



**Umbrella Family and  
Child Centres of Hamilton**

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**5.3 SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN POLICY**

<b>MANUAL</b>	<b>Child Care Centre Program Policy Manual</b>
<b>SECTION</b>	<b>5- Safety</b>
<b>POLICY</b>	<b>5.3 Supervision of Children Policy</b>
<b>LAST REVISED</b>	<b>June 19, 2024</b>

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**RATIONALE**

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The Health and Safety of children in UFCC programs is our primary concern; consequently, staff members will be diligent in the supervision of children at all times. Established transition procedures for off-site activities ensure that both children and staff are aware of expectations and processes and reduce risk. We meet or exceed the standards established under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

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All staff, volunteers and students on placement.

**PROCEDURE**

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**Child/Staff Ratios and Group Size**

This chart shows the ratio of employees to children, the maximum number of children in the group, and the proportion of employees that must be qualified employees in each age group as required by the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Ratio of Staff to Children</b>	<b>Max Number of Children in Group</b>	<b>Proportion of Staff that must be Qualified Staff*</b>
Infant	Younger than 18 months	3:10	10	1/3
Toddler	18 months or older but younger than 30 months	1:5	15	1/3
Preschool	30 months or older but younger than 6 years	1:8	24	2/3
Kindergarten	44 months or older but younger than 7 years	1:13	26	1/2



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Primary/Junior School Age	68 months or older but younger than 13 years	1:15	30	1/2
Junior School Age	9 years or older but younger than 13 years	1:20	20	1/1

\* Note: this chart indicates the minimum number of qualified staff required for licensing. UFCC strives to exceed the number of required qualified staff in each age group, whenever possible.

### Mixed Age Groupings

This chart shows the maximum number of children from the younger age category that can be included while still maintaining the ratio, maximum group size and proportion of qualified employees for the older age category. Mixed age grouping may be used in more than one room in each age category.

Age Group	Group Size	Maximum Number of Children from Younger Age Category
Infant	n/a	n/a
Toddler	15	3
Preschool	24	5
Kindergarten	26	7
Primary/Junior School Age	30	8
Junior School Age	20	5

### Reduced Child Staff/Ratios

Reduced Child Staff/Ratios *may not* be:

- less than two-thirds of the required ratio
- used for infant groups
- used during outdoor play periods

Full day programs (operating for six hours or more per day) can reduce ratios for the first 90 minutes after opening e.g., between 7 and 8:30 am) and sixty minutes prior to closing (e.g., between 5 and 6 pm). Ratios can also be reduced for up to two hours during the rest period.

- infant ratios are no less than 1:3
- toddler ratios are no less than 1:8
- preschool ratios are no less than 1:12
- kindergarten ratios are no less than 1:20
- primary/junior school age ratios are no less than 1:23

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



Before and After school programs (operating for less than 6 hours per day) can reduce ratios for the first 30 minutes after opening (e.g., between 7 and 7:30 am) and thirty minutes prior to closing (e.g., between 5:30 and 6 pm).

- infant ratios are no less than 1:3
- toddler ratios are no less than 1:8
- preschool ratios are no less than 1:12
- kindergarten ratios are no less than 1:20
- primary/junior school age ratios are no less than 1:23

During Times of Reduced Ratios		
Age Group	Number of Children in Room	Number of Staff Required
Infant	1-3	1
	4-6	2
	6-10	3
Toddler	1-8	1
	9-15	2
Preschool	1-12	1
	13-24	2
Kindergarten	1-20	1
	21-26	2
Primary/Junior School Age	1-23	1
	24-30	2
Junior School Age*	20	1

\* Reduced ratios are not possible for junior school age groups as the maximum group size set out in Schedule 1 or 2 only requires one staff per group.

#### When a Staff Does Not Arrive for a Shift

- UFCC strives to deliver programs that are safe and secure for all participants. This includes ensuring that the child/staff ratios required by the Early Years and Child Care Act, 2014 are maintained at all times. In spite of our best efforts, emergencies can happen as staff are traveling to their program and a staff may not arrive for a scheduled shift.
- When a staff realizes they will be late, they will call the Program Leader or a co-worker to notify them. The Program Leader or co-worker will immediately call their Supervisor to alert them to the situation and also notify the Principal/Vice Principal of the School that they may need emergency back-up until a UFCC Staff/supply arrives.

