



Policies & Procedures Guide for Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC Programs

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AHSABC
PO Box 21058,
Duncan, British Columbia, V9L 0C2

www.ahsabc.com | admin@ahsabc.com



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This guide is a living document that constantly grows, changes, and evolves. The guide is a valuable program resource that provides easy access to examples of policies and procedures across many different areas and is a best practice guide for delivering the highest quality care.

AHSABC Mission

The primary mission of the Aboriginal Head Start Association of British Columbia (AHSABC) is to nurture the holistic health and well-being of Indigenous children and families across BC through the support of urban Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) programs and people. We know the immeasurable value of fostering the development of children who have a deep connection to and pride in their First Nation, Métis, and Inuit heritage. All we do at AHSABC is to support these children and nurture healthy and thriving Indigenous families for generations to come.

To best serve our communities now and into the future, AHSABC leaders strive to always embody deep cultural integrity and commitment, weaving ceremony, protocol, and culture into all aspects of our operations and governance practices. Children are at the centre of our commitments and all our endeavors, and we know that to nurture healthy children, families and communities, we must lead by example.

That is why we prioritize living out the values, principles, and cultural teachings at every level of leadership and governance. More than just words, these values, principles, and teachings have been the foundation of AHSABC's practice and success over decades. They are who we are, and they guide how we relate to one another, how we make decisions, and how we grow.

AHSABC Ways of Being and Knowing

We are deeply committed to the Seven Sacred Teachings, and we embrace them as the Ways of Being that guide us in how we walk together:

1. **Love:** We honour the diversity of traditions, cultures, strengths, and gifts we bring to the circle. We ensure that the people we work with and for are nurtured in their spiritual, emotional, and physical wellness. We allow our love for our culture and for the children to ground our intentions and guide our actions.
2. **Courage:** We are accountable for our actions and their impact. We advocate for actions and decisions that help to create caring, healthy, happy, and safe children, families, and communities. We hold children's best interests at the heart of all that we do and encourage each other to act bravely on their behalf.
3. **Truth:** We speak from the heart and share what we know to be true. We value the different truths people bring and seek to understand diverse perspectives.
4. **Honesty:** We communicate and relate with each other authentically. We engage with each other in a way that fosters cultural safety, and we support each other in being vulnerable and honest about our beliefs, experiences, feelings, and perspectives.



5. **Respect:** We treat each other with respect and dignity, and we honour the confidentiality of the children, families, and staff in our programs. We act and communicate with positive and caring intent, listening deeply with open hearts and open minds, ensuring that every voice is heard and respected.
6. **Humility:** We appreciate that we all need each other, and must nurture each other's strengths to build health, happiness, and safety for children and families now and into the future. We share in our responsibilities and our celebrations as commonwealth.
7. **Wisdom:** We seek knowledge and guidance from all and understand that collective knowledge is what will nurture growth.

At AHSABC, we know:

- Children are a gift from the Creator.
- Our children have a right to live proudly as Indigenous people in the Lands of their ancestors.
- Children have a right to learn their respective Indigenous language(s) and histories, and adults have a responsibility to pass on the instructions that the Creator gave at the beginning of time as reflected in our languages, cultural beliefs and cultural practices.
- Each child is part of what makes a community whole.
- Children need to develop meaningful relationships with Elders, who are the carriers of knowledge and history.
- Children, under the guidance of Elders, will learn to love learning throughout their life.
- Adults are community role models who are to teach children how to live a good life.
- Children deserve opportunities to gain knowledge and experience of how to live a good life.
- Children acquire knowledge by watching, listening and doing, and adults are responsible for encouraging and guiding them in all those activities.
- Children, through being loved, valued and encouraged, will gain the courage, strength and wisdom to use the power of a good mind and spirit in all that they do.
- Children have a right to enjoy the opportunities that education offers.
- Children have a right to live in healthy, self-determining communities that are free of violence.



AHS Nine Components

The heart of AHS programs are the six Program Components and three Foundational Components, outlined in the AHS Principles and Guidelines. The sample policies and procedures included in this guide are organized into these nine components which provide a foundation for a comprehensive set of guidelines to support AHS program.

Beliefs and Values: Keeping AHS' beliefs and values at the core of our work, ensures that all Indigenous children and families in our programs receive high quality care to support their well-being and development.

Culture and Language: By providing children with an understanding and experience of their cultures and languages, they will develop a positive sense of self as Indigenous persons and participate in their communities' culture.

Education: By providing children with enjoyable learning opportunities in an early childhood setting, we can help them develop intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually, maintaining a desire for lifelong learning.

Health Promotion: By providing regular healthy lifestyle habits and opportunities to access assistance from health professionals, traditional healers and early intervention support, AHS participants and parents take charge of and improve their own and their families' health.

Nutrition: By providing children with wholesome food and parents with information about nutrition (e.g., Aboriginal Food Guides), families can develop healthy eating habits that enhance children's physical, mental, spiritual and social development.

Social Supports: By providing children and their families referrals and information about community resources, we support them in seeking the help they need from local service providers, who then become part of the AHS community.

Parent and Family Involvement: By acknowledging parents and guardians as their children's primary teachers and ensuring their active involvement in the program, they become empowered caregivers and to participate more fully in their child's development.

Accountability and Management: AHS staff ensure accountability within the program by aligning actions and outcomes with the best interests of children, families, and the wider community.

Leadership and Staffing: By defining staff qualifications, needs and how best to meet those needs, implementing fair hiring practices, checking character and qualification references for all potential program employees, board members, and volunteers, and setting the standard for program functioning, we ensure all children receive high-quality childcare.



What Are Policies and Procedures?

In an early childhood education program, policies and procedures are valuable guidelines to ensure quality, health and safety, fairness, and consistency. These written statements outline clear guidelines for parents, families, program staff, and children. They are essential for upholding and exceeding provincial/territorial daycare regulations covering child protection, fire, public health, zoning, and building codes. Ensuring that programs meet these requirements is vital. Provincial legislation outlines the necessary conditions for licensing centres, encompassing health and safety, physical space, staff qualifications, ratios, age groupings, group size, and programming. Adhering to these policies and procedures, creates nurturing environments prioritizing all children and their family's well-being. While Child Care Regulations require each licensed childcare facility to have written policies and procedures, AHS programs are encouraged to have policies and procedures that create a strong foundation of cultural practices that build on the value of community and the Beliefs and Values statements that guide practice in AHS.

The policies and procedures of an AHS program describe the expectations and practices which help a program to run smoothly. **Policies** are the “ground rules” that spell out **how** the program operates, and **procedures** refer to the ways in which policies are “**put into action.**” They are based on the philosophy, goals and objectives of the organization.

1. Philosophy – considers the purpose of the AHS program
2. Goals – considers what the Board of Directors, Early Childhood Educators and families are aiming to accomplish in the AHS program (s).
3. Objectives – considers the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to achieve goals.

AHS program policies should be consistent with and reflect:

- Knowledge about how children develop and learn
- Standards of best practice e.g. Developmentally Appropriate Practice, NAYEC
- Values of families and Early Childhood Educators (values influence approaches to child rearing and teaching strategies)
- Needs of children, families and staff
- AHS Principles and Guidelines, Code of Ethics (e.g., ECE BC)
- Legislation.

Well written policies and procedures will communicate clear expectations; ensure consistency and guide children, families, staff and board members.

Approval of policies “rests” with the Board of Directors (the governing body/the licensee), and development of procedures are the primary responsibility of staff. Input from families, staff and board members is vital for making informed decisions and setting appropriate policies and procedures.



How Do You Develop Policies?

Policies are developed in collaboration with the legal operator, Board of Directors and Centre Director with input from program staff and parents. The types of policies that a program develops depend on several factors: what kind of program it is, who it serves, what it offers, what its philosophy is, what its goals are, and what is required by the provincial/territorial legislation, the local health authority and funders.

It is also important to consider and reference provincial licensing regulations as well as materials relevant to your local and provincial context when creating and updating policies. In British Columbia, for example, The Early Learning Framework (ELF) plays a crucial role in shaping the early education sector. The ELF was used to enhance and inform the development of this Policies and Procedure Manual, helping to ensure that our practices adhere to the highest standards and align with the professional training of early childhood educators, thereby promoting consistency and excellence in early childhood education across BC.

Key Areas for Policy and Procedures

Typically, in a non-profit setting, policies and procedures are required for the organization, for Childcare Licencing and for the delivery of AHS programs. This is a collaborative document and is a guide for creating a new or enhancing an already existing policy and procedure manual. Please make note and support this document by sharing any policies that have not yet been added.

How to Use This Document

1. Determine which policy areas are required by your local health authority and region, as well as Host Agency.
2. Determine who needs to be involved in creating and approving policies, such as a board of directors, Elders, etc...
3. Select policies from this document relevant to your program, location and community, and add them to a new document you create just for your program.
4. When developing a new policy and set of procedures for your program, write it first and then break it down into simple steps or action items (procedures); consider how the policy aligns with the AHSABC "We Believe" statements, and the nine different component areas of The LOVIT Way.
5. Write policies and procedures in simple and clear language so that everyone can understand them.
6. Review annually with staff, families, Elders and community members to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.
7. Include input from program staff, parents and Elders during the creation, review and updating process; new staff may have ideas for changes or additions based on a new perspective.
8. Regularly communicate policies to parents in the program and highlight new or updated policies and procedures.



Section 1. Beliefs and Values Policies

We know that keeping AHS' beliefs and values at the core of our work, ensures that all Indigenous children and families in our programs receive high quality care to support their well-being and development.



