



VOLUNTEER & PRACTICUM HANDBOOK & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Our passion is Child Care. Our Secret is people.

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INTRODUCTION

It has been long established that volunteers, whether they be parents, practicum students or graduated TOPP KIDS, play an important role in our community, allowing for the improved quality of life for many. Children represent a particular group that benefits greatly from the generosity of volunteers. The word “volunteer” speaks of generosity, donation, giving, commitment, sharing and gratifying work.

Volunteers are an essential part of the team at TOPP KIDS. Together with the guidance of our educators and leaders, volunteers assist us in providing a happy, healthy and stimulating environment for our participants.

We at TOPP KIDS also feel that it is our role to help the development of new educators into the Early Childhood Education field, and provide positive learning experiences and environments showcasing the importance and reward of the school age care sector.

TOPP KIDS offers volunteers the opportunity to:

- Gain experience in a school age child care setting.
- Develop skills as an educator.
- Develop their creativity.
- Develop a sense of responsibility.
- Gain experience working within a team.
- Become familiar with Canadian culture.
- Function in a multicultural environment.

Everyone – regardless of age (13+), sex, race or religion – is encouraged to contact us about volunteer opportunities. No previous experience is necessary and there are many qualities that are greatly appreciated. Volunteering is done according to the individual’s availability, interests and aptitudes.

HISTORY

TOPP KIDS have been in operation since September 2009 and offers school age child care services to families from multiple locations throughout Alberta. The children we care for range from age 5 years old (Kindergarten) to 12 years old (Grade 6). We have grown to serve close to 2000 children each year.

This guide addresses those individuals who wish to share their time in bringing a positive experience to the lives of the children of TOPP KIDS. The volunteer committee of TOPP KIDS is pleased to offer this guide to assist you in your work with our special clientele.

PHILOSOPHY & MISSION STATEMENT

At TOPP KIDS, we know each child is unique. There are 4 fundamentals that we both believe in and practice every day in everything we do:

PLAY, GROW, LAUGH & LEARN



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We strive to provide an environment that is safe, nurturing & stimulating, where children learn and develop through play and exploration. Our physical environments and age-appropriate programs are designed to meet the needs of children in all areas of development: Social, Physical, Intellectual, Cognitive and Emotional. Individualized planning and supportive interactions between our teams and the children help us create an atmosphere that feels safe and encourages feelings of self-worth, creativity and leadership all while learning important *Life Skills**.

It is our mission to provide accessible, affordable & high quality child care programs and training to Albertan families and Early Childhood Educators

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. **We** thrive on creating fun group and learning experiences for our children and staff using **PLAY, GROW, LAUGH & LEARN**
2. **We** share ideas and communicate openly (**share fearlessly**)
3. **We** are genuine, considerate, and respectful – we are a family!
4. **We** are problem solvers and have a “can-do” attitude
5. **We** believe every child can be coached to develop leadership skills
6. **We** support creativity and personal growth
7. **We** support a safe and respectful environment for our children and teams
8. **We** are inclusive and embrace diversity through mutual respect
9. **We** continue to grow and evolve our programs and skills as educators
10. **We** develop TOPP KIDS!

TOPP KIDS provide a safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate program which fosters active learning, support for the whole child, and a child friendly environment.

TOPP KIDS vision is to provide outstanding childcare programs and to create and lead a new standard in School Age Care.



STAFF

Our staff members are qualified Early Childhood Educators and professionals. They are dedicated to the field of Early Childhood Education and to the growth of their personal and teams skills.

Please feel free to ask any of the staff members' questions you may have, they will be more than happy to help you. Practicum students will be assigned a Practicum Mentor to connect with daily.

VOLUNTEERS IN OUR PROGRAM

Policy:

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Each volunteer at minimum, needs a current **Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Search** (dated not earlier than 6 months prior to the date of commencement with the program and every 3 years after that date) on file, on site at TOPP KIDS programs before volunteering can occur.

