

# Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre Kwanlin Dün First Nation *Family Handbook*



## *Dännch'e – Welcome*

Physical Address: 47 McIntyre Drive

Mailing Address: 35 McIntyre Drive

Whitehorse Yukon Y1A 5A5

KDFN Phone: 867-633-7800

Dusk'a Ext. 301, 302, or 304

**Dusk'a Main Office: 867-393-3775**

**Manager: 867-633-7816**

Dusk'a Fax: 867-393-3959

## INTRODUCTION

“Dusk’a Head Start Family Learning Centre is committed to providing a program that will meet the needs of the whole child. This includes physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs, and parental involvement. Our goal is to work in partnership with parents in teaching children, nurturing their development and supporting the family....

*“Research has proven that children who come from homes with involved parents tend to do better in school and have a better parent child relationship. We feel it is important to encourage parent involvement”* (Parents in Aboriginal Head Start).

Dusk’a is Emma Burns’ traditional name. Emma used to spend a lot of time with the children at the Daycare. When the changes went through to change to a Family Learning Centre, it was decided that in recognition of Emma Burns, the centre would change its name to Dusk’a Head Start Family Learning Centre.

Dusk’a provides culturally based programming to the child and promotes a healthy sense of community. It is based on the principles of the Aboriginal Head Start Mandate. Integrated into the curriculum, the six core principals of Aboriginal Head Start include Education, Culture and Language, Nutrition, Parent and Guardian Involvement, Health Promotion, and Social Support.

### Our Centre

#### *Hours of operation*

Our doors open at 8:00 and close at 5:00. There will be a **late fee charged** to parents for late pick up after 5:00 **for the amount of a dollar a minute**. For example, if you arrive at 5:15 you will be charged \$15.00 late pickup fee.

#### *Fees*

Duska' Daycare Fee Breakdown	Full-time
<i>Fees for Child's Space</i>	\$700
<i>Government Subsidy</i>	\$700
<i>Caregiver Portion*</i>	\$0*

\*Effective April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, the Government of Yukon provides licensed early learning and child care operators with \$700 for each child in full-time child care programs. What this means is that Dusk’a caregivers do not pay anything out of pocket for child care. However, this funding is dependent upon your child attending at least 50% of days we are open. Please see parent contract for details regarding attendance expectations.

### Admission Policy and Procedures

Parents or caregivers are required to have a mini conference with the administrative staff prior to enrollment to go through admission procedures and be assisted with the registration forms. We have a caregiver contract that outlines caregiver expectations.

## PROGRAMS

### Head Start:

Aboriginal Head Start is a federally funded program through the Public Health Agency of Canada. The Aboriginal Head Start Program is integrated into our early childhood curriculum. The program offers services to families of the children who attend the centre.



### Health and Nutrition:

Our centre provides a morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack. All meals reflect the Canada Food Guide. After lunch, the children are provided with a toothbrush and toothpaste to promote formation of healthy habits. Washing hands is mandatory, and we make it a fun part of the daily routine!

### Field Trips:

Please watch for postings from your classroom teachers for field trips and outings to places such as: Canada Games Centre, parks, museums and other venues in Whitehorse and the surrounding area. There are a few opportunities each year for parents to join their child's group for outings.

### Cultural Teachings:

Our centre provides cultural teachings to the children: berry picking, harvesting traditional medicines, drumming, dancing, Elder involvement, etc. Our centre also participates in community events hosted by KDFN whenever possible.

## STAFF

**Director of Education & Social Development:** Dawn Waugh

**Centre Manager:** Cody-Anne McArthur

**Associate Manager:** Jessica Dyck

**Administrator:** Iris Liang (Keanna Lutz on leave May 2024 – November 2025)

**Elder and Southern Tutchone Language Teacher:** Vera Brown

**Tlingit Language Teacher:** Joe Binger

**Cultural and Language Connector:** Dustin, Charlene and Claire

**Cook:** Xi Ying Yang

**Early Childhood Educators:** Gold Vance, Nikki-Lee Williams-Patchett, Heather Chen, Hanaa Al-Shawa, Jasmine Tracey, Grace Todd, Valerie Ukrainetz, Nisha Panikkulam-Thomas, Jenny Dong, Hannah Huyskamp, Joicy Joy (on leave June 2024 - TBD)

**Support Early Childhood Educators:** Vanessa Epp

**Custodian:** Mark Johnson



## CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

The Child Development Centre has an office in our building. The hours are usually 08:30 to 3:30, Monday to Friday. CDC is closed during the summer. Staff assists with developmental check-ups and offer support to families. You can contact them at 867-633-7820, or stop by their office in the centre.