1.1 Elders

Policy Statement	AHS programs appreciate that Elders* play a significant role in raising and educating the younger generations. Through connection to Elders, culture, language and traditional ways are honoured and preserved. AHS programs will ensure that Elders play an integral role in AHS programs.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We will invite Elders to participate daily in the program to share their gifts.2. A designated staff member will ensure all paperwork needed to visit is prepared and completed, including permission slips and criminal record checks. Assist with filling it out if needed.3. To support participation in the program Elders will be provided with transportation and accessibility accommodations.4. Elders will participate daily in various settings, including land-based activities (e.g., walking in the woods, digging for roots, and gathering medicines).5. Elders will be hired as staff when possible. They will participate in planning and program development, provide support and mentoring to staff, and model language with other speakers.6. Educators and Elders will work collaboratively to teach and care for the children.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<i>The term 'Elders' refers to Traditional Knowledge Keepers, Cultural Resource people, and those who provide guidance and teachings in culture and traditional languages.</i>



1.2 Cultural Guests

Policy Statement	AHS programs honor the gifts of community members, including Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers and community role models, and recognize the importance of regularly inviting them into the program to share their gifts with the children, families and staff.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staff will plan each visit and contact the guest to set up a date and time.2. A designated staff member will ensure that all paperwork needed for the visit is prepared and completed, including permission slips and criminal record checks. They may assist the guest in filling it out if needed.3. Check in with the guest before they visit. Ensure all paperwork is completed and filed. Ensure they have transportation to and from the program.4. Review host agencies/community protocols on welcoming guests and exchange/honorarium for their teachings.5. Have the honorarium ready on the day of the visit.6. Introduce the guest to all staff upon arrival, any family members present, and all the children.
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Notes	



1.3 Parents as Partners

Policy Statement	Parents and families are integral to all aspects of AHS program functioning, including strategic planning, program development, operations, and evaluation.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. During intake, review AHS mission and role of parents and families as partners and collaborators in programs.2. Work together with parents to develop strategic plan for each year.3. Include parents in monthly meetings, including finance meetings and staff meetings.4. Provide parents with dates of PEPs (program evaluation) for the coming school year well in advance (i.e., in August) so that they can participate.
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Notes	



Section 2. Culture and Language Policies

Culture and language are the heart of AHS programming, providing children with a positive sense of themselves as Indigenous children and build on the children's knowledge of their languages and experience of culture in their communities. More specifically, programs will enhance the process of cultural and language revival and retention, with the goal that, where possible, children will aspire to learn their respective languages and participate in their communities' cultures after AHS.



2.1 Culture in the Program

Policy Statement	AHS programs ensure the learning environment, materials, and resources used in the program reflect the cultures and languages of the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children and families participating in the program; with this in mind, AHS programs intentionally work to create a welcoming and comfortable space for Indigenous people to be who they are.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. AHS staff will focus on the children's cultures and languages and find ways to incorporate these into their daily experiences.2. Invite Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and cultural teachers to participate daily.3. Apply Indigenous values and beliefs to daily programming, governance and administration.
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Notes	



2.2 Indigenous Languages in the Program

Policy Statement	AHS programs recognize and value the diversity of languages within their community and will incorporate Indigenous languages into everyday classroom activities.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. AHS staff will seek guidance from local Elders, Knowledge Keepers and parents on how to include language in the program.2. Staff will encourage language use by staff, children, families and Elders (for example, by learning the local greetings to use each morning.)3. Display words in the children's languages in the classroom. Include signage in all areas of the classroom.4. Read stories and sing songs in children's Indigenous languages.5. During enrollment, speak with families about the languages they speak at home. Families are encouraged to share their Indigenous language with the children and staff in ways they feel comfortable.
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Notes	



2.3 Cultural Ceremony and Celebrations

Policy Statement	AHS programs will honor the community, and the families involved and celebrate the uniqueness of everyone's traditions. Through guidance from families and Elders, AHS programs strive to understand local ways of knowing, being, and doing, and incorporate ceremony and celebrations into everyday programming.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staff will work with the program community, including staff, families, and Elders, to determine what milestones and events will be celebrated.2. On registration, staff will gather information on traditional milestones from families and incorporate it into the annual cultural calendar to implement in the program.3. Staff will partner with the Host Agency and Elders on planning celebrations that will be honoured.4. Create an annual calendar with celebrations and milestones to share with the families.5. Document celebrations and milestones and display them in the program. Ensure proper consent forms and protocols are being followed for photos and other content.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	See the appendix for the Ceremonial waiver template.



2.4 Daily Greeting and Connections with Families

Policy Statement	AHS programs believe that strong family connections support children’s growth and development. It is important to greet caregivers, parents and children at the beginning and end of the day to build safety and trust in the relationship.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Acknowledge the adult family member and child when they arrive and warmly greet them.2. Practice a greeting in the local language.3. Take this time to inform families of any upcoming events or updates.4. Take time to listen if the family member has time to talk. If they need space to share something personal, invite them into a private space and make sure that either the coordinator or a staff member can spend time with them.5. Ensure staff are using strength-based language when communicating with families about the day.
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Notes	



Section 3. Education Policies

AHS design programs to ignite a love of learning in every child. Our goal is to empower each child by providing engaging learning experiences that cater to their individual needs so that they can take the initiative to explore and learn. By capturing children's interest and nurturing their enthusiasm, self-esteem, and motivation, we aim to foster a lifelong love of learning and inspire them to excel.



3.1 Learning Stories

Policy Statement	At AHS we see the importance of making learning visible. Learning Stories demonstrate cultural teaching and learning interactions, highlighting the holistic learning that happens in the program every day.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have a culturally inspired template available for staff to use to make their Learning Stories; show this to staff and explain how to create a Learning Story if they do not have experience with this.2. Use the Cultural Calendar and the child's interests to create engaging activities and experiences.3. Set times aside for staff to complete Learning Stories to display in the program.4. Be sure that all children have signed photo release forms.5. Display Learning Stories in the program so children and families can view, reflect and expand on the learning experiences.6. Share digitally with families (Newsletter, email, app). Take photos of the Learning Stories and add them there.7. Use Learning Stories to promote conversation, engagement and curiosity.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- It is encouraged to have a visible list of children who are not to have pictures taken or shared.- See Appendix for a learning story template and example.



3.2 Technology in the Program

Policy Statement	AHS Programs will use technology in a supportive way to enhance cultural programming and administration.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. All potential technology uses will be discussed as a team prior to their use to determine the value and role in the program.2. Staff will share the intention of using technology with families and ask them to sign a permission form stating they understand there will be limited use of TVs or iPads.3. Before showing children a video or song, review it to ensure that it is culturally and factually correct and child friendly.4. No employee shall access or transmit:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. material that can, in any way, be considered defamatory, sexist, racist, offensive or otherwise abusive.b. personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions or other unsolicited commercial or business information.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	It is encouraged for AHS programs to find real-life experiences and not use technology as a replacement.



3.3 Kindergarten Transition Support

Policy Statement	At AHS we know the importance of preparing the children, their families and the schools for a child's transition to kindergarten. AHS programs will support children and families and be a liaison with the School District to ensure a safe and positive start to the child's next educational journey.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staff will connect with families to explore kindergarten transition needs and interests.2. Staff will connect with the child's local school district and their Indigenous Education Department staff.3. Ask for their kindergarten readiness calendars and information session dates and share this information with families.4. Invite representatives to come into the centre and review the registration process in-house with families.5. Arrange local kindergarten classroom visits for children and families.6. Support families to register their children for kindergarten.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	See appendix for the waiver to share information with the school district template.



3.4 Field Trips and Community Visits

<p>Policy Statement</p>	<p>AHS Programs recognize the value that field trips and community visits have in children's learning. By immersing them in nature and the community, they enrich their educational experience. AHS programs incorporate field trips and community visits into their daily programming.</p>
<p>Procedures</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather interest and ideas from families on local field trips and outings of interest to incorporate into daily programming. 2. Prepare a Field Trip Permission Form for field trips. 3. Bring children's emergency cards, first aid kit, Epi-pens and associated care plans with them. 4. Record the location, time, and number of children and staff in attendance. 5. Organize a safety plan for the field trip that everyone going on the trip is aware of <p>Missing Child on Field Trip In the event of a child missing, AHS staff will secure the other children with another staff member and begin a search of the immediate area, doing everything possible to locate the missing child and ensure their safety.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify all staff that a child is missing. 2. Designate staff to supervise the remaining children. 3. Immediately notify the facility's security staff if available, show them the child's photo from their Emergency Card, describe what the child is wearing and explain where the child was last seen. 4. Designate areas to search in order of priority, starting with the areas that present the most danger. 5. Contact the Coordinator by telephone, who will contact the parents/guardians. 6. Contact the police by dialling 911 if a search of the immediate area is unsuccessful. 7. Direct other staff members and volunteers to return to the centre with the other children. 8. Remain at the search site until the child is found and returned to the parent/guardian. 9. Record and report all relevant times, names, titles and details of the search, including completing a Reportable Incident form. 10. Do not issue any information to the media without written consent of the parent/guardian.
<p>Created/ Revised</p>	<p>November 2024</p>
<p>Notes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is encouraged for staff to identify transportation, to and from procedures, and share it with families. - See appendix for the general field trip waiver template.



Section 4. Health Promotion Policies

Empowering parents, guardians, caregivers and those involved with AHS to increase control over and improve their health is a crucial priority of AHS programs. More specifically, the program will encourage practices for self-care, working together to address health concerns and creating formal and informal social support networks. The goal is for everyone involved with AHS to take actions that contribute to holistic health, guiding and supporting families in their health goals.



4.1 Holistic Health

AHS Programs are dedicated to the well-being of each child's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development needs. All activities are designed to promote and support holistic development for children of different ages and abilities.



4.1.1 Physical Health

Policy Statement	At AHS we know the value of connecting with the land and its importance to early childhood development. We understand that outdoor play, including play involving risks (e.g., jumping from a height, climbing a tree) provides important learning and growth opportunities.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The program includes daily active play involving a variety of movements, where children are confident, competent, creative, and display strategic movements across a wide range of physical activities.2. The program will ensure a minimum of 60 minutes of outdoor active play every day. Exceptions are made if the outdoor environment is deemed not to be safe. Unsafe outdoor times may include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ High winds when there is a risk of flying debris.○ Thunder and lightning.○ Bear or cougar sightings.○ When air quality is a concern (smoke, extreme humidity, gas leaks).○ If the Program receives notice or is aware of a potential emergency that may place people at risk.
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Notes	



4.1.2 Spiritual Health

Policy Statement	AHS programs honour and teach spiritual practices, incorporating cultural values and beliefs into all aspects of daily programming, program governance and administration.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. During orientation, share with families about spiritual practices that the program practices.2. Ask families to read and sign a waiver describing any ceremonial practices that will be incorporated, such as Smudging.3. Provide workshops for families interested in learning and practice at home.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	See the ceremonial waiver template in the appendix.



