Parent Issues/Concerns

APPROVED BY: Director, Children's Services
DATE: August 29, 2016
EFFECTIVE DATE: December 10, 2016
LATEST REVISION: September 14, 2018

Authority:

Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.
College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Recognizing our Profession February 2011.
Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007.
Children's Services, Niagara Region.

Intent:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/ guardians, the home child care agency licensee and staff to use when parents/ guardians bring forward issues/concerns**.** The Regional Home Child Care Program is dedicated to ensure the delivery of high quality child care to all families. Children should be in a healthy, safe, happy environment. Children's Services is committed to work in partnership with families to resolve any issues/concerns that they may have about their child's care.

Definitions:

CONCERN/ISSUE: if the parent has a situation they are anxious or worried about.

COMPLAINT: an expression of grievance or resentment where a family is seeking redress or justice.

LICENSEE: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each home child care agency it operates (i.e. the operator). The Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Program is the licensee, and the Home Child Care Providers are contracted with the licensed agency.

HOME CHILD CARE PROVIDER: The individual with which the home child care agency has established an agreement for the provision of child care in their home premises.

STAFF: Individuals employed by the licensee (i.e. Home Child Care Advisor)

RECE: Registered Early Childhood Educator.

CECE: College of Early Childhood Educators.

FACS NIAGARA: Family and Children's Services Niagara.

CAS: Children's Aid Society.

MEDU: Ministry of Education.

OCCMS: Ontario Child Care Management System.

Policy:

Parent issues/concerns policy and procedures must be reviewed with Home Child Care Providers, volunteers and students, Home Child Care Advisors and employees.

The Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program will provide clear and transparent information to parents/guardians, the community and staff on how issues/concerns will be managed and resolutions will be found. This will ensure that families have access to support and direction when attempting to resolve an issue/concern.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our home child care agency and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our staff and Home Child Care Providers. As identified by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/ guardians, Home Child Care Providers and staff, and foster the engagement of ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our Home Child Care Advisors are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support positive experiences

The Home Child Care Provider will not prohibit a parent from having access to their child or entering the premises when their child is in care, except when the parent has no legal right, if the provider believes on reasonable grounds that the parent could be dangerous to the children and/or if the parent is behaving in a disruptive manner.

Families can expect their issues/concerns will be responded to in a courteous, respectful and timely manner. All issues/concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program including: Advisors, Supervisor and/or

Manager. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues/concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Families can expect an initial response to an issue/concern within five (5) business days from the Home Child Care Advisor, Supervisor or Manager, after becoming aware of the issue/concern. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

- Issue/Concern against a Home Child Care Provider: Home Child Care Advisors will maintain a record of parent issues/concerns on the "Family Issues/Concerns Log Form", which will be reviewed by the Supervisor/Manager, and in OCCMS case notes. This form will be filed in the Home Child Care Provider file and the client file.
- Issue/Concern against a Niagara Regional employee (i.e.) Home Child Care Advisor: Supervisor/Manager will maintain a record of the "Family Issues/Concerns Log" specific to employee, in the employee's electronic file.
- Issues/Concerns against the Home Child Care Program: Supervisor/Manager will maintain a record of the Family Issues/Concerns Log", specific to agency, which will be reviewed by the Director of Children Services, and stored electronically on the "L" drive.

At any time during the process the family may choose to involve an external agency such as the Ministry of Education, the College of Early Childhood Educators or Family and Children's Services Niagara (FACS Niagara).

Confidentiality must be adhered to throughout the issue/concern resolution process. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, Home Child Care Providers, other persons in the home child care premises, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or Family and Children Services Niagara). This means that the issue/concern should only be discussed by those people directly involved in the resolution process and/or governing bodies/agencies

A copy of the policy and procedure regarding Family Issues/Concerns are included in the parent handbook.