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



- The same procedure will be followed in the event that a staff does not arrive but has been unable to notify the Program Leader or co-worker that they are delayed.
- The Supervisor will call a relief staff and/or a supply staff and give them directions to the centre in need of a supply. If there is no relief staff or supply staff available, the Supervisor will call or email other nearby Supervisors to check if there is a spare staff who can come until the late staff arrives. If the delay is due to traffic problems, the supply staff will be alerted to this and alternate routes will be discussed with them. If necessary, the Supervisor or their designate will proceed to the program.
- The staff will regroup the children as required in order to follow the 2/3 reduced staffing ratio used during arrival and departure times. Low risk activities such as table activities, crafts or a movie will be available for the children until supply staff arrive. Children will not be on the playground until the required ratios can be met.

### **Classroom Supervision**

- No more than one staff per room will be granted a request for time off (vacation, personal, illness, etc.). Should it happen that two staff members are absent on the same day, the Supervisor will move a staff member from another classroom to ensure there is at least one regular staff member in each classroom.
- Whenever possible, bells/chimes will be attached to playground gates or classroom doors to aid in the supervision of children.
- During program time, staff members will engage in conversation/activities with children.
- Staff members will count the number of children in their group before and after every transition, and periodically throughout the day.
- Conversation with other adults will be limited during classroom and playground supervision time, as distractions compromise effective supervision.
- Should a staff member need to leave the room for any reason (i.e., washroom break, phone call, etc.), the staff member will ask the Supervisor or cook to replace them in the classroom for the few minutes they need to be away. Teacher: child ratios will never be compromised.
- When children leave at the end of the day, the time they depart will be recorded on the attendance form.
- Each time a child leaves, staff will put this on the attendance sheet, notify the other staff and will complete a roll call and confirm the revised number of children with the other staff.
- A roll call and head count will be done before the room is closed for the day.

### **Supervision of Children During Transitions**

- Each time there is a transition, staff will use the attendance sheets to complete a roll call and head count before they leave and again at their destination.
- When a child joins the group, it is recorded on the attendance sheet. When all children have arrived, the number of children is placed on the bottom of the attendance. During the arrival



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process, all staff should be aware of the number of children in their room and confirm these numbers with each other frequently. All staff will complete a roll call and confirm this with the attendance as children arrive and before they leave the room.

- Staff will be aware of the number of children in their care at all times and will confirm numbers with each other each time a child arrives or leaves.
- When indoors, if staff are taking children to a washroom outside of the room, staff will verify the number of children they are taking and each staff will verify the number of children they have. A roll call will be completed when all children are back in the room.
- If staff are taking children to the washroom from the playground, staff will confirm with other staff the number of children they are taking and the number of children that are staying in the playground. Once the children have left the playground, the staff that is in the playground will complete a roll call to confirm they have the correct number. A roll call will be taken when all children have returned to the room.
- Upon arrival at the washroom from the playground or room, a roll call will be taken to ensure all children are present.
- When staff take the children into the hallway to transition to the playground, they will complete a roll call and do so again before they leave to go outdoors. Staff will confirm the number of children with each other.
- Once the children are in the playground, staff will complete a roll call and confirm the number with each other.
- When transitioning from one area to another, there will be a staff at the front of the group and a staff at the back of the group.
- If there is only one staff, they will count their group each time there is a change, verifying the number of children they have with the attendance. When transitioning, staff will be aware of the children walking with them and will guide them as needed.
- When leaving the playground to go indoors, staff will complete a roll call and verify the number of children with each other. Once children are in the childcare, the staff will complete a roll call and verify with each other.

### Playground Supervision

#### *Daily Schedule:*

- Each day, it is expected that children attending full day programs will spend two hours playing outdoors. Children in extended day programs will spend at least half an hour per day playing outdoors.
- Different age groups will use the playgrounds at different times. (e.g., the infant, toddler and preschool groups will use the playground at different times; the kindergarten group will use the playground at different times than the school age group.) The daily schedule, posted in the Centre, identifies the time each group of children will spend on the playground.



- In cases of extreme wind chill, heat, humidity or smog advisories, outdoor play will occur for a shortened period of time, at the discretion of the Supervisor or their designate. Changes to the regular playground schedule and the reason for these will be noted in the Daily Journal.

#### *Supervision/Outdoor Staff Schedule:*

- There will be no reduction of child/staff ratio while on the playground (see the Child/Staff Ratios and Group Size chart at the beginning of this procedure).
- Staff will station themselves throughout the playground according to the activity level and needs of the children. Staff will move around the playground while they are outside and monitor all structures (if applicable) and play zones for safety.

#### **Sleep Supervision**

Rest time provides children with an opportunity to relax and take a break from active play. Regulations under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 require that:

- Each child in a licensed toddler or preschool group who receives child care for six hours or more in a day has a rest period not exceeding two hours in length.
- A child in a licensed toddler, preschool or kindergarten group is permitted to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on the child's needs.
- Children under 12 months of age will be provided time to sleep based on their individual needs and will be placed in individual cribs for sleep.
- All children who are younger than 12 months of age will be placed on their own backs to sleep, unless other instructions are provided in writing by the child's physician. Parents of these children will be advised of the centre's obligation to place their child(ren) to sleep on their backs, as set out in the "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Deaths in Canada".
- Children between 12-18 months of age, who receive child care for six hours or more, will be placed in individual cribs or cots for sleep in accordance with any written instructions from the child's parent.
- Where children are sleeping in a separate sleep room or area, their names will be posted directly outside the sleep room so that staff can immediately identify which children are present in the room/area.

#### *Parental Involvement:*

- Parents of children who regularly sleep at the child care centre will be advised of the centre's policies and procedures regarding children's sleep.
- Parents will be consulted respecting a child's sleeping arrangements at the time the child is enrolled and at any other appropriate time, such as at transitions between programs or rooms or upon request.



- Parents will be asked to send in a small blanket or quilt to be used at rest time and informed that a small stuffed toy can also help their child feel more secure.
- Staff will inform parents of any significant changes in a child's sleeping patterns or behaviours during sleep and will discuss adjustments to the way the child is supervised during sleep time.

#### *Rest Time:*

- The rest area/sleep room will be supervised by a staff member at all times.
- Children will be assigned individual cots.
- Children may choose to not sleep nor stay on a cot. Children who do not sleep are provided with quiet play activities until the other children awaken.

#### *Direct Visual Checks:*

- Staff in full day child care centres will periodically perform direct visual checks of sleeping children every 20 minutes by physically checking for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours.
- For infants (children under 18 months of age), direct visual checks will be completed at a frequency based on consultation with each parent and may be increased based on the observed sleeping patterns and/or medical needs of each infant or at least every 20 minutes.
- Staff will ensure that there is sufficient lighting in the sleep room to conduct these checks.
- Direct visual checks will be documented for each child daily on the applicable "Rest Time: Record of Direct Visual Checks" forms. Staff will place a check mark beside each child's name indicating that they have been checked and place their initials and the time the check was completed at the bottom of the column.
- Any concerns or irregularities will be noted in the comments section beside each child's name.
- The completed sheets will be stored for the duration of the year in a binder in the classroom.
- If there are any concerns identified, the information will be included in the child's personal file.

#### *Reduced Ratios at Sleep Time:*

- Staff are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate number of adults are on site, available, and accessible to each classroom operating at a reduced ratio in the case additional support is required or in the case of an emergency.
- Staff should use reduced ratios only when adequate supervision can be provided based on the number of children who are asleep and the overall needs of the classroom.
- Reduced ratios cannot be used in the infant program.

### **Independence of School Age Children**

- There are many reasons a school age child may need to have the opportunity to independently walk to another area within the child care program or school. Staff will look at each individual



child's competencies and consider where the children are going to ensure that the children will be successful and safe in their opportunity to be independent.

- Each time the children leave the group, staff will use the Supervision Chart to record the names of the children, the date and time the children left as well as the time they came back to the group.
- Children will be given a walkie-talkie to use in case they need to call staff for assistance.
- The current supervision chart will be kept with the current attendance pages.
- These charts will be kept on file for three years as required by the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.
- Staff members must be aware of how many children are in the group at all times.

### **Supervision During Off-Site Activities**

#### *Excursions:*

An excursion is a spontaneous walk around the neighbourhood. Parents will have signed the Registration Form that states that their child has permission to participate in neighbourhood walks.

- The staff will notify their Supervisor or Program Leader of their excursion and what route they will be taking. The staff will note their excursion in the Daily Journal.
- The staff and children will discuss where they are going and the purpose of the excursion.
- The staff will ensure that all children are dressed weather appropriately and, if needed, sunscreen will be applied to the children.
- The staff will carry a backpack that contains: a binder with the attendance, emergency contacts and medical authorizations, a first aid kit, any epi-pens or other required medication, and sunscreen if needed.
- Staff members will carry a walkie talkie or cell phone used only for emergencies.
- If children are having a picnic or a rest stop, the staff will have the children wait while staff inspect the area to make sure it is safe.
- When going on a walk, there will be one staff at the front and a second staff at the back.
- Staff will follow UFCC transition procedures, taking a roll call and confirming with the attendance; before they leave, when they reach their destination, are leaving their destination and when they arrive back at the centre.
- All staff will sign and follow the Supervision of Children policy and ensure they know where the children are at all times.