4.1.3 Emotional Health

Policy Statement	AHS Program staff will ensure that practice and philosophy to care are aligned to ensure the emotional health and safety of children. This includes an attachment-focused approach to children who are experiencing dysregulation. AHS staff will strive to create a nurturing program environment that supports a child's well-being and sense of belonging. This is fostered through reciprocal relationships with people and places where each child is valued both as a gift and for their gifts.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Adults will communicate with kind words, patience, gentleness, and acceptance with children and adults and model apologies and forgiveness.2. Adults will encourage children to connect with Elders by modelling respectful relationships with them.3. Children are encouraged to express their emotions, needs and interests in a healthy way.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	



4.2 Daily Health Policies

Health and safety policies guide program staff in providing a safe environment, minimizing the risk of injury by guaranteeing that indoor and outdoor areas, furnishings, toys, and equipment are in good repair, safe and clean for use by the children, and that all potentially dangerous materials are safely stored. These policies also include those for personal health care and behaviours. The following policies, many of which provincial/territorial day care regulations require, promote and monitor the health and safety of children participating in early childhood education programs.



4.2.1 Tooth Brushing and Oral Hygiene

Policy Statement	AHS program staff will model and encourage good dental hygiene in the program every day to support positive physical health behaviors.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have a shelf on which toothbrushes can be stored upright position with space between each toothbrush; use soft bristle toothbrushes.2. Label each toothbrush with the child's name.3. Use a pea-sized amount of child-friendly toothpaste.4. At tooth -brushing time, toothpaste will be individually portioned out, ensuring no cross-contamination between children's brushes.5. Ensure educator supervision and guidance is available during routine.6. Use a timer to practice length of time we should brush.7. Sanitize toothbrushes and toothbrush racks at least once a week.8. Replace brushes every 3-4 months or sooner if needed.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<p><i>"A licensee must establish a program to instruct children in, and to practice the rules of, health and hygiene"</i> (BC Childcare Licensing Regulations – Part 4: Division 1- General Care Requirements-Section 46: Health and Hygiene, pg.26) https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



4.2.2 Hand Washing

Policy Statement	AHS program staff will practice safe hand hygiene to prevent the spread of germs. This keeps our staff, children and Elders safe in our programs.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff will wash their hands using soap for at least thirty seconds each time. The following are examples of when staff members must wash their hands. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Before starting each shift. b. Before and after handling food. c. Before feeding children or self. d. Before and after diapering or assisting children with toileting. e. After personal toileting and grooming. f. After encountering bodily secretions such as blood, mucus, and urine. g. After wiping or blowing their nose, or children's nose. h. After cleaning and using cleaning solutions. 2. Staff will be supporting children to wash their hands using soap for at least thirty seconds each time. The following are examples of when children are required to wash their hands. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. When entering the program b. Before and after eating times c. After using the washroom or after being changed d. After any contact with bodily fluids (blood, urine, feces, vomit, mucus) e. After wiping/blowing their nose.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes:	<p><i>"A licensee must establish a program to instruct children in, and to practice the rules of, health and hygiene"</i> (BC Childcare Licensing Regulations – Part 4: Division 1- General Care Requirements-Section 46: Health and Hygiene, pg.26) https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



4.2.3 Toileting

<p>Policy Statement</p>	<p>AHS staff will support the children’s individual diapering and toileting needs, always ensuring a healthy and clean environment.</p>
<p>Procedures</p>	<p>Diapering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The names of children who need diapering will be listed and visible. 2. Staff will complete a record of toileting incidents will be completed daily, especially for younger children. 3. Staff will keep the diapering list accessible to staff but not visible to others in the childcare centre. 4. Staff will be responsible for changing diapers at a time scheduled or individually as needed. 5. Invite children to diaper changes and engage them in conversation about the steps involved to foster trust, support development and build language skills. 6. Staff will inform a co-worker when they are about to diaper a child. 7. Staff will support those doing diapering by checking in with them occasionally. 8. To protect the health and well-being of children and adults at the childcare centre, staff and parents must wear disposable latex-free gloves when changing diapers. 9. Staff will store all diapering materials in an easily accessible area in the washroom. 10. If you are changing a diaper, use a change table made of material that can be easily sanitized between each use. 11. Staff will guide the child after diapering, to wash their hands before returning to the group. 12. Dispose of any diaper solids in the toilet and place the soiled diaper in a plastic bag. 13. Staff will remove disposable gloves and place in a plastic bag. 14. The staff person will then wash their hands and put on fresh gloves and the area will be sanitized. Paper towels, the paper sheet and gloves are placed in the plastic bag with the diaper. 15. The plastic bag should be sealed and disposed of in the designated lined garbage bin. <p>Toileting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children will be invited to use the washroom based on their individual needs, and the flow of the day. 2. Children will be supported and supervised while using the washroom. 3. Children will be encouraged to try to undress and dress themselves, determined by each child’s unique developmental stage and capacity. 4. Educators will be attuned to each child’s existing and growing toileting skills and capacity. Where appropriate, children will be encouraged to begin learning independence in the washroom. 5. Staff will support children, and educators will follow each child’s needs, interests and abilities.
<p>Created/ Revised</p>	<p>November 2024</p>



Notes	<p><i>“A licensee must establish a program to instruct children in, and to practice the rules of, health and hygiene”</i></p> <p><i>“A licensee must ensure that any surface used for food preparation, storage or consumption is not used for changing diapers”</i> (BC Childcare Licensing Regulations – Part 4: Division 1- General Care Requirements-Section 46: Health and Hygiene, pg.26) https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>
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4.2.4 Sanitation

Policy Statement	Staff will sanitize AHS program spaces regularly to ensure the health and safety of children, staff and families.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staff will develop a sanitation schedule with all staff involved.2. Staff should refer to the Sanitation Schedule for instructions about sanitizing the program space and materials.3. Staff members responsible for sanitation will sign and date the schedule once they have finished cleaning.4. The sanitizing solution and supplies, like all cleaning materials, will be stored out of reach of children.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>“A licensee must establish a program to instruct children in, and to practice the rules of, health and hygiene”</i>- <i>“A licensee must ensure that any surface used for food preparation, storage or consumption is not used for changing diapers”</i> (“ (BC Childcare Licensing Regulations – Part 4: Division 1- General Care Requirements-Section 46: Health and Hygiene, pg.26) https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007



4.2.5 Rest Time

Policy Statement	AHS Programs will support the health and well-being of children by including a regular rest time each day.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff will work to meet the individual rest needs of children, gathering direction from families. All children will have their own cot or mat with their blankets and any personal sleep items. 2. Children must be positioned for sleep on their back, unless they can roll over without assistance. 3. If a separate sleep room is used, a staff member must be in the sleep room, or a monitoring system will be installed. 4. Not all children will nap; however, quiet time allows all children an equal opportunity to recharge in their own way. 5. At rest time, lights will be dimmed, and soft soothing music played. 6. Children are encouraged to lie down for a period; after this time if they are awake and choose to get up, they may move on to a quiet independent activity such as reading, puzzles or tabletop toys/activities.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<p>- <i>“A licensee must ensure that each child is positioned for sleep only on the child’s back, unless the child can roll over without assistance” (BC Childcare Licensing Regulations – Part 4- Operations- Division 1-General Care Requirements Operations-Section 42 : Positioning for sleep,pg.24)</i> https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



4.3 Illness Policies

No child or adult deemed to be unwell or has a source of infection may attend the AHS centre. The staff's acceptance or non-acceptance of children who may be ill is at their discretion, except in cases of provincial public health policy. Staff should remain home if they show symptoms or contract illnesses.



4.3.1 General Health

<p>Policy Statement</p>	<p>AHS programs encourage all community members to be vigilant about monitoring health concerns and to stay home if they are not feeling well. This collective effort helps ensure that programs remain healthy, nurturing and secure spaces for everyone.</p>
<p>Procedures</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff, children, and community members will stay home if experiencing the following symptoms.: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Temperature at or above 99°F (37.2°C) b. Vomiting and/or diarrhea c. Unexplained rash, itching, or open sores d. Unexplained, persistent pain, including headaches e. Difficulty breathing or persistent cough f. Extreme fatigue or lack of energy g. Any of the following: Impetigo, Chicken Pox, Strep Throat, Measles, Rubella, Pertussis, Mumps, Hepatitis A, Scabies, Tuberculosis. (Children or staff may return when a doctor or public health nurse has examined them, have been properly treated and have received written medical clearance.) 1. If a child displays any of the above symptoms or is injured after arriving at the program, they will be provided a clean quiet resting area, and staff will contact a parent/guardian and request that the child be picked up as soon as possible. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be called. 2. In an emergency, a parent/guardian or emergency contact will be called and, if required, immediate medical attention will be sought, which may include transportation of child(ren) by ambulance. 3. Once having a chance to rest and heal, staff, children and community members may return to the program when: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. underarm temperature has remained below 99°F for 24 hours without medication; Or, b. It has been 48 hours since the last episode of diarrhea or vomiting without medication; Or c. A doctor has examined them, and provided written medical clearance; Or, d. When cold symptoms have subsided and/or has been examined by a doctor and has received written medical clearance; Or, e. After a minimum of 24 hours since starting antibiotics. 4. If a child is being kept at home due to illness, the parent or guardian should contact and inform the program as soon as possible. 5. Licensing regulations require a posted notice of any communicable diseases and to be informed of any outbreaks. This posting will remain confidential, allowing program staff to take precautions to help reduce the risk of anyone else becoming ill. Outbreaks of infectious diseases will be reported to the Licensing Officer, using a Reportable Incident Form. Staff will carry out all instructions given. 6. Parents/guardians must inform the program within twenty-four hours of a diagnosis of severe illness or contagious disease in the family or in the people that the family has been in contact with. An exception to this policy is HIV/AIDS, as families have a legal right to withhold such information.
<p>Created/ Revised</p>	<p>November 2024</p>



Notes	<p>- <i>If a child becomes ill while under the care of the licensee, a licensee must (a) provide in the community care facility a quiet and clean resting area for the child, and (b) ensure that the child is under the close supervision of a responsible adult.</i>” (BC childcare licencing Regulations - Part 4: Manager and Employee Requirement's- Division 3 - Illness- Section 54: child who becomes ill, pg. 29) https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>
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4.3.2 Medications

