



**Umbrella Family and  
Child Centres of Hamilton**

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**1.3 INCLUSION, ACCESS, AND EQUITY POLICY**

<b>MANUAL</b>	<b>Child Care Centre Program Policy Manual</b>
<b>SECTION</b>	<b>1- Belonging</b>
<b>POLICY</b>	<b>1.3 Inclusion, Access, and Equity Policy</b>
<b>LAST REVISED</b>	<b>June 19, 2024</b>

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**RATIONALE**

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*“All children benefit from being in inclusive environments where they are able to participate and collaborate in meaningful ways and form authentic, caring relationships.” (How Does Learning Happen 2014)*

All children, families and UFCC staff bring their own unique contribution to our program. All children, families and staff have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. UFCC programs reflect and comply with the principles of the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

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All staff.

**PROCEDURE**

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UFCC strives to deliver programs that:

- Respect the uniqueness and the strengths of each child and family enrolled
- Reflect the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the staff, children and families they serve
- Provide support for children with special needs

**Respectful Relationships**

In ensuring respectful relationships and boundaries, the safety of the children, families and UFCC staff are of upmost priority. Any actions taken and language used must ensure the safety and respect of all parties.

**Celebrating Cultural Diversity**

- Children and families are encouraged to share celebrations and observations throughout the year and community members will be invited to participate in these events.
- Religious, social and cultural celebrations/observation are acknowledged and respected.

All policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to reflect Umbrella’s most current practice.



- Discussions of various cultural practices will be appropriate to the level of understanding for the group. These discussions are supported through EDIB guides provided to staff on the employee portal.
- Open ended creative materials will allow children to express their own understanding of religious, social and cultural celebrations and observances.

### **Support for Children with Special Needs**

1. UFCC's goal is for every child to be successful in their programs. At the time of a child's registration and enrollment, any information specific to their needs are communicated to UFCC staff.
2. UFCC staff will work closely with parents, school staff and community partners to ensure that each child's individual needs are being met.
3. When an enrolled child needs extra support, staff will consult with their Program Manager who will observe and discuss supportive strategies with the staff.
4. If these strategies are not successful, the Program Manager will contact the PE Team, who will make observations to provide environmental and developmental suggestions. An ISP will be designed to provide optimal supports for the child.
5. The Supervisor will meet with the parents/guardians, staff and the Program Manager to review and revise the plan.
6. A review of the child's plan will occur within the first month to discuss the success and changes that may be needed in the plan. After this, an annual review will occur, unless a request is made sooner by one of the parties involved.
7. Staff will continue to receive consultation/training from the PE Team, as well as any additional UFCC and community resources to ensure a child's optimal success.
8. When a child with special needs is transitioning to school, new age group or a new program, a transition plan will be developed in consultation with the family, UFCC staff, and appropriate community partners.
9. At times, despite our best efforts, there may be a time where our program cannot meet the unique needs of the child. If this is determined, the child's family and local agencies will be consulted to develop a transition plan that best supports the child.

UFCC staff will adhere to the confidentiality policies and practices in all matters pertaining to the use, disclosure and sharing of a child family's personal information.

### **Service Animals**

- Service Animals defined under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act will always be accommodated when they are accompanied by their owners.



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- Our priority is to protect the health and safety of children and families while respecting the rights of individuals who are supported by service animals.
- If a service animal is to regularly accompany their owner to the program, an individual protocol will be developed to ensure that children and staff are aware of their role as a service animal.
- Up to date immunization records for service animals will be on file.

**Policy Attachments:** N/A