- **Direct unsupervised access (i.e. when the adult is alone with the children) is not permitted for persons who are not employees of child care centres.**
- **Practicum placement students and volunteers may not be counted in the staffing ratios in child care centres.**
- **No child shall be supervised by a person under the age of 18 years or without an TK Educator present (See Rule of 3).**
- **All volunteers must adhere to all supervision policies of TOPP KIDS and sign a Volunteer Acknowledgement form before volunteering can occur.**

THE RIGHTS OF THE VOLUNTEERS

The volunteer who offers his/her time to TOPP KIDS is an invaluable resource for our organization. **As such TOPP KIDS recognizes the following volunteers' rights:**

1. To an orientation at the beginning of his/her volunteering experience.
2. To receive information about the organization.
3. To receive support throughout his/her experience.
4. To be treated with fairness and respect.
5. To be assigned tasks that are of interest to him/her and that are within his or her abilities and talents.
6. To refuse to work in an environment where there is personal conflict.
7. To end his/her volunteering either permanently or temporarily having given notice to TOPP KIDS.
8. To keep confidential his/her personal contact information.
9. To offer suggestions that may be helpful towards improving his/her tasks.
10. To request a letter of reference from the cooperating Program Coordinators or Owners for his/her volunteer experience at TOPP KIDS.

ORIENTATION

Orientation at TOPP KIDS is a two part process. A meeting is set up with the Program Coordinator to complete necessary paperwork, to address questions and to introduce the volunteer to the assigned group. The second part of orientation takes place with the primary staff and tends to be an ongoing process. Volunteers are encouraged to ask questions and take initiative in the program.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Professional Work Ethic:

Volunteers should conduct themselves with dignity, courtesy and consideration and be professional. The conduct of volunteers should reflect the values of TOPP KIDS: caring, integrity, respect and teamwork.

Attendance:

Volunteers should be punctual and are asked to call the program in case of absence.



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Cell Phones:

Cell phones should be kept on silent or vibrate and should not be used in the presence of the children (or in the program).

Photos:

The taking of photos are not permitted for volunteers. Please refer to the Confidentiality Policy on our website www.toppkids.com.

Practicum students may use photos for assignments with signed permission from all applicable parties. Before taking or utilising any photos, please connect with your Practicum Mentor.

Dress:

Volunteers should be dressed appropriately for the day with comfortable closed-toe shoes and appropriate clothing for outdoor play. Sweat pants and baggy clothing are not acceptable. Please refrain from dangling jewelry.

Volunteers should wear TOPP KIDS identification in the form of a **orange** lanyard.

Smoking:

TOPP KIDS is a smoke and vaping free environment.

Confidentiality and Privacy:

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of all information they may receive while serving in the program. Strict confidentiality applies to all information, whether it involves other volunteers, participants, community or team members. This information applies to all information whether it involves volunteers, staff and children. In all situations, it is wise to not discuss or share any privileged information, and to refrain from discussing children or families in the presence of others. Please note that any communication to a family must be from a TOPP KIDS employee (volunteers are not permitted to share information about children or the program with our families, stakeholders, or community members unless required for a practicum and guided by your Practicum Mentor.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The program is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

SIGNING IN

At TOPP KIDS volunteers onsite with children will not be considered a primary staff member and not counted to ratio. In the case of an incident, if present on site, the volunteer must be listed as a volunteer on site in any Incident report.

All volunteers must sign in on Timesavr as volunteer on their profile created before they begin. This way TOPP KIDS can track time spent and attendance at each.

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BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

We strive to prevent difficult discipline situations from arising by providing an environment that is comfortable for children in a group, and provide activities that allow for freedom of choice. We believe it is essential for children to behave with respect for themselves, other children, adults and the equipment at TOPP KIDS. We emphasize role modelling through our staff, redirection and reinforcement through praise and encouragement.

When a child's behaviour becomes unacceptable and or unsafe for himself or others, discipline is a necessary part of guidance. We strive to provide an environment that minimizes conflicts between children by providing many different play centres and activities that keep the children busy and happy, and allows them to interact in a constructive and stress free manner. By providing age – appropriate equipment and varying activities we hope to minimize the need for discipline.

On occasion, children may become frustrated and act in an unacceptable manner towards other children or adults. In these situations, we apply the following procedures to assist the child in regaining their self – control.