Policy Statement	If a child is required to take prescribed medication, AHS staff can only administer these with written consent and directions as indicated on the *Prescribed Medication Consent and Record Sheet.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents bring medication to drop off in the morning in the original container that the medicine was prescribed in, with the label. 2. Parents/guardians will fill out and sign medication form. 3. Label all prescribed medications carefully with the child's name, date, and instructions. They will be kept in a locked cabinet and refrigerated medications will also be locked. 4. Staff will follow the instructions exactly as parent/guardian wrote them. Staff will document when and how much medication was given. 5. Staff will put medication back in a locked cabinet. 6. Documentation will go into the child's file. 7. Medications – The program staff will keep a daily record of the medications administered to the children using the Prescribed Medications Consent and Record Sheet. 8. Non-prescribed medications – Unless prescribed, medications will not be given to any child at any time, unless in the case of a medical emergency. 9. Epi-pens can be left at the center during the school year and should be kept in a local and easily accessible (by staff only) place. Staff will review instructions for use at the start of the school year.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See Prescribed Medication Consent waiver template and Record Sheet template in the appendix - "If a licensee has agreed with a parent to give a child any medication prescribed by a medical practitioner or provided by the parent, the licensee and the licensee's employees must ensure that the medication is (a) administered to the child in the amount and at the times specified by the child's parent or in the child's record or care plan, and (b) readily accessible to employees." (BC childcare licencing Regulations -Part 4- Operations - Division 3:Illnesses: Section 43: Medication. Pg.28) https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007



4.3.3 Head Lice

Policy Statement	AHS programs strive to reduce the transmission of head lice among children and staff, and staff will support parents to implement appropriate protocols when head lice are present in the centre.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If a child has either nits or lice, parents are required to inform the AHS program immediately. 2. The parents will be informed if lice or nits are found on a child. Families will be supported in treating and remediating the lice. 3. Families are strongly encouraged to check their child's hair and remove all nits before bringing the child to the program. Running the hair strand between the thumb and forefinger or gently pulling out the hair will remove nits. The nits or strands of hair should be placed in a plastic bag, tied and thrown away. 4. At the same time, parents will be encouraged to vacuum their homes and cars and wash all bed linens, towels and clothes worn in the last two days in hot water, including hats, scarves, jackets and sweaters. Stuffed animals, pillows and other items that do not go in the washing machine can be put in the dryer on the hottest setting for 30 minutes or be dry cleaned. Families should soak hairbrushes and combs overnight in the lice treatment. 5. Families will be encouraged to check their child's head when washing their hair. 6. Lice do not prevent a child from participating in an AHS program. 7. When an outbreak occurs staff will carry out weekly checks for head lice of the whole group of children and all staff members, to prevent further spread. 8. Staff will give the coordinator a confidential report of the head check results. The coordinator will call the family to inform them of the lice and to support the family in dealing with them. 9. Children will not share hats, to avoid transmission of lice.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<p><i>"Head lice are tiny insects that live on the scalp. They lay eggs, called nits, which cling to the hair very close to the scalp. Head lice spread from person to person by direct contact, or on things like hats, combs, sweaters, etc. They are easily transmitted in a childcare setting."</i> HealthLinkBC provides more information about head lice here: Head Lice Health Link BC</p> <p><i>"A licensee must ensure that a child, while under the care or supervision of the licensee, is not subjected to any of the following: harsh, belittling or degrading treatment by an employee or another child, whether verbal, emotional or physical, that could humiliate the child or undermine the child's self-respect."</i> (BC Childcare licensing Regulations-Part 4: Operations- Division 2 – Guidance and Treatment of Children -Section 52: Harmful actions not permitted, pg.28) https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



4.3.4 Bedbugs

Policy Statement	AHS programs strive to reduce the transmission of bed bugs among children and staff, and staff will support parents in implementing appropriate protocols when bed bugs are present in the centre.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If a staff person sees bedbugs in a child's belongings, he/she gives a confidential report to the coordinator.2. If children have bites that may be from bedbugs, staff provide the coordinator with a confidential report.3. The coordinator calls the family to inform them of the possibility of bedbugs and to support the family in dealing with them.4. When staff identify bedbugs in a child's belongings, they isolate the items, seal them in a plastic bag and send them home.5. When staff see bedbugs in the preschool or bus, they will be especially vigilant.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	Bedbugs do not impact children's participation in preschool.



Section 5. Nutrition Policies

The Nutrition Policies provide children with meals that meet their nutritional requirements while also connecting to culture, supporting their overall well-being. AHS programs aim to serve as an educational resource for staff and families, highlighting the critical connections between nutrition culture and children's physical, spiritual and mental development. Mealtimes are recognized not merely as a time for eating but as a valuable opportunity for sharing, teaching, and socializing.



5.1 Food Safe and Sanitation

Policy Statement	AHS staff must obtain their Food Safe certification before working in the program. Staff will be handling children's food regularly and must know safe storing and handling procedures to ensure the safety and health of the children and community members, especially Elders.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Food safe training will be provided to all staff handling food. 2. Food Safe certification will be renewed every five years; it is the staff's responsibility to renew in a timely manner. 3. We may offer group courses annually and will offer them to all programs and families. 4. Staff will be reimbursed for renewal costs when applicable. <p>Sanitation of Food Areas</p> <p>AHS staff will always keep the food preparation area clean and take necessary precautions when preparing and storing food</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The food preparation area will be sanitized at least daily, and more frequently if needed using using proper sanitization solutions. 2. Staff will sanitize the food preparation and serving area before and after use. 3. Staff will clean the kitchen thoroughly once a day. 4. Staff will wash the tables and chairs with sanitizing solution before and after presenting food to the children. <p>Food Preparation and Storage</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The staff will wash hands thoroughly with soap and water and use a paper towel to dry hands. 2. Review the allergy list before preparing and serving food. 3. Read the menu plan for the day each morning and prepare food accordingly throughout the day. 4. Keep the fridge and freezer at appropriate temperatures for perishable foods. 5. Store knives and other sharp utensils in a locking drawer.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<p>https://www.foodsafe.ca/courses/level-1.html</p>



5.2 Mealtimes

Policy Statement	Mealtimes provide opportunities for children to learn, share, and socialize. AHS staff will support the philosophy that mealtime is about more than just eating; it is a time to learn and share together.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staff serving food should have Food Safe certification.2. Staff will nourish children as needed including a snack and lunch.3. Children and staff wash their hands with soap and water and dry them with paper towels before eating.4. Staff and children are encouraged to remain seated while eating for safety reasons.5. At least one staff member must always be at each table and engage in conversation and dialogue about the food that they are eating.6. Children will be encouraged to help set up for mealtimes, find their placemats and choose a place to sit at the designated seating area.7. Children will be encouraged to find and recognize their names and sit down at the table.8. Children will be supported in serving themselves from the food offered.9. Children will choose what they want and eat what they feel comfortable eating or trying; they will be encouraged to select an amount that matches their hunger cues.10. Children will be encouraged to keep waste to a minimum and to compost leftover food.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	See appendix for general menu template



5.3 Menu Planning

Policy Statement	AHS programs provide a food menu that reflects the cultural values of the children, staff, and local territory and includes locally sourced and Indigenous foods. AHS programs only offer highly nutritional foods that reflect the Canadian and Indigenous food guides.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Menu planning will be collaborative, involving Elders, Knowledge Keepers, families, staff and children, to ensure children are provided with the essential nutrients they require to grow, develop, and be active. 2. The Chef will plan a rotating healthy menu, keeping children’s dietary needs in mind (refer to children’s care plans for guidance). 3. The menu will reflect the cultural calendar and traditional foods from the four directions. 4. The menu will reflect the cultural background and preferences of the children in the program. 5. The menu will be posted in the preschool and shared with parents before the start of each week. 6. Families, Elders and other community members are encouraged to share recipes and meal ideas.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<p>see the link for the Canadian Food Guide: https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/migration/hc-sc/fn-an/alt_formats/pdf/fnim-pnim/2007_fnim-pnim_food-guide-aliment-eng.pdf</p> <p>See AHS resources and food ideas connecting to the cultural calendar: https://www.ahsabc.com/category/cultural-calendar-ideas/</p> <p><i>“A licensee must (a) ensure that each child has healthy food and drink according to the Canada’s Food Guide, and (b) promote healthy eating and nutritional habits.”</i> (BC Licencing Regulations: Part 4-Operations- Division 1 – General Care Requirements: Section 48: Nutrition. Pg.26)https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



5.4 Allergies and Food Sensitivity

Policy Statement	All AHS staff will be aware of any allergies or food sensitivities of children, as well as staff and community members working in the program to ensure that the sharing of food and the experience of mealtimes is safe for everyone. All children’s dietary needs in the program will be accommodated and supported.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinator will ensure all staff are aware of all allergies and food sensitivities. 2. Staff will post a list of allergies (and who has the allergy) in the kitchen / and in all eating areas. 3. Staff will designate a specific place to store and quickly access lifesaving medications, such as an EPI pen. 4. The coordinator will ensure all staff have basic knowledge of administering the EPI pen and following protocols. 5. When visitors are present for mealtimes, the coordinator will alert staff to any visitor dietary restrictions at the start of the day and post that information in the kitchen.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<p><i>“(1) A licensee must (a) ensure that each child has healthy food and drink according to the Canada’s Food Guide, and (b) promote healthy eating and nutritional habits. If a child’s record includes, or the child has a care plan that includes, instructions respecting food and drink for the child, (a) the requirements of subsection (1) (a) do not apply to the extent that they are inconsistent with those instructions, and (b) the licensee must comply with those instructions.”</i>(BC Licencing Regulations: Part 4- Operationsa: Division 1 – General Care Requirements - Section 48: Nutrition. Pg.26 https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007)</p>



Section 6. Social Support Policies

AHS communities are built on the value of relying on each other. We depend on our connections with others for our well-being and honour the value of sharing skills and knowledge. AHS programs connect families with diverse resources and valuable community services. Collaborating with community members, identifying resources, and sharing knowledge enhance the program and help reduce barriers for families to best support their children. This ensures a holistic support system for children and families, enhancing their well-being and success. This practice of collaboration, especially among healthcare providers, educational institutions, and early childhood education initiatives, is highly regarded for its substantial benefit to our communities.



