



**Umbrella Family and
Child Centres of Hamilton**

5.5 MAINTAINING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS POLICY

MANUAL	Child Care Centre Program Policy Manual
SECTION	5- Safety
POLICY	5.5 Maintaining Safe Environments Policy
LAST REVISED	June 19, 2024

RATIONALE

The environment plays a key role in the quality of children's exploration and play (HDLH). UFCC will take measures to provide a safe play space for children while promoting creative and constructive play.

RESPONSIBILITY

All staff and summer camp staff.

PROCEDURE

Equipment Purchase and Replacement

- UFCC staff members will ensure that any prospective suppliers of equipment under a rental or leasing arrangement abide by Section 31(1) of Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act which indicates that the supplier shall ensure that the equipment is in good condition and the equipment is maintained in good condition.
- Upon the arrival and prior to the installation of new equipment, the equipment shall be inspected and the operating manual reviewed so that any potentially hazardous conditions can be identified.
- It will be the responsibility of the Manager authorizing the purchase of new equipment to ensure that the equipment is CSA approved and the final destination/installation is safe. The manager who tends to the facility will monitor aspects concerning Section 31(1) of the act.
- All staff using the equipment will be trained prior to start up.

Equipment Maintenance and Repair

- Staff members will report any unsafe or unsanitary conditions to the Supervisor immediately.
- The Supervisor or Designate will be responsible for conducting a monthly inspection of the interior and exterior of the property to make sure that it complies with all standards and that the equipment is in good repair.
- Should the inspection uncover unsafe or below-standard conditions, the Supervisor or Designate will report these to the most appropriate person, within 24 hours (e.g., Program Manager, School Principal, School Caretaker, and the Umbrella Joint Health and Safety Committee).

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



Safe Drinking Water

It will be the responsibility of the first child care staff member arriving at the centre on the first day the school is open in each week—or daily as required (refer to Category 1 and Category 2 instructions below) to flush the water system as follows:

1. Turn on the cold water tap of the faucet that is furthest away on each branch of the plumbing and let it run for 5 minutes. If possible, filters and other devices should be bypassed before flushing.
2. Turn on every drinking fountain in the program and let these run for at least 10 seconds.
3. Turn on every cold water tap that is commonly used for cooking or drinking and let these run for 10 seconds. Any aerators must be removed from taps while flushing.
4. Use the Ontario Tap Water Flushing Record Form to note the date and time of every flushing and the full name of the person who performed the flushing.
5. All records of flushing and testing, related documents and a copy of O. Reg. 243.07 must be available for inspection by any member of the public.
6. Records of flushing and test results must be kept for six (6) years.

Since the age of a building—and the plumbing inside the building—can be a determining factor in whether or not the water is safe to drink, the Act/Regulation have determined two categories of buildings, along with requirements operators must meet in order to ensure the safety of children and adults. Compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and regulations falls within one of the following categories:

Category 1 – Programs located in buildings built before 1990 (this indicates building where all or part of the plumbing was installed before January 1, 1990):

- Must flush the water system daily, before the centre opens for the day.
- Hamilton Wentworth District School Board will complete the laboratory tests and receive the test results. The Program Manager will request the results to review and send to each centre. HWDSB will contact the Program Manager if the testing exceeds any of the standards prescribed in the legislation and will take steps as directed by the medical officer of health. The Supervisors/Program Leader and the Ministry of Education will be advised.
- If the results of the annual testing exceed any of the standards prescribed in the legislation, the operator must take steps as directed by the Medical Officer of Health. The Ministry of Education must be advised and a serious occurrence must be reported.

Category 2 – Programs located in buildings built after January 1, 1990:

- Must flush the water system on the first day that the centre is open in each week, before the centre opens for that date. Note: The Chief Drinking Water Inspector recommends that all child care centres flush the plumbing daily as a precaution.
- Annual testing is not required.



If the Water Flushing is Being Performed by the School Custodian:

- Obtain a letter from the Principal/Custodian stating the flushing is being performed as required.
- Make sure the record of flushing is completed as required.
- The Supervisor/Program Leader will ensure that they know where the caretakers Water Flushing Binder is kept and are able to access the records of flushing at any time.
- When the water samples are submitted for annual testing, the Supervisor should complete the paperwork to be sent with the samples (Ministry of Education Identification Number is the license number).
- You must receive a copy of the annual testing report and be informed regarding any steps required by the Medical Officer of Health (if applicable).

Room Temperature

- The Supervisor or designate will communicate with HWDSB caretaking staff members to ensure that the temperature of the centre is maintained at a comfortable level for both children and adults.
- During periods of extreme hot and humid or cold weather, it is possible that the school systems cannot regulate the temperature adequately. If needed, the Program Manager will call the HWDSB liaison to discuss the situation and determine an outcome.
- HWDSB does not allow fans or space heaters in a classroom.

Playgrounds

Playground Binder:

- Each centre will develop a “Playground Binder” which will contain all documents related to the requirements and expectations contained in this policy and procedure. All playground records will be kept for 3 years.

Policy and Procedure Review:

- All staff, supply staff, students, volunteers and support staff must review and sign off on this procedure, as well as the site specific Playground Supervision Plan and the Playground Rules.
- These documents must be signed prior to commencing work at the centre, as well as annually thereafter. These documents will be kept in the “Playground Binder”.
- Where outdoor play space is shared with the elementary school students, this policy will be provided to the Principal and appropriate teachers. Copies of playground inspections will be shared with the appropriate school staff members, as needed.

Playground Inspections:

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



- The “Playground Binder” will contain all playground inspections and related action plans.
- Daily inspections of the playground will be conducted and recorded on the Daily Playground Inspection Form before the children begin outdoor play sessions.
- Daily inspections will also apply for extended day programs using the school grounds for outdoor play and will be completed for each day that the playground is used. The Daily Playground Inspection Form will indicate which area was used on that day.
- The Supervisor or their designate will be responsible for conducting and recording the Monthly and Annual Playground inspections.
- Should a playground be deemed unsafe, the staff member and Supervisor will make alternate arrangements for outdoor play if possible.
- If repairs or maintenance are needed, the Supervisor will be responsible for making the request and will document the request or action taken on the Playground Repair Log.
- The results of the inspections and a plan of action (including time lines to address specific issues) will be kept as a permanent record and may be reviewed by the Ministry of Education Program Advisor.

Centres with Creative Play Structure:

- In addition to the Annual Playground Inspection, if a centre has a creative play structure, the impact absorbent material under the structure must be tested for impact absorbency by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector at least every two years.

CSA Standards:

- All new equipment, renovations, repairs or replacements will be installed to meet the most recent CSA Standard.
- Verification that these standards are met will be in the form of a formal playground inspection by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector.
- A copy of the report must be sent to the Ministry Education Program Advisor for approval before the children are allowed to use the equipment.

Certified Playground Inspector:

When hiring a Certified Playground Inspector, verify the following credentials:

- Must have proof of current Playground Safety Certification as granted by the Canadian Playground Safety Institute.
- Must have a Declaration of Non-Conflict of Interest, including Declaration of Non-Affiliation with playground equipment and protective surface manufacturers.



- Must have proof of current Professional Errors and Omissions Insurance specific to Playground Inspections.

Injuries on the Playground:

Should a child be injured while playing outdoors, staff will:

- Follow the procedure for completing an Accident/Incident Report Form as outlined in the Illnesses/Accidents policy.
- Notify the Supervisor of the injury and write in the Daily Journal that child has had an accident and that a signed (by staff and parent) copy of the Accident/Incident Report Form is placed in the child's file.
- If the child has hit their head, a phone call will be made to the parent immediately to notify them of the head injury. A discussion between the parent and the staff to determine what the next steps will be, dependent on the severity of the hit. The staff will write in the Daily Journal that they have called the parent.

Policy Attachments: Daily Playground Inspection Form, Monthly Playground Inspection Form, Annual Playground Inspection Form, Accident/Incident Report Form