



**Umbrella Family and
Child Centres of Hamilton**

1.7 PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS POLICY

MANUAL	Child Care Centre Program Policy Manual
SECTION	1- Belonging
POLICY	1.7 Parent Issues and Concerns Policy
LAST REVISED	June 19, 2024

RATIONALE

Providing our families with the highest quality of customer service is a matter of primary importance to us at UFCC. Transparent and equitable processes for resolving concerns are embedded in our Mission and Values statement.

In any environment, problems emerge. It is important to all of us “under the Umbrella” that families are happy and satisfied with the service our centres provide. Sometimes a situation arises when a family’s needs are not being met. As Early Years Professionals, staff find solutions that meet the needs of everyone involved.

We recognize that conflict can be a healthy process when it is managed in a transparent and respectful manner. Staff will do their best to understand the family’s concerns and to respond in a respectful and timely manner.

The establishment of a fair and transparent process for families to share concerns or express complaints reflects that commitment.

RESPONSIBILITY

All staff.

PROCEDURE

Guiding Principles

Staff in UFCC will:

- Work collaboratively with families to develop a view of conflict as a healthy and creative process.
- Develop positive relationships with families.
- Treat all concerns seriously.
- Treat every issue and concern confidentially and make every effort to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be

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



disclosed for legal reasons (e.g., to the Ministry of Education, College or Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society). The level of detail provided will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

- Respond to the family's concerns within 24 hours (one business day).
- Keep the person who raised the issue/concern informed throughout the resolution period.
- Act with integrity at all times.
- Investigate concerns in a manner that is fair, impartial and respectful to all parties involved.
- Receive issues verbally or in writing.
- Respond and provide outcomes verbally, or in writing upon request.
- Conduct an annual review of family concerns to determine if policy changes are indicated. (The review will not include any identifying information.)

Expected Conduct

- Our centres and programs maintain high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.
- If at any point a family member or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Supervisor, Program Leader or Program Manager.
- Staff and Families are expected to align with the behaviour guidelines set out in the *Rights and Expectations of Children, Families, and Staff* Document.

When Parents Have Concerns

- Arrange to speak with your child's educator at a time and place that is mutually convenient for both of you. It is important to us that we have a place where confidentiality is preserved, and the educators can take the time to fully understand the family's concerns. It wouldn't be fair to you or to the children in the program if we engaged in these conversations while the teacher is engaged with the children.
- Alternatively, you may wish to bring forward your concern in writing.
- Most conflicts are resolved at the centre or supervisor level; however, you do have the opportunity to request the involvement of the Program Manager.
- Parents/Guardians could expect an initial response within 24 hours. We endeavour to resolve all complaints within one week.



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The following guide will help families know who to contact:

Type of Concern	Who to Contact	What You Can Expect
Program related concerns (e.g., scheduling, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise the issue or concern with the classroom staff directly. There is also the option of speaking to the program Supervisor. 	<p>The concern may be able to be resolved right away. If not, the parent/guardian will be contacted within 24 hours by an UFCC staff with an update. If the concerns cannot be resolved through a conversation with the staff member, it may be suggested that the Supervisor become involved in the discussion. The Supervisor can also be contacted directly to request assistance. The Supervisor is ultimately responsible for the quality of programs and will work with all involved to address issues and resolve concerns.</p>
Fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact the Program Supervisor 	
Staff, supervisor or volunteer related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have the option of raising the concern directly with the individual or you may want to speak to the Supervisor or Program Manager Any concerns about the conduct of staff or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation 	

Concerns About the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

- Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.
- If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.
- Staff who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.
- For more information, visit:
<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

Additional Contacts for Families

Name	Contact Information
Umbrella Family and Child Centres of Hamilton	Head office: 905-312-9836



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College of Early Childhood Educators	416-961-8558 info@college-ece.ca
Children's Aid Society of Hamilton	905-522-1121 info@hamiltoncas.com
Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton	905-525-2012 hamiltonccas.on.ca/contact-us/
Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk	1-877-510-5333

Staff Responsibilities

Type of Concern	Initial Action to be Taken	Documentation
Program related (e.g., schedule, sleep program activities, feeding plans, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify the parent/guardian's concern Determine the follow up needed Determine if the Supervisor needs to be informed or involved Follow up with the parent/guardian within one day with an update on the status of complaint Provide the resolution or outcome to parent/guardian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date and time the issue/concern was received Name of the person who received issue/concern Name of the person reporting issue/concern
General, centre or operations related (e.g., fees, hours, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Supervisor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of the issue/concern Steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information regarding next steps or referral
Concerns re. staff, supervisor, student or volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Supervisor, directly by the parent/guardian. If the concern is in regard to the Supervisor, the Program Manager should be reported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome or resolution

Policy Attachments: N/A