Conduct

- Our agency maintains 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 parent/guardian, Home Child Care Provider and/or Home Child Care Advisor, student or volunteer feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, bullied or belittled, they will

immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Home Child Care Supervisor/Manager.

Procedure:
Steps to be taken by Parent/Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:

First Point of Contact (must always be the Home Child Care Provider or Home Child Care Advisor, depending on the concern.

- Parent/Guardian to contact the Home Child Care Provider/Home Child Care Advisor to discuss the issue(s)/concern(s).
- Schedule a time with the Home Child Care Provider/Home Child Care Advisor to talk about your concern(s).
- Be prepared to make notes ahead of time about your concerns. Issues/ concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing.
- Be clear about what's being said (if you need clarification or have concerns about the Provider's/Home Child Care Advisor's response, ask them to explain further).
- Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request.
- A follow up meeting should be arranged if you feel it is necessary.
- Investigation of issues/concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to all parties involved. If you are unsatisfied or still have concerns you may want to then move to the second point of contact.

Second Point of Contact

- Family to contact the Home Child Care Advisor (about any concerns about the Provider) by calling 905-980-6000, ext. 3194 to discuss the issues/concerns.
- Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing.
- The Home Child Care Advisor will discuss with you next steps in response to your concerns which may include but are not limited to, a discussion with the provider, increase of visits, moving the child to another home, etc.

If you are unsatisfied, still have issues/concerns, or your concern is regarding a Regional employee you may want to then move to the third point of contact.

Third Point of Contact:

- Family is to contact the Program Supervisor of Children's Services, Direct Operations by calling 905-980-6000, Ext 3874.

If you are unsatisfied or still have issues/concerns you may want to then move to the fourth point of contact

Fourth Point of Contact:

- Family is to contact the Manager of Children's Services by calling 905-980-6000 ext. 3877.

If you are unsatisfied or still have issues/concerns you may want to then move to the fifth point of contact.

Fifth Point of Contact:

- Family is to contact the Director of Children's Services by calling 905-980-6000 ext. 3876.

Additional Points of Contact:

You may make a complaint to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Complaint line, regarding program concerns at:

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: (if the parent has concerns about the licensed Home Child Care Program).

- Telephone 1-877-510-5333.
- Email childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

Complaints regarding Registered Early Childhood Educators can be filed with the regulatory body of the College of Early Childhood Educators at: CECE (If the parent has issues/concerns about the Home Child Care Advisor and/or Manager and/or if the Provider is a Registered Early Childhood Educator). Telephone 1-888-961-8558.

Email: info@college-ece.ca

FACS Niagara (if the issue/concern is related to a child in need of protection and/or concerns of suspected abuse or neglect).

- Telephone 905-937-7731
- Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, are 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/guardian will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS), known as Family and Children Services Niagara (FACS Niagara), directly.
- Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to FACS Niagara as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act.*
- For more information, visit Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Public Health, Niagara Region (Environmental concerns).

- Telephone 905-688-3762 or 1-800-263-7248

Niagara Region

REGIONALLY OPERATED HOME CHILD CARE

Parents Issues or Concerns

Nature of Issue or Concern
Program-Related e.g. schedule, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, menu, etc.
Steps for Parent/Guardian to Report Issue/Concern.
Raise the issue/concern with the following:

- The Home Child Care Provider or'
- the Home Child Care Advisor.

Nature of Issue or Concern
General Agency or Operations e.g. fees, placement, etc.
Steps for Parent/Guardian to Report Issue/Concern.

- Raise the issue or concern to The Home Child Care Advisor or;
- Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program.

Nature of Issue or Concern
Provider, Home Child Care Advisor and/or Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program Related, e.g. conduct of provider, Home Child Care Advisor.
Steps for Parent/Guardian to Report Issue/Concern

- Raise the issue or concern to the individual directly or;
- Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program.