6.1 Community Partnerships

Policy Statement	AHS programs prioritize building and sustaining collaborative working partnerships with community organizations that support children and families to fulfill the goal of providing holistic, wrap-around support.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Organize field trips into the community, following the children's interests and curiosities and connecting with cultural experiences.2. Connect with other professionals in the community who offer services that may benefit to families.3. Have the children and families attend community events.4. Share training events with organizations, such as school professional development days.5. Connect with the school district to support families' transition to kindergarten.6. Offer your program as a site for ECE student placements.7. Arrange visits between your program and the Elders lodge/centre.8. The program should be up to date with community events so they can share with families promptly.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	- See Appendix for information release waiver template



6.2 Integrated Service Delivery (Wrap Around Services)

Policy Statement	AHS programs will utilize an integrated service delivery model to build on community partnerships and support the care, education, health and well-being children and families.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Work closely with the Aboriginal Infant Development Program team and the Aboriginal Supported Child Development Program team to support families with external programs and services such as Language Development Services and Autism support programs.2. Invite practitioners into the programs such as kindergarten vaccines, dental hygienists, optometrists.3. Provide caregivers with information sessions and connections with community services.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	



6.3 Guiding Strategies

Policy Statement	AHS Programs promote positive, prosocial behaviour and guide children in a supportive environment.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educators will foster positive interactions among children, focusing on supporting their development, self-expression, and strengths. 2. Staff will guide children to manage their behaviors through positive limits and problem-solving strategies provided by staff. 3. Physical punishment or actions causing emotional harm are strictly prohibited, ensuring a safe environment for children. 4. Conflict resolution is encouraged using age-appropriate communication and problem-solving skills. 5. Educators will mentor children to enhance their self-awareness and foster healthy relationships. 6. Building strong connections with children allows educators to create personalized programs catering to their needs and interests.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	<p><i>“(1) A licensee must (a) ensure that behavioral guidance is appropriate to the age and development of the child who is receiving the guidance, and (b) provide to employees and parents a written statement of the licensee’s policy on behavioral guidance. (2) If the child has a care plan that includes instructions respecting behavioral guidance, the licensee must ensure that (a) any behavioral guidance given to the child is consistent with those instructions, and (b) if the behavioral guidance includes the use of restraints, that the restraints are administered only by a person who is trained in the use of, and alternatives to the use of, restraints.”</i> (BC Childcare Licensing Requirements: Part 4 -Operations-Division 2- Guidance and Treatment of Children- section 52: Behavioural Guidance. PG. 27)</p> <p>https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



6.4 Assessment of Needs

Policy Statement	AHS staff will work collaboratively with families to determine a child's individual needs and ensure the child and family receive the support and services necessary for the child's healthy development.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AHS programs will gather any available information regarding a child's needs and development during the intake process. 2. Staff work closely with families and document any observations of children that demonstrate extra support needs. 3. Educators connect with the ASCD team to support families and children. 4. Staff will provide one on one support. If one on one support is not possible, the centre will advocate for other agencies to help provide any necessary support. 5. Schedule a meeting with the parent/caregiver to review the care plan together. Either fill it out together or beforehand to get their thoughts and additions. 6. After having staff all read the care plan and add any information that would be important. 7. Clearly explain the strategies to the team and go over the care plan. 8. Check in with the team weekly about the care plan and how it is going. Is there anything that needs to be changed? Added? Removed? This is where documentation and observation are important practices. They allow you to keep track of progress and any changes. 9. Plan regular meetings with the family to go over the child's progress.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes:	See Appendix for a documentation template



6.5 Additional Supports

Policy Statement	Supporting and valuing all children, including those with requirements for extra support, is fundamental to the AHS program philosophy.
Procedures	<p>New Enrollment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Invite the family to discuss the transition plan for their child into the AHS Program (same as with all children).2. Understand if resources and supports are already in place, or are referrals needed based on parent's input.3. Explore the need for an integrated care planning meeting to support the development of a care plan for the child.4. Work with the educator team to develop a detailed care plan.5. Adjust daily flow and program based on the care plan.6. Plan for regular observations to ensure the care plan reflects meeting the child's needs. <p>Existing Enrollment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Conduct observations of the child in play to clarify the patterns of behaviour that require support.2. Follow steps 1-6 above.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	



6.6 Nurturing Circle Plan / Pathway Plan/ Care Plan

Policy Statement	AHS programs support the holistic health of all children. AHS staff will create a Pathway Plan or Care plan for children who need extra support. This may include, but is not limited to, diet, medication, activity modification, and behavioural guidance.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge what type of additional support is needed. Using notes from observations. 2. Meet with parents/family to discuss the need for Care Plan 3. AHS staff creates a Care Plan (Pathway Plans / Nurturing Circle) in consultation with the family of the child. (See Culturally Aligned Care Plan Template in Appendices). 4. Have all AHS staff read through the Care Plan to add any additional information regarding the child. 5. If a child has a support team of professionals in the community, include their goals or strategies in the Care Plan. 6. Quarterly review of the Care Plan with the family will ensure goals are being worked towards and updated when needed.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See care plan template in Appendix <p>Per BC licensing requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“A licensee must keep, for each child requiring extra support, a current care plan showing the following information:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>The diagnoses relevant to the child’s requirement for extra support, as made by health care professionals.</i> o <i>The courses of action recommended by health care professionals to address the needs of the child requiring extra support.</i> o <i>The resources to be made available to the child requiring extra support by the licensee, including any adaptation of the community care facility necessary to ensure the child’s safety or comfort, and any modification to the program of activities necessary to enable the child to participate in or benefit from the program.</i> - <i>The licensee must develop the care plan in consultation and review the care plan at least once each year with a parent of the child requiring extra support and any person requested by the parent.</i> - <i>The licensee must record compliance with the care plan of a child requiring extra support in respect of each of the following that are applicable to the child:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Any therapeutic diet given to the child by the licensee.</i> o <i>Any medication administered to the child by the licensee, including the amount and the time at which the medication was administered.</i> o <i>Any modification to the program of activities for the child’s benefit.</i> o <i>Any behavioral guidance provided to the child, and its effect.</i> o <i>Any other matter for which the licensee has agreed with the parent of the child to record compliance.</i> “(Please see BC Childcare Licensing Regulations: Part 4 – Operations - Division 4 – Records - Section 58: Care plans. Pg. 32) <p>https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



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Section 7. Parent and Family Involvement

AHS Programs encourage and support the family's role as children's primary teachers in their well-being and learning. The program will acknowledge parents and family as contributors through their involvement with a Parent Body or participation in and contributions to program activities. Programs empower caregivers to bring forth gifts and develop as role models for children in their communities. Learning involves more than one generation. Elders and grandparents are central to AHS programs, and their knowledge of cultural traditions and language greatly benefits the children, families, educators, and community.



7.1 Family Participation in Daily Program Activities

Policy Statement	AHS programs welcome and encourage family members to participate in supporting all aspects of the program and classroom community development through ongoing collaboration, planning and engagement.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We encourage parents and family members to volunteer in the program to support it, share their knowledge and build the program community.2. Parents and families are encouraged to participate often and regularly in the daily program and share cultural knowledge and language.3. Parents and Caregivers are encouraged to join on field trips and program outings as leaders and facilitators.4. Parent and family volunteers are integral to the promotion and hosting of program events and activities. Program staff and families will work together to plan events.5. Programs encourage a parent to take on the role of “Parent Lead” each year; in this role, the parent will support other parents, provide information about program or support services, and encourage classroom community development.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	



7.2 Gatherings and Celebrations

Policy Statement	Gatherings and celebrations that include family members and others from the community are an essential part of AHS programming, occurring at least monthly throughout the program year if possible.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Program staff, families and the program community will work together to plan gatherings and celebrations for the year.2. A Calendar including planned gatherings and celebrations will be created and shared with the families and community at the start of the program year and shared at the beginning of each month.3. Staff will remind families of upcoming gatherings or celebrations at drop-off or pick-up, welcoming people and encouraging participation.4. Information on upcoming gatherings or celebrations will be posted on the information board outside the centre and sent to parents via email or social media.5. Staff will send special invitations to Elders and arrange transportation if needed.6. The program will provide food and drinks for everyone attending the event.7. Staff will work together and be designated to follow local traditional protocol concerning Elder attendance; ensure Elders attending the event are comfortable and are seated and served food first.8. All gatherings and celebrations are alcohol-free events.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	



7.3 Communications and Social Media Use

<p>Policy Statement</p>	<p>AHS staff will communicate with parents, family members and community members daily by sharing information about the child, program activities and routines, and special events using families' preferred method of communication. Regular, open communication ensures the entire program community stays connected and actively involved in all aspects of programming.</p>
<p>Procedures</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Program staff and families will communicate daily through conversation, email updates and/or social media. 2. Daily evidence of learning will be collected using photos and/or videos. 3. Parental/guardian permission is required (e.g., a Photo Release Form signed at intake) for any images or videos gathered, collected and shared. These images are for our families only and parents/guardians are asked not to share them on any other social platforms. 4. AHS programs are encouraged to maintain and update a private social media page (e.g., Remind, Lillio Class Dojo) so that our families can stay engaged in projects and upcoming events. This content and these images are for our families only, and we expect parents/guardians not to share them on any other social platforms. 5. Please note that Facebook and Instagram platforms are less safe and secure ways of sharing and are therefore discouraged. 6. Information about program activities will be shared regularly with Elders via their preferred method of communication.
<p>Created/ Revised</p>	<p>November, 2024</p>
<p>Notes:</p>	<p>See the photo consent form template in Appendix</p>



7.4 Resources and Support

Policy Statement	AHS programs aim to support and elevate children, parents and families by sharing parenting resources and organizing workshops on relevant topics on a regular basis.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. All AHS programs will offer a resource library for parents to access information regarding children’s development, parenting, guidance, and health.2. AHS programs will offer parent workshops or guest speakers on topics of interest and access expertise in the community. For example, they might invite the kindergarten teacher to come and speak about school readiness.3. AHS staff will share knowledge and expertise with parents and families on an ongoing basis, for example, toileting or child guidance.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Make time at pick up or drop off to talk to the parent and share relevant information.b. If you are printing out an information sheet on strategies or tips for a particular area of child development, share it with the parent during a conversation and time of connection; this ensures the family feels supported and can ask questions or share challenges.4. The program will invite parents and family members with different areas of expertise to share their knowledge at special parent events.5. Staff will invite Elders to share their parenting and caregiving knowledge with parents and families during specially planned events.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	



Section 8. Program Design and Management

AHS programs ensure that program actions and outcomes are grounded in culture, aligned with early years best practice, and that the interests of children, families, and the wider community are valued. The program emphasizes that Indigenous children are the primary beneficiaries, receiving the most significant and profound benefits. This approach aims to sustain and enhance the trust and confidence of the community and the government in the program's capability to effectively deliver Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) services, as outlined in the AHS Principles and Guidelines.