All volunteers are to bring behaviours needing addressing to staff's attention so staff can provide guidance. The following are some of the tools the staff will use.

DEVELOPING TRUST & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

NO MEANINGFUL LEARNING EVER OCCURS WITHOUT A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP ATTACHED! - Dr. Gale Gorke

Good luck enforcing behaviour guidance to a child that does not trust and respect you as an Educator. As we learn more about children and how they develop, we understand more clearly the role of positive meaningful relationships. Warm, nurturing relationships based on respect, understanding and acceptance are essential for children's optimal social and emotional development and also influence other areas of their development. Do what you can to build trust and meaningful relationships with every child in the program. Once this is achieved, behaviour guidance goes from hesitation to meaningful interaction.

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CHILD BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

Child guidance is maintained through careful, active supervision, setting clear limits and giving age appropriate explanations. Staff approach discipline in a positive manner, using praise and attention to encourage desirable behaviours. Staff treat each child as a unique individual and are fair, firm and consistent. We encourage children to accept the consequences of their behaviour and we engage in problem solving alternatives where age appropriate. Methods used include:



1. **REDIRECTION:** Guiding a child into acceptable options
2. **LOGICAL AND NATURAL CONSEQUENCES:** Making the child aware of the results of their actions
3. **LIMIT SETTING:** Staff develop boundaries for the children, either as a group or individually according to the situation
4. **MODELING:** Demonstrating appropriate ways to the children
5. **PROVIDING CHOICES:** Staff outline appropriate choices and children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves



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6. **ANTICIPATING:** Staff plan and prepare the environment in such a manner to avoid conflict
7. **IGNORING:** Some inappropriate behavior can be ignored and more attention paid to appropriate behavior
8. **REFLECTION TIME:** A child may be removed from a situation that is distressing them for a short period of time. This step requires an educator to use guided conversations.

6 STEPS TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. **APPROACH** calmly, stopping all hurtful actions. Place yourself between the children on their level.
2. **ACKNOWLEDGE** children's feelings...asking the child aware of the results of their actions.
3. **GATHER INFORMATION ...**
4. **RESTATE THE PROBLEM ...** Demonstrating appropriate ways to the children.
5. **ASK** for ideas and solutions and choose one together....
6. Be prepared for **FOLLOW UP SUPPORT.**

ZONES OF REGULATION

To help children and educators start to identify emotions and begin their journey on developing a S.E.L. focused guidance, every TOPP KIDS program has a white board erasable Zones of Regulation board. This tool can be used with individuals who need to both identify how they feel and determine the best way to move from a "Red Zone" back to a "Green Zone".



SUPERVISION

ACTIVE & EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION

Keeping children safe is a top priority for all TOPP KIDS programs. TOPP KIDS Program Performance Standards require that "no child shall be unsupervised while under our care." Active & Effective Supervision is the most effective strategy for creating a safe environment and preventing injuries in young children. Educators from all over the world use this strategy to make sure that children of all ages explore their environments safely. Each program can keep children safe by training educators and volunteers how to Actively look, listen, and engage and Effectively use tools, relationships and preventative maintenance to minimize the possibility of behaviours or dangers.

WALKIE TALKIE PROCEDURE

Walkie Talkies will be used as a mode of communication amongst the team at the following times:

- When educators and children are on the outside play space or at the park
- When educators are walking Kindergarten children to and from school
- Radios will be kept on each educator at all times to allow for easy and effective communication between team members

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Team Procedure

- Educators will place all radios on charge at the end of every night
- Educators will ensure radios are charged at all times
- Educators will only use radios for work-related purposes

NOTE: The Program Coordinator or Room Lead will direct staff to use cell phones when walkie talkies are not available.

RULE OF 3

The bathroom supervision policy ensures the safety and privacy of children involved in TOPP KIDS programs. It is designed to protect children from peer-on-peer abuse and to protect educators from allegations of abuse.

Division 1 children who are participating in TOPP KIDS programs are NOT to be sent to bathrooms without a TOPP KIDS educator present and buddy (rule of three). The buddy system or three children together WITHOUT AN EDUCATOR is not acceptable practice and IS NOT permitted at TOPP KIDS.