#### *Off-Site Trips:*

A trip is any approved and supervised activity or program off the child care premises, with the exception of neighbourhood excursions.





- Parents will be given a form requesting permission for their child to attend the trip. This form will notify parents where the trip is to, the date/time/duration of the trip, how and by which transportation agency the children will be transported to and from the trip and what their child will need for the trip.
- All volunteers, including parents, must supply a Vulnerable Sector Criminal Reference Check and proof of immunizations in order to volunteer on any trips.
- All children will wear a UFCC t-shirt on the trip. Depending on the weather and the trip, the children will have sunscreen applied before they board the bus.
- All staff will wear a Staff UFCC shirt on the trip. All volunteers, including students and parents, will not wear staff shirts.
- All staff will follow and complete the UFCC Trip Checklist to ensure they have all the necessary information and equipment needed for the trip.
- All staff will take attendance as children arrive, complete a roll call and verify the numbers with attendance and staff.
- If staff are taking children to the washroom, they will communicate to other staff regarding how many children they are taking and verify how many children will be left. A roll call before leaving the room, arrival at the washroom, leaving the washroom and when back in the room will be completed. Once in the room, staff will verify with each other the number of children and confirm with the attendance sheet.
- Before boarding the bus, the children will line up to go out and all children will be counted and verified with the attendance sheet.
- Once seated on the bus and before the bus leaves, a roll call will be completed and confirmed with the attendance sheet.
- Upon arrival and once children are off the bus and in a safe spot, a roll call will be completed and verified with the attendance and staff. The last staff that is departing the bus, will check the bus to ensure there are no children left on the bus.
- Each time there is a transition from one area to another a roll call will be completed and verified with the attendance and staff.
- Again, before boarding the bus for departure, and before the bus leaves, all children will be counted and verified with the attendance sheet.
- Upon arrival back at the child care program and once children are off the bus, they will stand in a safe spot and roll call will be completed and verified with the attendance sheet. The last staff that is departing from the bus, will check the bus to ensure there are no children left on the bus.
- Once in the classroom, roll call will be completed and verified with staff. Staff will then follow the transition procedures.
- Each time there is a staffing change, the staff will verify the numbers and complete a roll call. The transition procedures continue until all children have left.
- All staff will sign and follow the Supervision of Children Policy and ensure they know where the children are at all times.



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### Swimming

- Children may not enter the water unless there is at least one certified lifeguard present. If there is one lifeguard present, this person will supervise water activities from the beach. If there are two lifeguards present, one will be on the beach and one will be in the water.
- When a group arrives at the beach, the children will stand in a line and the staff will take a roll call and verify it with the attendance sheet.
- The staff along will go into the water and establish a “box”, a safe space for the children to swim in. Once the Supervisor confirms that the safe space is ready and staff are in place, the Supervisor will give the “all clear” for the children to go into the water. The children are only allowed to go into the water up to their armpits. Their heads must be above the water and always visible to staff.
- If children are playing on the beach, there will be staff on land monitoring the children on the beach as well as looking out into the water and alert to signs that children are in distress.
- Every 15 minutes the Supervisor will do an all call out. The children will have to come out of the water and line up in their groups. The staff in the water will slowly walk in, making sure there are no children still in the water. While the staff are walking in, they will be looking to make sure all children are getting out of the water.
- Once staff are out of the water, they will do a roll call of the children verifying it with the attendance sheet.
- Once all the children are accounted for, the staff will notify the Supervisor that their check is complete.
- Once all groups have checked in, the Supervisor will have the staff go back into the water and create the box formation (safe swimming area) again. Once the staff are ready, the Supervisor will let the children go back in.
- These steps will be repeated every 15 minutes during swimming time.

### Animals

On occasion, children and staff may be exposed to service animals or other animals during neighbourhood outings, field trips or special events. It is important that children and staff are aware of safe practices.

- If children will be exposed to animals during a field trip or special event (e.g., petting zoo), parents will be informed prior to the event.
- Children must always be closely supervised when interacting with or in the presence of an animal.
- Children and staff will wash or disinfect hands after interacting with an animal.
- Children will be educated to leave wildlife and stray animals alone as even friendly appearing animals may be aggressive.
- Any unusual animal activity will be reported to Animal Control.



**Policy Attachments:** Rest Time: Infant Record of Direct Visual Checks, Rest Time: Toddler/Preschool Record of Direct Visual Checks