Licensed Home Child Care
Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program
APPROVED BY: Director, Children's Services
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EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2024
LATEST REVISION:
Authority: Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014: Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

Purpose

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide Home Child Care Providers, and Niagara Region Home Child Care staff and students with a clear direction as to what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the home child care premises as expected, as well as procedures to follow to ensure the safe arrival and dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Policy and Procedures

Accepting a child into care

The Home Child Care Provider is responsible for signing children in in the daily log as children arrive at the home premises where care is provided.

The Home Child Care Provider is responsible for ensuring any communication from parents/guardians related to drop-off or absences is noted in the daily log.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

Parent/Guardian responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the Home Child Care Provider, no later than approximately one hour before their child's scheduled arrival time, should

their child be absent for any reason. Parents are required to deliver this message using the preferred method of communication as decided with the Home Child Care Provider.

Home Child Care Provider responsibilities:

1. Where a child does not arrive at the home child care premises and the parents/guardians have not communicated a change in drop-off, or that the child will be absent, the Home Child Care Provider must:

    - contact the child's parents/guardians approximately an hour after the child's scheduled arrival, or when the program safely allows. Home Child Care Providers shall contact the parents/guardians using the preferred method of communication as decided with the family, i.e., phone call with voice message, text, or email at least once.

2. If the child's absence has been confirmed, the Home Child Care Provider shall document the child's absence and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily log.

Releasing a child from care

1. The Home Child Care Provider shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or another individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child may be released to.
2. Where the Home Child Care Provider has never met the individual picking up the child, the Home Child Care Provider must ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm that the individual's information matches what is documented in the child's enrolment form, or the written authorization provided by parents/guardians.
3. Parents/guardians understand that the Niagara Region Children's Services recommends that children under sixteen (16) years of age do not pick up children from child care programs. However, if a parent or guardian chooses to have a child who is under sixteen (16) years of age but thirteen (13) years of age or older to pick up their child, the centre will release the child to the authorized individual. The "Release of child to person under age of 16 Form" must be completed. The parent/guardian is aware that the child care is no longer responsible for that child upon their dismissal. Please note identification required upon pick up (i.e., health card).

Where a child has not been picked up as expected

Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived, the Home Child Care Provider will:

Step 1: Make contact with parents/guardians or authorized individual:

- Attempt to contact the parents/guardians or authorized individual approximately 15min-30 mins past the child's scheduled pick-up time, or

whenever program safely allows to establish pick up time either by telephone where a voicemail must be left, text message or e-mail.

- Activities and snacks, if applicable, will be offered to the child(ren) while they await pick up.

Step 2: Contact emergency contacts:

- Should no response be received from the parent/guardian or authorized individual within 30 minutes from point of contact, the Home Child Care Provider will contact the child's emergency contacts.

Step 3: Contact Niagara Regions Licensed Home Child Care Program

- Where the Home Child Care Provider is unable to reach the child(ren)'s emergency contacts they will phone Niagara Region's Licensed Home Child Care Program to provide an update of current situation. When contacting outside of Regional business hours, Home Child Care Provider will call dispatch. Refer to the After-Hours Emergency Process.

Step 4: Family and Children's Services

- Where the Home Child Care Provider is unable to reach the parent/guardian or emergency contacts as outlined in the child's enrolment form approx. an hour from scheduled pick-up time, the Home Child Care Provider shall proceed with contacting Family and Children's Services (FACS) at 905-937-7731. The Home Child Care Provider shall follow direction provided by FACS with respect to next steps. The Home Child Care Provider shall continue to update the Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program of situation.