8.1 General Operations

All AHS programs are dedicated to establishing a simple and smooth registration process and seamless program integration for families and children. AHS will often serve as a first introduction to an educational program, shaping children's initial experiences.



8.1.1 Program Orientation and Registration Packages

Policy Statement	All children and families who join an AHS program will receive an orientation to ensure the new family and child feel confident and knowledgeable as they begin programming.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once a child's place on the waitlist opens, parents will be contacted to see if they still want the space. 2. Parents/caregivers of children registered in the program are invited to a program orientation before the child starts the program. 3. AHS Staff and the families will complete the orientation process together. 4. The program will give caregivers a registration package that will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Principles and Guidelines book ○ overall approach and philosophy ○ Family Handbook ○ opportunities and procedures for parent/caregiver participation ○ screening and observation tools that staff may use ○ general intake forms ○ Immunization Records ○ consent forms ○ Other <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Families will be supported in completing the registration package and returning it to the program to confirm their child's space in the program. 2. The family will receive a tour of the facility, a handbook outlining program policies and procedures, and any pertinent program information. 3. Gradual entry dates will be set-up during the intake process to accommodate the family's schedule/obligations.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	



8.1.2 Transition Plan

Policy Statement	AHS programs will make every effort to provide a space for a child turning three years old to move from the Toddler program to the Preschool program; however, the program cannot guarantee this space during enrollment.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When a child is nearing the age to move from the Toddler group to the Preschool group, AHS staff will determine if a space is available.2. Parents will be notified, and staff will help prepare the child and family for the change:<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Drop-off and pick-up information will be shared if it is different from the previous program.o Programming details such as field trip information, snack and food/drink information, nap schedule, will be shared.o Staff will invite parents to meet with new staff, tour the space, and ask questions.3. Should a space not be immediately available, priority will be given to a child already in the Toddler program over a child who is not, to ensure continuity of care for the child and family.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	



8.1.3 Confidentiality

Policy Statement	AHS programs will ensure that personal information is kept confidential. The only release of information or records would be for a legal matter requested or required by law.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Information obtained about program participants is deemed to be strictly confidential except where the sharing it is required by law.2. Staff must store all written information about program participants in a secure location.3. When staff are unsure about the appropriateness of sharing program participant information, they should seek direction from the coordinator.4. Information about participant families may only be released as agreed to in the "Consent to Obtain and Release Information Form" signed by the parent/guardian.5. Disclosure of information necessary to prevent a crime should be made with reasonable care in conjunction with the coordinator and the parties' knowledge unless informing the parties would impede due process of the law or violate the duty to warn others.6. The obligation to maintain confidentiality continues indefinitely (e.g. after the employee has ceased contact with persons served and/or employment with the program).
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	Find Consent to Obtain and Release Information Form template in the appendix



8.2 Attendance Policies

All AHS programs are dedicated to supporting and accommodating the families in our programs. We design our initiatives to emphasize responsibility and accountability among our families.



8.2.1 Daily Attendance

Policy Statement	Routine and consistency are essential to a child's development, and AHS programs encourage regular and consistent attendance to support children's learning, building healthy relationships, and taking part in all the activities in the program.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Parents/Caregivers are asked to notify the program by 9am if their child is not attending on a regularly scheduled day.2. Parents are asked to inform the staff as soon as possible if their child is sick or will be absent for any reason. Staff members will keep track of attendance every day for program records.3. If a child or family is struggling to attend every day or consistently, program staff will help to create a plan and support the family.4. If child is absent from the program for two consecutive weeks without prior notice, efforts will be made to reach out to the family. If communication attempts fail, or a return date cannot be established, the child's spot in the program may be given to a child on the waitlist.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	



8.2.2 Arrival and Departure Procedures

<p>Policy Statement</p>	<p>AHS programs will offer procedures for the start and end of the day so that families can be prepared and know what to expect when participating, while recognizing that circumstances or routines may change, and programs are flexible.</p>
<p>Procedures</p>	<p>Procedures for the start of each day:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents/caregivers are requested to arrive as close to the program’s start time as possible. 2. We ask parents/caregivers to sign in their child upon arrival. 3. Each child will be assigned a cubby space for extra clothing and outdoor items. Parents are asked to ensure that all the child’s belongings are clearly labelled. 4. Parents/caregivers must stay with their child until the class officially starts. They are encouraged to remain at the program until their child feels comfortable. 5. In cases where separation is difficult for the child, the staff and the family can collaborate to create a plan to ease the transition. <p>Procedures for the end of each day:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents/caregivers who pick up their child from the program are requested to do so within 5 minutes of the program end time. 2. Parents/caregivers must sign their child out before leaving the program with them. 3. Staff will ensure the parent/caregiver has the necessary handouts and other information before leaving.
<p>Created/ Revised</p>	
<p>Notes</p>	



8.2.3 Authorized Persons Signing in and Out of the Program

Policy Statement	AHS programs have clear procedures for signing children in and out of the program each day to ensure the safety of each child in our care and meet licensing requirements.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Upon registration, we will ask parents to submit a list of people authorized to pick up their child(ren) from the program.2. The child's legal guardian must make any changes to this list in writing and provide a signature.3. We will release children only to the adults listed.4. Only in an emergency will a child be released with verbal permission.5. In an emergency if an unauthorized person arrives to pick up a child, staff will not release the child to the person unless the parent or guardian has notified the staff either in writing or verbally. Parents and guardians are required to give the full name, and a physical description of all pick-up persons authorized informally.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ After obtaining authorization from the parent or guardian the staff will ask for a picture ID to verify that the pick-up person is who they claim to be.○ Staff will not release the child if the person cannot produce picture ID.○ If staff cannot obtain authorization because they cannot contact the parent or guardian, the staff will call another authorized person to pick up the child.○ If staff are unable to contact the parent or guardian or other authorized pick-up persons, the child will remain at the centre until such persons are contacted; a staff member will be designated to stay with the child and ensure that the child feels safe and happy.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	



8.2.4 Late End of Day Pickups

Policy Statement	AHS programs encourage parents and caregivers to pick up their child(ren) at the stated pick time to allow time for communication with their child’s care provider about the day.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If parents or caregivers know they will be late due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance, they are asked to inform the AHS staff as soon as possible. 2. The emergency contact person will be called if a child remains at the centre after the pick-up time. 3. If the child is not picked up by closing time, the coordinator/manager will be contacted, and appropriate arrangements will be made for the child. 4. We will only release children to authorized persons. 5. AHS staff will make all efforts to work with a family to support on-time pickups; if there is a reoccurring pattern of late pickups, check in to see if there is a specific barrier to pick-up that staff can help in some way. <p>If a child is not picked up at the end of the day:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A staff member will be assigned to stay with that child, ensure they are happy and engaged in play, provide a snack if needed, and offer comfort if they are upset that the parent is late. 2. If the program has not received notification from the pick-up person, the family will be called. 3. Staff will attempt to contact the parent/caregiver by phone at work and at home every 10 minutes for at least 30 minutes. 4. If staff cannot contact the parent/caregiver, staff will contact the next authorized pick-up persons to pick up the child. 5. If the staff member needs to leave, they will contact the coordinator to come and take their place in waiting with the child and contacting the family for pick up. 6. The child will stay with an AHS staff member until the parent or emergency contact is located, and a plan for the child has been made.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	



8.3 Transportation Policies

AHS programs are devoted to providing comprehensive support for families. To ensure accessibility and uphold regulations for the secure transportation of passengers, many AHS programs provide a bus service for families who need support reaching program facilities. By fostering a positive and respectful atmosphere, our drivers ensure that everyone's focus remains on the road for a smooth and safe journey. We strive to make every aspect of our programs conducive to the well-being and comfort of our valued families.



8.3.1 Bus Driver Responsibilities

Policy Statement	AHS bus drivers are held to the highest standards of safety, supervision, and preparedness, considering the precious cargo they transport.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bus drivers must be at least 19 years or older 2. Bus drivers will receive specialized training, both in the classroom and on the road. 3. Bus drivers must maintain a driver's license that permits the driver to operate the type of vehicle being used, and a copy of that licences should be placed in the Bus drivers' file. 4. Drivers must demonstrate their knowledge of traffic laws, policies, and procedures as well as g exemplary driving skills and the operation of a school bus. 5. Driving records will be screened and criminal background checks will be performed during the hiring process. 6. Medical exams are required annually. 7. Bus Drivers take certified driver improvement courses and periodic re-examinations to learn about new techniques and improve their skills. 8. There is a program in place for Driver's License Status Checks; this service is a reliable way for bus operators to confirm at regular intervals that their bus drivers continue to hold a valid license and that there have been no contraventions since the last check. <p>Training and instruction will include the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proper use of school bus equipment ○ Daily pre-trip and post-trip vehicle safety inspections ○ Safe driving techniques, including defensive driving skills ○ Procedures for loading and unloading passengers ○ Procedures for entering and exiting school zones ○ Student management ○ Accident and emergency response, including evacuation ○ First Aid/CPR ○ Route instructions ○ Use of electronic communications
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	<p><i>"(1) If children are to be transported by vehicle by a licensee or a licensee's employees, the licensee must ensure that the driver of the vehicle (a) is 19 years old or older, and (b) holds a driver's license that permits the driver to operate the type of vehicle being used. (2) If more than 7 children are transported in a single vehicle, a licensee must ensure that at least one responsible adult, not including the driver, is in the vehicle."</i> (BC Licencing Requirements: Part 4 – Operations- Division 1- General Care Requirements- section 45: Transportation. PG. 26)</p> <p>https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