Division 2 children who are participating in the distal supervision program at TOPP KIDS programs have the privilege of going to the bathroom alone. Effective supervision must still be maintained. The buddy system or three children together is not acceptable practices and IS NOT permitted at TOPP KIDS.

No child, regardless of age, should ever use a restroom/locker room alone during off-site activities. Educators should assess restroom and locker room areas for safety before a child enters, and monitor the area while children are using these spaces. The procedures allow privacy for the children and protection for the educator (not being alone with a child).

PRIVATE ACTIVITIES

Putting on bathing suits, taking showers & toileting are all examples of private activities that must be supervised using the "Rule of Three." When this is not feasible, educators /volunteers should be positioned so that they are visible to others.

PHYSICAL CONTACT POLICY:

Appropriate physical contact is important in the emotional development of all children, and children at different developmental levels will need different degrees of physical contact. Educators and volunteers will respect children's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and will respect their right to say no. Educators and volunteers should not place themselves in a situation where someone may misjudge their actions. However, we are very aware of the need for clear boundaries for physical contact in order to protect everyone involved.

TOILETING ROUTINE

Bathroom breaks are directed by TOPP KIDS staff members, and volunteers and/or practicum students are not permitted to solely supervise toileting routines. Please note that guests of TOPP KIDS should use the adult, staff washrooms when visiting the program.



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EXAMPLES OF ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE PHYSICAL CONTACT

REASON FOR CONTACT	ACCEPTABLE CONTACT	UNACCEPTABLE CONTACT
Consoling and reassuring a child who is upset, possibly due to an accident or disagreement, or maybe a child is struggling to separate from parent or caregiver.	Hugging a child with their consent or request while ensuring child can disengage, leave, walk away whenever they wish. Child sitting on knee at their request best practice is to have a child sit beside you versus on you. Occasionally when separating a child from parent/caregiver it is necessary to physically transfer the child to staff. This requires the adult parent/caregiver consent. Occasionally there is no alternative to picking a child up, but for health and safety reasons this is a last resort, and you must have child consent.	Kissing better Contact without consent
Toileting children who require support	Providing child with necessary verbal direction and supplies. Bathroom door will always be left open to the bathroom facility. Staff will stand outside the closed stall. If there is a no stall separation the staff must receive consent from the child to enter and modesty must be preserved.	Touching child's private parts; rather the adult may verbally direct the child help themselves
Restraining a child for their own protection (Emergency Situation ONLY) Physical contact is not appropriate as a response to mere "poor behaviour" by a child unless there is an actual risk of self harm, or harm to others.	Holding a child from behind by circling your arms around child so you only have contact with your arms/hands until child has calmed down. There will always be 2 staff present, one being a designated supervisor in these situations.	Unacceptable force e.g., causing reddening of the skin
Assisting with dress up clothes adjusting clothing, zipping coats, buttons.	Ensure contact is brief and that you first communicate directions for the child to try themselves.	Intimate or sustained contact with body
Holding hands, such as for reassurance, in circle games or for safety reasons	Gently holding hands when implied permission is given. The child must have the ability to let go at anytime.	Using unacceptable force or if done for disciplinary reasons
Children sitting beside staff during program activities such as community unity or reading a book	Putting arm or arms around a child's back with your hands exposed.	Unacceptable force or for disciplinary intentions
Rough and Tumble play, Physical play, Risky play	Holding child around upper body i.e.; assisting on bikes, stilts, helping them jump, bounce, hop, climbing ladder, swim etc. It is vital any contact must be on the child's terms and with their willing participation. The staff must always be sensitive to the child's feelings and body language as the child may not always communicate verbally.	Piggy backs (for health and safety reasons), tickling. Any unreasonable force or intimate contact e.g., wrestling without agreed upon guidelines and consent

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HIGH NEEDS PARTICIPANTS

High or exceptional needs program participants are, indeed, more at risk than others and need to be more closely supervised to prevent peer-to-peer abuse or medical emergencies and need to be more closely supervised to prevent others from taking advantage of their impairment. This is one of the reasons TOPP KIDS tries to have at least one extra staff above ratio in each of its programs as often as possible or a dedicated Aide.