### **Staff**

#### ***Developmental Therapist***

The developmental therapists role, is to assist children with their learning and behavior, providing services and supports to children, families and caregivers at the centre and for the Kwanlin Dün Community.

#### ***Program Assistant***

The program assistant provides early intervention services to individual children at Dusk'a under the direction of the CDC clinical team

#### ***Child Psychologist***

The psychologist works with children and their families to assist them to understand how their children think and learn, express emotions and relate to other people.

#### ***Physiotherapist***

The physiotherapist assists children in the development of gross motor skills balance and coordination needed for movement such as rolling, sitting, crawling, walking and jumping.

#### ***Occupational Therapist***

The occupational therapist assists children in the development of their fine motor skills needed for the use of their hands. This includes grasping, holding, cutting, writing and self-care skills such as feeding, toileting and dressing.

#### ***Speech and Language Pathologist***

The speech and language pathologist assist children in their speech, language, and communication skills.

## OUR GENERAL DAILY SCHEDULE

**Welcome:** 8:00 am—10am

**Breakfast:** 9am

**Clean up**

**Language**

**Child-led Free Play**

**Outdoor Play**

**Lunch:** 11:30am

**Quiet/Nap Time**

**Snack:** 2:30pm

**Circle & Table Top Activities**

**Clean Up**

**Outdoor Play**

*\*Learning Centers: Block Centre, Dramatic Play Centre, Art Centre, Sand/water and other sensory play, Book Centre, Science/Discovery Centre, Table Top Area, Listening Centre, Music Area*

*\*\*Activity: Cooking/Baking, Exploration, Discovery, Guest speakers or performers, Gardening, Play-dough, Music*

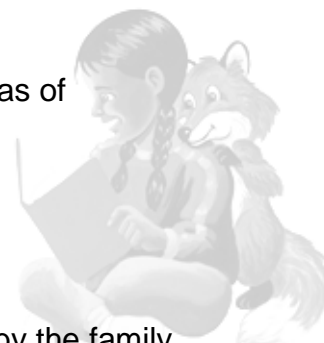


# CURRICULUM

The toddler and pre-school curriculums are developmentally appropriate guides for our teachers to follow. The principles of healthy growth and development are integrated throughout our curriculum.

## Child Growth and Learning Guiding Principles

- Nurturing relationships.
- Learning is most meaningful when it is integrated across all areas of development.
- Learning is continuous and sequential.
- Children are active and individual learners.
- Development and learning are rooted in culture and supported by the family.



## Description and Objectives of Daily Routine Activities

### ***Centre Time***

Centre time or “Free Play” allows for children to choose what is open for them to explore. The spaces are specifically designed for active involvement and experience-based learning. The designs support children’s individuality, developmental abilities, interests and learning styles. Learning centers include: table top centre, art centre, dramatic play centre, sand/water centre, science centre, building centre, book or quiet centre.

### ***Small Group Activities***

Small group activities involve breaking up the larger group into smaller ones in order to explore a specific activity.

### ***Circle Time***

Circle time allows for children to come together as a larger group to experience and explore songs, finger plays, movement, stories and participate in discussions. Activities that support development of specific language concepts can be done.

### ***Gross Motor / Movement Time / Outdoor time***

Children participate in a variety of movement activities and outdoor pursuits. Children work on skills that are developmentally appropriate by learning about body awareness, motor planning, physical fitness and the use of recreational equipment.

### ***Native Language Time***

Native Language instruction is in Southern Tutchone and Tlingit. Language activities are related to local values and customs of Kwanlin Dun and Yukon First Nations.

### ***Snack and Meal Time***

Children come together and eat as a group. Teachers take this time to assist and model manners, safe eating practices, and self-help skills.

### ***Toileting/ Diapering***

Proper diapering procedures are posted and followed to assure the children's health and safety. We also strive to make this a fun and positive learning experience that supports potty training and learning around this important skill.

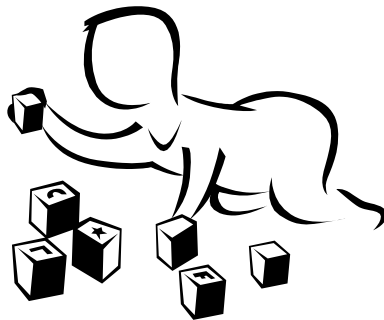
### ***Naptime***

There is a space where children can sleep quietly and safely. Children have their own cot, blanket, and familiar space to sleep in. A relaxed mood is created by planning a smooth transition before nap time or by playing soft music during.

### ***Fireside Fridays***

Children spend time in or around Dáku Ghra every Friday with the centre's Culture and Language Connector.

**For further information or any questions on the curriculum, please speak with a staff member.**



# EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT

## Social and Emotional Development

In quality early childhood programming, one of the primary goals is to foster social and emotional development in young children. By learning how to appropriately express and manage feelings, children learn how to get along with others.

## Language and Cognitive Development

Language and literacy skills develop through talking, listening, playing, reading, writing and learning the skills that adults use to communicate. Language and literacy are supported and encouraged through play, music, rhythm and rhyme.

Language is linked to cognitive development. Cognitive development is the growth of thinking skills.

## Literacy

Children gradually begin to understand how oral language is reflected in written symbols (letters), and learn to create written symbols to communicate their ideas. This process can be supported in an environment that is rich in language and literacy experiences.

## Concept Development

Concepts are learned through listening, watching, playing, imitating and exploring. Concepts are learned during every day routines and play.

## Gross Motor Development

The development of gross motor skills is a critical part of the development of the preschool child. Young children need both indoor and outdoor space that allows them to experience a variety of developmentally appropriate physical activities.

## Fine Motor Development

Children are “hands on” learners and explore their environment by using their hands, guided by their vision. The hands are an important tool for learning. Fine motor skills can be developed using a variety of materials, sand, water, paint, pegboards, beading, sponges, etc. Hand skills include coloring, cutting, printing, and general eye/finger/hand manipulation skills.

For further information or any questions on the curriculum, please speak with a staff member.





# **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **Punctuality**

It is important to ensure that your child arrives by **9:00 am** in order for them to be part of traditional language lessons, morning programming and potential outings. Arrive at the centre at the same time daily to ensure an easy transition, routine and familiarity for your child. **10:00 am** is our cut off time for arrival each day.

## **Appropriately dressing your child**

Your child needs appropriate clothing for the weather and season as we spend a lot of time learning outside year-round. In the spring and fall, provide rubber boots, a warm jacket, and splash pants. In the summer, provide hats. In the cold months, please provide a hat, mitts, winter boots, and snow pants.

## **Labeling clothing items**

Labeling your child's clothing can ensure their clothing does not get lost, misplaced or make it's way home with another child.

## **What to bring**

Your child needs a pair of indoor shoes and an extra clothing set. Bring prescribed medications such as inhalers or EpiPens if needed, and fill out an accompanying medication form. We will never administer medications without your consent. The centre looks forward to parent involvement in programming. Suggestions are always welcome!

## **What not to bring**

Please leave all toys at home and refrain from sending your child with sugary snacks.

## **Updating files and records**

Keep your file updated and communicate changes with the administrator or managers. It is a child care regulation violation when files are not up to date. The centre relies solely on the information provided by you, the caregiver, when attempting to contact a caregiver in an emergency situation.

## **How to find out what is happening in your child's classroom**

You are encouraged to participate in your child's learning! We will send out a monthly calendar of upcoming Centre events, as well as Language & Culture Department and community events. You may ask a teacher about the development of your child at any time. Please share talents such as sewing, beading or cooking with the children and become involved with the Centre. Come in for a visit any time.

## **Releasing a child**

Staff will not release a child to anyone that is not on the approved pick-up list, unless we receive a written or verbal authorization from the child's caregiver. The staff at Dusk'a will request that your file be updated with a new contact for your child when new people are approved to pick up your child. Please text a picture to the classroom phone if the team doesn't know the person picking up.

## **Communicable diseases**

Please do not send your child to the centre if they have a communicable disease such as scabies or diarrhea until the infection is cleared by a doctor's note. It is a health and safety policy to prevent spreading of infection to other children and staff. In the event that we suspect your child has a communicable disease, then the parent or caregiver will be called to pick up their child to be taken for further assessment. With your permission, we can speak with KDFN Health Centre about our concerns.

## **Sick Policies**

If your child is too sick to participate in daily activities, then your child is too sick to come to the centre. You will be called by staff to pick up your child. For instance, with signs of flu or a fever of 99.5°F or more, you will be called.

## **Weather**

Our staff will not take the children outside to play if the weather is below – 30 with the wind chill.

## **Signing in and out**

Parent/Guardians must sign their children in and out of the centre on our Sign In/Out sheet in the front entrance. This information is required by Yukon Early Learning and Child Care and helps ensure your child's safety.



## SPECIAL EVENTS FOR FAMILIES

### Family Luncheon

A family luncheon is held on the last Thursday of every month.

### Field Trips

Family members are encouraged to join for field trips.

### Craft Nights

During winter months our facility will coordinate a family craft night each month. This is a fun event held at the centre.

### Preschool Graduation

This is an annual event where we have a graduation for the preschool children transitioning to kindergarten. Parents will also be provided materials, and time to work with our cultural coordinator to create a regalia piece for this ceremony.

### Drum Workshop

Each year, new families to the centre will be provided a workshop in order to make a traditional drum for their child to use during singing, dancing and drumming at the centre. Drums will be gifted to the children when they graduate from Dusk'a.

### Other Workshops

We often host other activities and workshops throughout the year. Families will be notified as these come up.



## STATUTORY HOLIDAYS AND CENTRE CLOSURES

January	New Year's Day
February	Yukon Heritage Day
March/April	Good Friday & Easter Monday
May	Victoria Day
June	Aboriginal Day
July	Canada Day
August	Discovery Day
September	Labor Day & National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
October	Thanksgiving
November	Remembrance Day
December	Christmas Break (TBA after chief and council sets dates)

\*Please look for postings of other centre closures for professional staff development. There will be a minimum of 4 days per year.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Kwanlin Dun Health Centre: 867-668-7289

Kwanlin Dun Community Justice: 867-633-7850

Yukon Early Learning and Child Care: 867-667-3492

Whitehorse Health Centre: 867-667-8864

Family Violence Prevention: 867-667-3581

Kaushee's Place: 867-633-7720

Crisis line: 867-668-5733

Skookum Jim's Friendship Centre: 867-633-7692

Healthy Families: 867-667-8864

Canada Games Centre: 867-667-4386



## TIPS FOR TEACHING BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

- Effective behaviour guidance is good for caregivers and children!
- Positive guidance teaches a child to take responsibility for their own behavior.
- The caregiver can maintain a healthy attachment relationship with their child by using positive behaviour guidance effectively.
- The goal is to teach the child how to behave using positive strategies, not to make the child suffer.
- When guiding an undesired behaviour to something more desirable, explain to your child why, and set clear and safe limits.
- Look for signs that your child knows these limits.
- Be consistent!
- Keep it positive. Tell your child what to do instead of what not to do. You are the caregiver. Role model your actions. For example, if you yell at your child for yelling at others, your child will not understand why it is not okay to yell.
- Guide your child through natural consequences.
- Help your child feel safe by establishing clear expectations.
- Reward your child's good behavior.
- Find consequences that fit the actions when a child misbehaves.
- Remember that you can always reach out to the Child Development Centre or Dusk'a staff for suggestions and information around discipline. Your child will do better if we are all working together to positively influence behaviour changes.

## COPING WITH SEPARATION ANXIETY

- This is developmentally expected, so be positive with your child.
- Staying to read a book, tell a story, or talk about feelings and answer questions your child may have about going to a new place is helpful.
- Get information about the new place and plan a talk with your child about what to expect.
- Some children feel less anxiety when they bring a special item from home. Just remember not to bring something they would be devastated to lose as things can go missing in a group child care environment. Sometimes a photo of you in their pocket is enough.
- Please do not slip out when your child is not looking. It very important to say good-bye to your child, and reassure your child you will be back to pick him/her up. When leaving the centre, sometimes a special hand shake or little special good bye make for an easier transition into the centre

