Accident/Incident reports completed if a child has an accident for providing information.
- Notes posted as reminders for parents about upcoming activities.
- Posted Electronic bulletin board tablet with a calendar to remind children and parents of special program clubs/activities.
- Newsletter written by children and educators, emailed to parents monthly.



### Parents as Partners

Educators foster engagement and ongoing communications with families regarding the program and their children. We strive to build positive and responsive relationships with children and their families. We recognize and value each family for their unique strengths, perspectives and contributions to our program. Families are encouraged to participate in our child care activities- allowing us to partner with families in supporting the development of healthy, happy, capable and competent children.

A strong, respectful and equitable relationship with parents is key to our ability to fully engage as co-learners with the children and with their families. To this end, we seek out opportunities to engage parents in a way that meets their needs and build on strengths while respecting the challenges that face young families including; long commutes, time pressures and the busyness inherent in raising a family. Strategies include but are not limited to:

- An “open door” policy that welcomes parents to drop off and pick up at the times that work best for their family within the hours that the centre is open and allows them to drop-in to observe whenever convenient for the parent.
- Working with parents to accommodate their need for flexible child care needs.
- Informal discussions on a daily basis.
- Posted documentation of activities, interactions and engagement.
- Sharing resources and materials about community supports and activities
- Inviting parent participation in the development of curriculum; to share cultural and family experiences
- Inviting and encouraging parents to participate directly in the day to day activities of the centre
- Social and open house activities
- Questionnaires

### Key ideas and messages we share with parents:

- Our program is play and inquiry based because research tells us that this is the way children learn best. A play-based program provides the kind of opportunities that children need to be fully engaged and to learn how to express themselves many different ways. We will be sharing our learning with and about your children in many different ways.
- What do you think is important that I know about your child to support his/her well-being?
- These are our goals for your children and this is what we will be doing with your child to support the achievement of these goals, (outline the program expectations).
- How can we support your engagement with our program so that you feel that you belong? What works for you, your schedule and your family?

- 10) Actively engage with community partners and provide opportunities for the children and families to develop close connections with a range of community supports.



- You will see:
  - Parents are encouraged to drop in and observe when they have time to do so.
  - Planned excursions to community services and programs.
  - Use of community services as a resource and support to family and staff.
  - Invitations to community partners to provide knowledge through interactive activities closely supervised by staff.
  - Quarterly dinner with our community partner
  - PA Day or holiday trips to join seniors in the area, for songs and games.
- 11) Strengthen the capacity of educators to collaborate effectively with children, families and their colleagues through the provision of ongoing opportunities for continuous professional learning.
- Staff encouraged and supported to attend professional development;
  - Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE's) are required by their membership in the College of Early Childhood Educators to commit to their own ongoing professional learning
  - New ideas and strategies to support children's development introduced throughout the program; and
  - Materials and research shared with parents.
- 12) Use many languages to document and review the experiences of the children and the educators in order to:
- Provide an ongoing record of development;
  - Provide tools to enable educators to reflect on impact of their activities and strategies;
  - You will see:
  - Documentation posted that tells and shows you what the children are doing;
  - Different methods of recording observations about what the children are accomplishing

### Continuous Professional Learning for Educators

Our Centre supports educators and others who interact with children, to continuously self-reflect, have discussions, foster on-going collaboration, and engage in continuous professional learning, in order to provide the best possible learning environment for children. Staff are provided with many mandatory health and safety related training, such as Standard First Aid and infant child CPR, Occupational Health and Safety Training, in addition,

- Staff are encouraged to participate in on-going education
- Staff have scheduled planning time.
- Staff meet together to share ideas and information and to develop programs
- RECE's participate in the College of Early Childhood Educators Continuous Professional Learning Program.



### A commitment to Continuous Improvement

All new staff, students and volunteers are required to review the program statement prior to interaction with children in our care, and any time the program statement is updated. All staff are required to review the program statement on an annual basis. This will be accomplished at a year-end staff team meeting which provides the opportunity to reflect on the successes and challenges of the past year and to set goals for the upcoming year.





## Parent Signatures

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

While every effort is made to ensure that your child will receive the best possible care, there are times when unfortunate situations arise. As a result, you hereby waive, release, discharge and hold harmless Ultimate School-Agers and all persons associated with them from any and all responsibilities or liabilities in injuries and damages resulting from your child's participation in any activities or use of equipment and facilities.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

I allow my child to occasionally visit local playgrounds around the neighborhood, including, but not limited to soccer field and community garden, with supervision.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

In the event my child will be away from USA program and does NOT require a scheduled pick up from school I will call USA no later than 2 pm and inform them of my child's absence.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

I allow my child's picture to be taken and posted for display purposes or in media.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

I am aware that is not required of me to provide my child's health card number.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

I will allow USA to apply sunscreen/ bug repellent to my child if deemed necessary.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the attached program statement.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

By completing your application process, you recognize these areas as signed, as of today's date.