When TOPP KIDS accepts a child or team member who has high or exceptional needs it is the Program Coordinator's duty to ensure that the needs of that child / educator are met by receiving additional education that focuses on the individual's needs until the team feels comfortable. As a part of being a TOPP KIDS Educator, it is their job to grow, learn and adapt to the needs within the program. High needs volunteers or educators also need advanced supervision. While the educator or volunteer may well appear to be an adult, their psychological state may have been arrested at a certain stage. It is important to know and work with any limitations they may have. If a Program Coordinator is unsure about the safety of a child or educator while at TOPP KIDS, the program reserves the right to refuse service without discrimination. All final decisions must be made with a TOPP KIDS CEO.

It is the volunteers role to assist educators with supervision and tasks that make the program more enjoyable for every participant.

RATIOS & GROUP SIZE

TOPP KIDS staff must ensure that, at all times, the following requirements are met with respect to:

- a. the minimum primary staff member to children ratio, and
- b. the maximum number of children who may be included in a group:

School Grade	Primary Staff Member to Children Ratio	Maximum Number of Children in a Group
Kindergarten (5 years old)	1:15	20
Grades 1-6 (6-12 years old)	1:15	30

Where a group of children includes children from the 2 school grade groups specified in the table:

- a. the maximum group size is 25, and
- b. the minimum primary staff member to children ratio is the ratio for the school grade group that constitutes the **majority** of children in the combined group,
- c. where 7 or more children are present at a program, whether on or off the program premises, a minimum of 2 adults, one of whom is a primary staff member, are on duty.

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CONTACT POLICIES



OUTSIDE CONTACT POLICY

TOPP KIDS is not responsible or liable for activities, events or circumstances involving educators, volunteers, parents, or children outside program hours. Educators and volunteers are encouraged to refrain from interacting with children under 18 years of age that are participants in TOPP KIDS programs outside of the program's activities. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, inviting children to your home, or visiting children at their home. Under NO circumstances should an employee or volunteer encourage private communication or visitation between the employee and a child.

Please note that anytime a staff or volunteer chooses to babysit a child in a TOPP KIDS program, that individual must ensure it is communicated that they are not representing TOPP KIDS.

SOCIAL NETWORKING, ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION & OTHER CONTACT POLICY

TOPP KIDS educators and volunteers must NOT contact anyone who is under the age of 18 that they meet through their interactions with TOPP KIDS through social media, text message, email, telephone, written message, blogs, chat rooms, or any other personal manner without parental authorization. Any communication that is required must be made directly through the parent or legal guardian of a child. Under no circumstances should a staff encourage private communication or visitation between the employee and a child.

PROCEDURE

- TOPP KIDS educators and volunteers must NOT be in communication with TOPP KIDS programs participants through means of electronic or social media without parental authorization.
- TOPP KIDS educators and volunteers must NOT take, send, or receive photos, videos, audios, text messages, or engage in communication with children via cell phones, handheld devices, computers, etc.
- Educators and volunteers who are associated with TOPP KIDS's programs, or who regularly interact with children, with the exception of official TOPP KIDS sites, must not post pictures or content on the internet (through social media or otherwise) that could be visible to a child with whom the employee interacts. Anything that is visible to the public is visible to a child, and anything inappropriate should be removed;
- Supervisors may monitor educator online activities (i.e., perform unscheduled 'spot checks' on social networking pages) and reinforce this policy with all staff members and volunteers.