8.3.2 Bus Safety

Policy Statement	AHS drivers ensure all bus rides are a positive and safe experience for all participants.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All buses will use flashing lights to indicate to oncoming traffic that they are stopping and that children will be exiting or entering the bus. 2. Bus drivers will complete a vehicle inspection, including seat belts, before and after each journey. 3. Drivers may play quiet music may be played during the duration of the trip. 4. All bus journeys will have AHS staff present to assist and support the bus driver; in addition, if a child with extra needs is riding the bus, they may require a support person to ride the bus with them and help them. 5. AHS staff will fasten and check each child's seatbelt before the bus moves. 6. All participants will be given a reminder of the rules before the start of each journey (emergency exits must be indicated). 7. All bus riders must wait for the bus to come to a full stop before getting up from their seats, entering or exiting the vehicle. 8. All AHS bus drivers will have a direct phone number where they can be reached and communicated with directly (please note, that bus phones may only be used when the bus is at a complete stop and turned off). 9. If more that 7 children are transported in a single vehicle a licensee must ensure that at least one responsible adult, not including the driver, is in the vehicle. 10. Emergency exits will be clearly labeled.
Created/ Revised	
Notes	<p>See the bus rules template in the Appendix See the Vehicle Inspection Check List in Appendices L <i>"(1) If children are to be transported by vehicle by a licensee or a licensee's employees, the licensee must ensure that the driver of the vehicle (a) is 19 years old or older, and (b) holds a driver's license that permits the driver to operate the type of vehicle being used. (2) If more than 7 children are transported in a single vehicle, a licensee must ensure that at least one responsible adult, not including the driver, is in the vehicle."</i> (BC Licencing Requirements: Part 4 – Operations- Division 1- General Care Requirements- section 45: Transportation. PG. 26) https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



8.3.3 Daily Bus Service Family Responsibilities

Policy Statement	Families with children attending the AHS program have some responsibilities when their children ride the bus. This helps the bus drivers and staff ensure the safe and efficient transport of the children.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. During orientation, all families will review the bus rules and discuss them with their children before each bus ride. They will be shown car seat safety, including how to put their child in a car seat.2. Families are given the bus phone number and asked to use this method to communicate with the bus driver about their bus needs.3. If a child will not need the bus on a regular bus day, families are asked to inform the bus one hour before the start or end of the program. This communication helps to avoid confusion and miscommunication.4. For children requiring daily transport, families are asked to be ready and waiting for the bus at least 5 minutes before each ride (traffic and road conditions can fluctuate and it is impossible to give exact pickup or drop-off times).
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	- See the bus rules template in Appendix



8.3.4 Field Trip Bus Policy

Policy Statement	AHS bus driver and AHS staff are responsible for ensuring the safe entry and exit of children from the bus.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If more than 7 children are transported in a single vehicle a licensee must ensure that at least one responsible adult, not including the driver, is in the vehicle2. Before entering the bus, AHS staff will read aloud the names of children who are in attendance, and the driver will take note of children's attendance.3. Driver will assist children to enter bus, and AHS staff will fasten seat belts.4. AHS staff will do a head count to ensure all children are on the bus.5. Upon arrival at the destination, AHS staff will undo seat belts while the driver waits outside bus. The driver will assist the children in departing the bus and AHS staff will do a head count.6. The driver will physically inspect the bus to ensure all children have departed.7. Any time the driver or AHS staff must leave the bus, the driver shall turn off the van and take the key out.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	<p><i>"(1) If children are to be transported by vehicle by a licensee or a licensee's employees, the licensee must ensure that the driver of the vehicle (a) is 19 years old or older, and (b) holds a driver's license that permits the driver to operate the type of vehicle being used. (2) If more than 7 children are transported in a single vehicle, a licensee must ensure that at least one responsible adult, not including the driver, is in the vehicle."</i> (BC Licencing Requirements: Part 4 – Operations- Division 1- General Care Requirements- section 45: Transportation. PG. 26)</p> <p>https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



8.3.5 Bus Accident or Breakdown Procedures

Policy Statement	In the event of a bus accident or breakdown, the AHS bus driver and AHS staff will work together to ensure the safety of the children and others on the bus and return to the centre or family in a safe and timely way.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Stay calm.2. Check the children and other adults for injuries.3. Call 911 if necessary.4. Call the Program Coordinator to inform them of a bus breakdown or accident.5. Review the Bus Accident and Breakdown Procedures manual located at the front of the bus in the emergency kit.
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	- See Bus Accident and Breakdown Procedures manual in Appendix



8.4 Health and Safety Policies

We design AHS programs to follow the applicable childcare or preschool legislation or daycare licensing regulations specific to their respective province or territory. Often, programs will refer to the provincial or territorial childcare, preschool, or daycare licensing regulations to ensure compliance. The goal is to provide a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment for children and their families.



8.4.1 Reportable Incidents

Policy Statement	AHS programs will comply with provincial licensing requirements for reportable incidents to ensure the safety and health of all children and families. The Licencing officer must be notified within 24 hours of the incident.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All staff will review the reportable incident list provided by provincial licensing annually; new staff will review it within the first two weeks of starting a program. 2. In the event of an emergency staff will notify the child’s parent(s) and/or guardians as soon as possible. 3. Staff members: who witnessed the incident will, within twenty-four hours of the incident, complete a Reportable Incident Form. The witness will: 4. Complete a Reportable Incident Form Internally using the Community Care Facilities Licensing Incident Report paper form. 5. File the original copy of the report in a locked file cabinet in the program office. 6. Keep a file of completed Reportable Incident Form in a locking file cabinet in the office. 7. Send a copy to the Licensing Officer and the host agency.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please see BC Childcare Licencing Requirements under: Schedule H- Reportable Incidents: PG. 45 https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007 - BC childcare licencing requirements state that these are listed as reportable incidents: - Aggressive or unusual behaviour refers to a child’s aggressive or unusual behaviour by a child towards others, including other children, that has not been appropriately assessed in the child's care plan. - Attempted suicide: which means an attempt by a child to take the child's own life. - Choking: means a choking incident involving a person in care that requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - first aid, - emergency care by a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner, or - transfer to a hospital. - death, which means any death of a child. - Disease outbreak or occurrence: this means an outbreak or the occurrence of a disease above the incident level that is normally expected. - Emergency restraint: which means a restraint that is necessary to protect the child or others from imminent serious physical harm that is not approved and documented in a child's care plan. - Emotional abuse: this means any act, or lack of action, which may diminish the sense of well-being of a child, such as verbal harassment, yelling or confinement, perpetrated by a person not in care. - Fall: this means a fall of such seriousness experienced by a child, requiring emergency care by a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner or transfer to a hospital. - Financial abuse: which means <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the misuse of the funds and assets of a child by a person not in care or - the property and funds of a child are obtained by a person not in care without the knowledge and full consent of the child or the child's parent.



- **Food poisoning:** means a food-borne illness involving a person in care that requires emergency care by a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner or transfer to a hospital.
- **Medication error:** is an error in the administration of a medication that adversely affects a child or requires emergency intervention or transfer to a hospital.
- **Missing or wandering person:** a child who is missing.
- **Motor vehicle injury:** an injury to a child that occurs during transit by motor vehicle while the child is under the care or supervision of the licensee.
- **Neglect:** the failure of a care provider to meet the needs of a child, including food, shelter, care or supervision.
- **Other injury:** an injury to a child that requires emergency care by a medical practitioner or transfer to a hospital.
- **Physical abuse:** any physical force that is excessive for, or is inappropriate to, a situation involving a child and perpetrated by a person not in care.
- **Poisoning:** the ingestion of a poison or toxic substance by a child.
- **Service delivery problem:** any condition or event that could impair the ability of the licensee or their employees to provide care, or that affects the health, safety or well-being of children.
- **Sexual abuse:** any sexual behaviour directed towards a child by an employee of the licensee, a volunteer or any other person in a position of trust, power or authority, and includes
 - any sexual exploitation, whether consensual or not, and
 - (b)sexual activity between children if the difference in age or power between them is so significant that the older or more powerful child is taking sexual advantage of the younger or less powerful child.
- **Unexpected illness:** any unexpected illness of such seriousness that it requires a child to receive emergency care by a medical practitioner or transfer to a hospital.



8.4.2 Preparedness

Policy Statement	AHS staff will be trained in emergency preparedness to ensure that when an emergency arises, the steps and tools needed will be available to address the situation effectively. This preparation can significantly reduce panic and confusion, leading to more organized and efficient emergency management and ensuring the safety of the children and staff.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A first aid kit, an attendance record, a pen or pencil, a cell phone and an emergency information card for each child and staff members are kept beside the exit doors for quick and easy access. 2. Staff will keep emergency supplies, including water, food and child friendly supplies will be kept in daycare exit area. The supplies will be checked and rotated on a regular schedule. 3. All staff will know how to work the fire extinguishers. 4. Staff will teach children what to do in case of fire, earthquake and other emergencies. Staff will practice evacuation drills. 5. Staff will keep a log of monthly fire and earthquake drills, reviewing to assess how well drills went and making any changes needed. 6. A simple diagram of exit paths from the building to the meeting place, along with all emergency phone numbers will be posted. 7. There are assigned designated meeting places outside the building. 8. If needed evacuation safe places will be Muster station; the far corner of the parking lot inside the fence. Or Emergency relocation stations
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	<p><i>“A licensee must (a) ensure that the community care facility has emergency exits that meet the requirements of the British Columbia Building Code, and a fire drill system that is approved as defined in section 2.8.3 of the British Columbia Fire Code, and (b) have an emergency plan that sets out procedures to prepare for, mitigate, respond to and recover from any emergency. (2) A licensee must ensure that each employee (a) is trained in the implementation of the fire drill system and emergency plan described in subsection, including the use of any equipment noted in the fire drill system and emergency plan, (b) practices implementing the fire drill system at least once each month, and (c) practices implementing the emergency plan at least once each year. (3) A licensee must display a copy of the fire drill system in a prominent place in the community care facility. (4) A licensee must ensure that all employees have access, in an emergency, to reliable communications equipment.”</i> (BC Childcare Licensing Regulations: Part 3 -Manager and Employee Requirements- Division 1-General Requirements- Section 22: Emergency Training and Equipment, Pg.14)</p> <p>https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