Nature of Issue or Concern
Related to other Persons at the Home Premises.
Steps for Parent/Guardian to Report Issue/Concern
Raise the issue or concern to;

- The Home Child Care Provider directly or;
- The Home Child care Advisor or;
- Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program.

All issues/concerns about the conduct of other persons in a home child care premises that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program, as soon as parent/guardians become aware of the situation.

Nature of Issue or Concern
Student/Volunteer - related.

Steps for Parent/Guardian to Report Issue/Concern

Raise the issue or concerns to:

- The person responsible for supervising the volunteer or student OR
- The Home Child Care Advisor and/or Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program.

Note: All issues/concerns about the conduct of students/volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program as soon as parent/guardians become aware of the situation.

Steps for Provider, Staff and/or Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program in responding to issue/concern:

Provider:

- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within five business days.
- Advise Home Child Care Advisor, if needed.
- Document the issue/concern, in detail, in daily journal outlining the following:
  - The date and time the issue/concern was received.
  - The name of the person reporting the issue/concern.
  - The details of the issue/concern
  - Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian.
  - Provide contact information for designated Home Child Care Advisor if unable to resolve the matter.

Staff:

1. Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within five business days. Advise Children's Services Program Supervisor and/or Manager, if needed.

2. Document the issues/concerns, in detail, on one of the following 'Family Issues/Concerns Logs' specific to either the Home Child Care Provider and/or Employee outlining the following:

- The date and time the issue/concern was received.
- The name of the person who received the issue/concern.
- The name of the person reporting the issue/concern.
- The details of the issue/concern.
- Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
- Provide contact information for Program Supervisor, Manager or Director if unable to address the matter.

Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 5 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter.
Document reasons for delays in writing
Provide resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern
Indicate documentation can be found in one of the following: Provider File, Client File or employee's electronic file.

Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program:

- Issues/Concerns to be recorded on the Regional Niagara Home Child Care Program Issues/Concerns Log
- Director of Children's Services to be notified.
- Based on outcome from the Program Advisor's follow up investigation, Children's Services Program Supervisor and/or Manager will follow up with required action.

Copies of the 'Summary of Home Child Care Agency Licensing Requirements and Recommendations Report' to be filed in Home Child Care Provider files, both in home and at headquarters, in addition, stored electronically on the 'L' drive.

Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

Parent issues/concerns

- **45.1** Every licensee shall ensure that there are written policies and procedures that set out how parents' issues and concerns will be addressed, including details regarding,
  (a) The Steps for parents to follow when they have an issue or concern to bring forward to the licensee;
  (b) The steps to be followed by a licensee and its employees in responding to an issue or concern brought forward by a parent; and
  (c) When an initial response to the issue or concern will be provided. O. Reg. 126/16, s. 31.

Parent Handbook

- **45.** (1) every licensee shall have a parent handbook for each child care centre or home child care it operates which shall include:
- (2) a copy of the licensee's policies and procedures required under section 45.1 regarding how parents' issues and concerns will be addressed;

Intent H

This provision is intended to provide licensees and parents with a clear and transparent procedure to follow when a parent has brought forward an issue or concern they wish to have addressed by the licensee.

Niagara Region
Community Services | Children's Services
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, PO Box 344
Thorold, ON L2V 3Z3
Tel: 905-980-6000 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215
FAX: 905-984-4463
www.niagararegion.ca

Regional Niagara Home Child Care Program Family Issues/Concerns

Name of Employee: _____

Date	Parent Name	Issue or Concern	Outcome	Signature
Click or tap to enter a date.				
Click or tap to enter a date.				
Click or tap to enter a date.				
Click or tap to enter a date.				
Click or tap to enter a date.				

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Regional Niagara Home Child Care Program Family Issues/Concerns

Name of Provider:

Date	Parent Name	Issue or Concern	Outcome	Signature
Click or tap to enter a date.				
Click or tap to enter a date.				
Click or tap to enter a date.				
Click or tap to enter a date.				
Click or tap to enter a date.				