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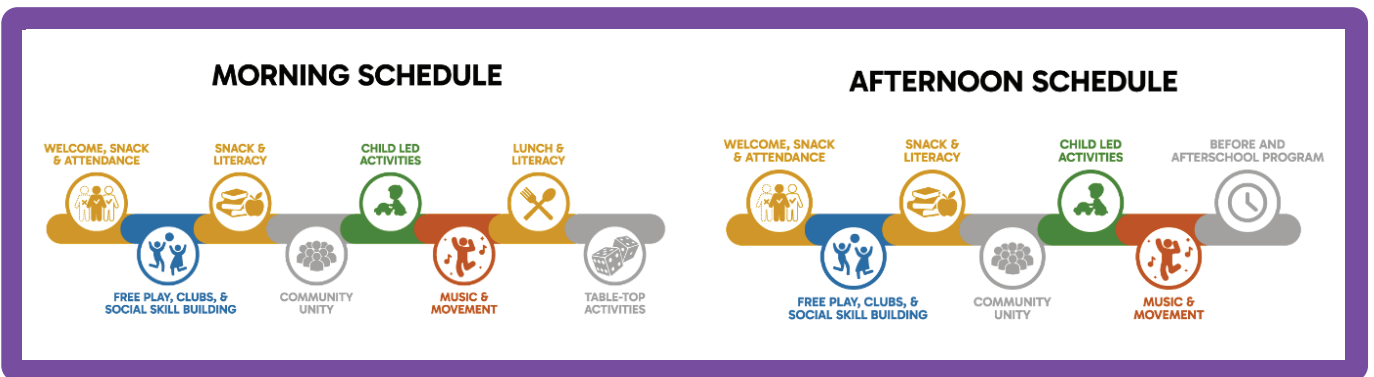
DAILY FLOW

ROUTINES

OUT OF SCHOOL CLUBS



KINDI CLUBS



FREE PLAY

A time when children initiate their own activities and move around freely in the room. Volunteers are encouraged to interact with the children; be responsive and let the children develop and carry out their own play.

SNACK AND LUNCH

Times when children are expected to sit at the table and we encourage them to use this time as an opportunity for social conversation. Volunteers are encouraged to help serve food, sit with the children and help with cleanup.

TEACHER DIRECTED ACTIVITIES

Activities such as Community Unity, physical literacy, free play, art or STEM projects, music, etc. Volunteers are encouraged to help staff set up for activities, help supervise the activity and assist the staff as needed.

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TRANSITIONS

At transitions a lot of supervision and motivation is required. Volunteers are encouraged to support staff to ensure the children get ready for the next activity.

OUTDOOR PLAY

On the playground and green spaces requires a lot of supervision. Volunteers are encouraged to support staff to ensure the safety of the children. Guidelines are available in the programs. Please take the time to read them if applicable.

COMMUNITY UNITY

HEY TOPP KIDS: COMMUNITY UNITY TIME TO BE A COMMUNITY TOGETHER

Program Coordinators are in charge of leading the program transitions and flow. Part of that is Community Unity. Program Coordinators (or the designated supervisor) need to be loud enough to address the entire room while other educators help keep children quiet and pay attention. THIS IS NOT YELLING, but a FUN daily occurrence that needs to be fast, to the point and engaging. The entire point of Community Unity is not only to explain what activities we are doing during that day but to create an environment of Social Emotional Literacy. Which aids in the teaching of self-awareness, respect, responsibility and helps build an overall community between all TOPP KIDS and the educators. Children do NOT need to be in a circle for Community Unity, this also works well at carpets or tables after the cleanup transition with multiple groups that are child led or the Program Coordinator facilitating the entire group.



Community Unity consists of 4 parts:

1. Program Coordinator will ask educators to connect with children and engage them in a brief activity at each carpet or circle
2. Heys & Praise – Led By Program Coordinator
3. Good News and Announcements, sharing successes, experiences and positive choices– Led By Program Coordinator
4. The Program Coordinator will ask each educator to explain the planned activities for the day and announce misc. updates. Children are then able to go and choose which planned activities, clubs, community involvement programs or projects they would like to participate in. At this time, Active Play Coordinators will be leading activities and Room Leads acting as support.

HEY TOPP KIDS!!! ... HEY WHAT?!

Tell the group that when we are ready to transition from one activity to another, leaders will use a code phrase that only they know what it means (they love this). I tell them that our code is "HEY TOPP KIDS!!!" When we call this, they are expected to stop what they're doing, sit down and call back "HEY WHAT!!!" with their eyes on the leader who called. The leader will then make the announcement they need to with the whole group's attention.



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HEALTH AND SAFETY

ALLERGIES

Some of the children in our care have either food allergies or intolerances that we are aware of. These vary from the common nut allergies to milk, fish, eggs and others.

All of the programs snacks are peanut and nut free. All adults must be extremely careful with any foods which they bring into the centre. We ask that you keep this in mind during the preparation of your lunch or any food you may bring into the centre.

ILLNESS

Should a volunteer be sick he/she should not come to the centre. The voice mail is in operation 24 hours daily and a message can be left for any particular program (1.403.710.8384). Messages can also be sent via e-mail to ctopp@toppkids.com.

One of the most common means of germs transmission is via hand contact. The importance of frequent hand washing by children and adults cannot be stressed enough. Hands should be washed thoroughly at the following times:

One of the most common means of germs transmission is via hand contact. The importance of frequent hand washing by children and adults cannot be stressed enough. Hands should be washed thoroughly at the following times:

1. Upon entering the daycare
2. Before and after eating
3. Before cooking activities, lunch, and snack preparations
4. After toileting and diaper changing
5. After nose cleaning/blowing
6. After "messy" activities (gluing, sand; play, outdoor play)

Hand washing is a simple task that is of utmost importance. Hand sanitizers, for adults only, are located at each entrance.

EMERGENCIES

Become familiar with fire exits and evacuation procedures. The staff will advise you of your role in the event of an evacuation.

FIRST AID

Be familiar with the location of the first aid supplies in case you may have to get them in a hurry for a staff member.

PERSONAL FOOD AND DRINKS

To avoid spills and burns, hot beverages must be in travel mugs with secure lids in the centre. Food should only be consumed on site during meal times with children.

In accordance with our Nutrition Policy, all foods brought into the centre should be healthy and nutritious i.e no soda, candy, gum, etc.

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HELPFUL HINTS

When working with children...

- get down to their level – sit on a chair or on the floor to interact.
- avoid conflict and forcing an issue. Allow the staff to handle these situations. Remember that the aggressive child is upset. To help avoid conflicts or the forcing of an issue give children two acceptable choices so the child feels in control (for example, "Please turn the pages in the book carefully or if you wish to tear paper, I can give you an old newspaper.").
- avoid giving choices that you are unwilling or unable to allow. For example, "Would you give me the knife?" is not appropriate when you mean, "I must have the knife now. It is very dangerous."
- whenever possible, it is better to let the children settle their own conflicts. Step into the situation only when it is necessary to prevent injury or when the children are unable to find a satisfactory solution on their own. To assist, move close to the children involved, crouch down to their level, and talk to them using eye contact.
- allow the children to do everything they can do for themselves. Know the children and vary the amount of help you give according to the situation.
- observe the staff members' approach with individual children; their answers and methods of dealing with situations may vary according to the needs of the child. If you have any questions about an staffs' approach or methods ask the staff member at an appropriate time (not in front of the children).
- please do not discuss the children or their families in their presence. Children hear, understand, misunderstand and occasionally repeat what we say out of context.



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VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for offering your help to be a volunteer with our program. To ensure the safety of everyone participating, we ask that you read, sign and respect the guidelines below.

- You will be paired with a staff member or Practicum Mentor in a small group. Staff will make decisions in the best interests of the program. Please follow their lead.
- Children must be supervised at all times. No child is to be left unattended.
- A staff member of the program must escort children to and from the washroom facilities.
- Areas such as playgrounds or open fields should be monitored for hazards.
- In the interest of health and safety, please only offer food and beverages that have been supplied by the program.
- Please encourage children to walk (avoid carrying children except in emergency situations).
- Be aware of your hands and body language, ensuring that all actions are appropriate and follow TOPP KIDS policy.
- Smoking and/or cell phone use is not permitted while supervising the children.
- Please make sure you have previously **read the policies out lined in the Volunteer Handbook**. Volunteers are expected to follow these policies while helping supervise children.
- Please fill out the [Timesavr profile](#)- it is your responsibility to sign in and out daily.
- The staff is legally responsible for children at all times. However, we rely on your co-operation in helping us supervise the children and informing the staff of any unsafe situations.

Name of volunteer: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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