8.4.3 Emergency Plans

Policy Statement	All AHS staff will be trained in emergency response procedures and participate in refresher training annually. All programs must have an emergency plan that sets out procedures to prepare for, mitigate, respond to and recover from any emergency.
Procedures	<p>Emergency Plans should be created or revised annually and must be practiced at least once a year. Consider the following when developing emergency plans:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When a child is registered for programming, parents are asked to sign a Medical Emergency Consent Form. This form gives permission to the program staff to take whatever emergency measures are deemed necessary to protect the child. 2. In the event of an emergency, staff will contact 911 immediately. 3. The staff member dealing with the situation will designate duties to the rest of the staff and use his or her knowledge of first aid and CPR if needed and following the Universal Precautions. 4. If a child's condition warrants it, staff will use emergency transportation to transport the child to the hospital. Staff will contact the parents immediately. 5. The other staff will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Immediately ensure that management is aware of the situation. b. Promptly follow instructions of the person directly attending to the emergency. c. Keep a calm atmosphere for the other children.
Created/ Revised	November, 2024
Notes	<p><i>"A licensee must (a) ensure that the community care facility has emergency exits that meet the requirements of the British Columbia Building Code, and a fire drill system that is approved as defined in section 2.8.3 of the British Columbia Fire Code, and (b) have an emergency plan that sets out procedures to prepare for, mitigate, respond to and recover from any emergency. (2) A licensee must ensure that each employee (a) is trained in the implementation of the fire drill system and emergency plan described in subsection, including the use of any equipment noted in the fire drill system and emergency plan, (b) practices implementing the fire drill system at least once each month, and (c) practices implementing the emergency plan at least once each year. (3) A licensee must display a copy of the fire drill system in a prominent place in the community care facility. (4) A licensee must ensure that all employees have access, in an emergency, to reliable communications equipment."</i> (BC Childcare Licensing Regulations: Part 3 -Manager and Employee Requirements- Division 1-General Requirements- Section 22: Emergency Training and Equipment, Pg.14)</p> <p>https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



8.4.4 Fire and Emergency Response Drills

<p>Policy Statement</p>	<p>AHS staff will complete monthly emergency response drills with the children, teaching how to respond during different crises.</p>
<p>Procedures</p>	<p>All AHS programs must ensure that the facility has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emergency exits that meet the requirements of the British Columbia Building Code, and - A Fire drill system that is approved and checked by the B.C. Fire code - All staff must be trained in the implementation of the fire drill system and emergency plans including the use of any equipment noted in the fire drill system and emergency plan - The fire drill system must be displayed in a prominent place that can be easily viewed and accessed by anyone in the building. - All employees must have access to reliable communications equipment in the case of an emergency. - <p>Fire Drill – Fire Drills must be practiced at least once a month</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff and children will participate in one recorded and documented fire drill per month. 2. All rooms will complete these together. 3. One staff member from each room will ring a bell, indicating a fire drill. To attract the children’s immediate attention, the word “Fire” will be yelled out. 4. Staff will line up all children at the closest exit, ensure all doors are closed, and bring the attendance, and emergency cards. Once outside and lined up at the agreed-upon emergency location, one staff member will do the roll call while the other supervises the children. 5. Staff carry out fire drills in accordance with the posted procedures. <p>Earthquake Drill</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff and children will participate in one recorded and documented earthquake drill per month. 2. Teaching children how to cover and protect their heads and find safety 3. Licencing guidelines for earthquake preparedness require that material not be stored on top of cabinets and in danger of falling. 4. Staff will display emergency numbers by each phone. 5. Family contact numbers will be kept on file on site and each child will have an emergency comfort kit with rations, water and comfort items from home. <p>Guidelines for Indoor Procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you are indoors: “DROP, COVER AND HOLD ON” 2. Stay inside. 3. Drop under heavy furniture such as a table, desk, bed or solid furniture. 4. Cover your head and torso to prevent being hit by falling objects. 5. Hold on to the object that you are under so that you remain covered. Be prepared to move with the object until the shaking has finished. 6. If you can’t get under something substantial, or if you are in a hallway, flatten yourself or crouch against an interior wall and protect your head and neck with your arms. 7. If you are at school, get under a desk or table and hold on. Face away from windows.



	<p>8. If you are in a wheelchair, lock the wheels and protect the back of your head and neck.</p> <p>Guidelines for emergency plan for Outdoor Procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Stay outside.2. Go to an open area away from buildings. The most dangerous place is near exterior walls.3. If you are in a crowded public place, find cover where others won't trample you.
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Notes	<p><i>“A licensee must (a) ensure that the community care facility has emergency exits that meet the requirements of the British Columbia Building Code, and a fire drill system that is approved as defined in section 2.8.3 of the British Columbia Fire Code, and (b) have an emergency plan that sets out procedures to prepare for, mitigate, respond to and recover from any emergency. (2) A licensee must ensure that each employee (a) is trained in the implementation of the fire drill system and emergency plan described in subsection, including the use of any equipment noted in the fire drill system and emergency plan,(b) practices implementing the fire drill system at least once each month, and (c) practices implementing the emergency plan at least once each year.(3) A licensee must display a copy of the fire drill system in a prominent place in the community care facility.(4) A licensee must ensure that all employees have access, in an emergency, to reliable communications equipment.” (BC Childcare Licencing Regulations: Part 3 -Manager and Employee Requirements- Division 1-General Requirements- Section 22: Emergency Training and Equipment, Pg.14)</i></p> <p>https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007</p>



Section 9. Leadership and Staffing Policies

AHS programs will define staff qualifications needs and how best to meet those needs, establish and implement fair and open hiring practices, require and check character and qualification references for all potential program employees, board members, and volunteers, and set the standard for expectations on program function.



9.1 Staff Personal Technology Use

Policy Statement	AHS Programs provide children with an environment where they are treasured as gifts from the Creator and, as such, receive the staff's undivided attention. Therefore, the use of personal devices during working hours or during AHS-hosted events is strongly discouraged as these devices take away from the positive experiences of the children.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staff personal devices such as cellphones or iPads should be kept with personal items and kept away from program operations.2. Staff are encouraged to give the program/centre phone number for emergency contact.3. Staff may use personal devices during breaks or when staff are not working.4. No photos or videos should be taken of the children or program on personal devices.
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Notes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- If staff need to be easily contacted in case of emergency it is encouraged to give the phone number of the program, which should be easily heard from the "floor", or it should be monitored regularly.



9.2 Confidentiality

Policy Statement	AHS values all community members safety and privacy. Any matters pertaining to the program, employees, children or families will be kept in confidence.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A confidentiality form will be signed by all employees and registered families, who agree to maintain confidentiality.2. Should a sensitive issue arise, the employee will be required to report it directly to the program Coordinator.3. The transmission of confidential or sensitive material over the Internet, email or social networks such as Facebook or Twitter is strictly prohibited.4. Information obtained about program participants is deemed to be strictly confidential, except where sharing of it is required by law.5. All written information about program participants must be stored in a secure location that is not accessible to unauthorized people.6. Information about participant families may only be released as agreed to in the "Consent to Obtain and Release Information Form" signed by the parent/guardian.7. The obligation to maintain confidentiality continues indefinitely (e.g., after the employee has ceased contact with persons served and/or employment with the program).
Created/ Revised	November 2024
Notes	



9.3 Photos and Videos

Policy Statement	AHS Programs recognize the value in documenting experiences of children throughout the day. Staff will ensure the security of such documentation (photos or videos) for storage and sharing.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A photo release form should be signed and placed in each child's file. Documentation of any families not wanting photos taken should be posted and visible for staff.2. Each program should have a device that is designated to take pictures to share with parents and to document the children's learning experiences.3. Staff should designate a safe location for such device.4. Photos or videos should only be downloaded and saved on a secure program designated computer.5. Pictures / videos should not be taken on personal devices.
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Notes	- See photo release waiver template in the Appendix



9.4 Gratuities and Honoraria and Gifts

Policy Statement	AHS programs encourage relationship-building with families and community. As such, families or community members or organizations may share gifts or other tokens of appreciation with staff, and staff are encouraged to graciously accept and show appreciation for such gestures.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Employees shall not accept money or gratuities from persons receiving services or from persons otherwise in a position to benefit from an employee's action.2. When an employee is remunerated for representing the preschool at a conference or other such event during normal working hours or otherwise, all monies paid for their services during this time will be used to cover the costs of travel, personal expenses and wages except where the employee pays his/her own costs and is not in receipt of wages.3. Gifts may be accepted where the gift:<ul style="list-style-type: none">o has only a token value oro is part of a regular exchange of hospitality or courtesy between persons doing business together oro has traditional significance not extending to expectations or implications of favoured treatment ando could not be construed by an impartial observer as a bribe, payoff or anything improper.4. If an employee receives a gift from a family, they should notify the program coordinator.
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Notes	



9.5 Employee Dress

Policy Statement	AHS programs strive to create a warm, welcoming and professional environment for children and families. Staff are required to dress modestly and professionally to honour the high-quality care that is provided.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Clothing will be clean and in good repair.2. Staff must wear shorts, skirts and dresses at a length that does not show undergarments.3. Clothing should be comfortable and allow the staff member the range of motion required for their duties.4. Shoes should have low heels, closed toes and non-marking soles (no open-toed shoes).5. Outdoor clothes should be appropriate to conditions, and staff should model wearing weather appropriate clothing.6. Staff are required to have separate, appropriate footwear for inside and outside.7. Long hair must be held back and away from the face.8. Staff should avoid wearing long earrings, scarves or other accessories that someone could grab or that could get inadvertently caught.9. The program coordinator may ask staff to cover personal body decorations if, they are inappropriate or offensive.
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Notes	



9.6 Smoking, Vaping, Drug and Alcohol Policies

Policy Statement	We designate AHS programs and AHS-sponsored or related activities as non-smoking and drug and alcohol free.
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We prohibit smoking and vaping in any areas of a program facility or event.2. Adults who smoke must do so in designated areas away from the children, center or event.3. All designated smoking areas must be 6 meters or more from a doorway, window, air intake, or outdoor play area.4. Employees are only permitted to smoke during designated breaks.5. Adults who smoke are responsible for keeping matches, lighters, cigarettes, and ashtrays out of the children's view and out of reach always.6. Employees must wash their hands and brush their teeth after smoking.7. Program staff are encouraged to role model healthy lifestyle choices to the children.8. We strictly prohibit the use of drugs or alcohol during AHS programming and events.9. AHS programs are safe places to seek help and persons seeking support will be greeted with grace and kindness.
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Notes	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/keeping-bc-healthy-safe/tobacco-vapour/requirements-under-tobacco-vapour-product-control-act-regulation/tobacco-vapour-free-places



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Prepared by:

Brenna Beattie

Alisa Henry

Daina vanRijt

Content Contributors:

AHSABC Advisory Team, *Dana Gustafson, Yvette Bolduc, Sarah Russ, Sheena Rogers, Trudy Hill*

AHSABC Program Coordinators that supported this project by sharing, collaborating and informing this document.

Joan Gignac, *Executive Director*, Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC

Odette Auger, *Director of Communications*, Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC

Tammy Aguilera, *Director of Programming*, Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC