



Christ-Centered | Loving & Caring | Pursue Excellence

2025/2026

# ParentHandbook

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## **Welcome to Tree of Life Montessori Academy**

Tree of Life Montessori Academy (TLMA) is a non-profit child care center established to serve all children and families in the North York urban community by providing Christian, loving, nurturing, caring, and excellent learning environment. In the Tree of Life Montessori Academy, our staff and guides practice the Montessori education method in which they will focus on the child's independence and will use positive discipline which will allow space for children to grow and learn about how to be an adult.

Our program is designed to meet the needs of individual children between the ages of 6 months to 6 years old through our infant, toddler(Pre-CASA) and preschool (CASA) program.

TLMA is located at the North York Korean United Church in North York, Ontario. This handbook will provide you with information about the TLMA program and policies. If you require further information, please feel free to contact the center supervisor,

[info@treeoflifemontessori.net](mailto:info@treeoflifemontessori.net)

Welcome to the TLMA community!

## **Our Philosophy**

We view children as competent and capable learners and creative scientists. Children should be given choices, responsibilities, and opportunities to initiate their own learning. We value and develop each child's strengths, interests, skills, abilities and knowledge and their unique languages to extend their learning. Children need the assurance of being loved and cared for while they are enjoying an educational environment. We believe that passionate and compassionate educators are able to build security and trust through their relationship with each child.

## **Christian Education**

We believe that every child is a blessing of God. We should appreciate their uniqueness and support them to understand that they are reflecting the wonder of God's image. Differences in ability, culture, language, race, and learning methods make our community flourish. As Christian educators, we should celebrate the benefits of diversity with each individual child and family, and enable them to understand and acknowledge these differences. Children are competent and they are ready to learn when provided an environment where they can thrive.

“Start children on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn back from it.” Proverbs 22

## Montessori Philosophy

We recognize and support each child's developmental needs. We provide a prepared environment in which the materials and activities meet each child's needs as they work with their hands and collaborate together with their peers in a small community of children with the guidance of a trained Montessori guide.

"Our aim...is not merely to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core." - by Maria Montessori.

## Program Statement Overview

Tree of Life Montessori Academy (TLMA) welcomes you to a genuine Christian Montessori education for young children. Our Board of Directors and family members along with our dedicated Early Childhood Educators, view **children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.**

Tree of Life Montessori Academy (TLMA) is consistent with the Ministry of Education's policy by operating a program that constitutes high quality child care, early years programming and pedagogy that supports children's learning and development.

Our mission to provide quality Christian education and care for young children in the community and pass the virtues of Christ on to them and to celebrate the benefits of diversity with each individual child and family so as to empower them to understand and acknowledge these differences in the community is achievable through implementing the four foundations of early learning: belonging, well-being, engagement and expression.

Tree of Life Montessori Academy (TLMA) offers a learning program that is consistent with Ministry of Education policies, pedagogy and curriculum. Some of the Ministry documents we reference in our program include the following:

- [How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years](#)
- [Ontario Early Years Framework](#)
- [Ontario Early Learning Framework](#)
- [Early Learning for Every Child Today](#)

Tree of Life Montessori Academy (TLMA) also uses an **Emergent Curriculum** approach in its Early Learning and Child Care Centre. Emergent Curriculum emphasizes active learning. Since we know that children learn best by pursuing their personal interests and goals, children make their own choices about materials and activities during program time. As they

pursue their choices and plans, children explore, ask and answer questions, solve problems, and interact with peers, program staff, volunteers, students on placement and other adults. Believing that every child is a miracle can transform the way we design for children's care. Tree of Life Montessori Academy (TLMA) recognizes each child is a unique individual who brings his or her own abilities to the program and deserves that encouragement and space to try new things, explore new ideas and develop their own creativity. Located in a diverse and multicultural community, Tree of Life Montessori Academy (TLMA) celebrates the benefits of diversity with each individual child and family and empower them to understand and acknowledge these differences in the community. We will also educate parents and the public to understand children's rights and acknowledge them as a member of Christian community who can edify the body of Christ through their spiritual gifts.

We believe that God's words will foster and inspire children through hearing the Bible stories, reciting Scriptures, singing worship songs, and learning how to apply God's truth in their daily life and relationships. Also, based on children's needs and interests, Tree of Life Montessori Academy strives to create a great variety of learning experiences.

For a full version of the TLMA Program Statement, visit [treeoflifemontessoriacademy.net](http://treeoflifemontessoriacademy.net) or request a printed copy from the TLMA center administration office.

## **Rooms**

TLMA provides Infant, toddler (Pre-CASA) and preschool (CASA) programs. To meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of a child, Tree of Life Montessori Academy offers a variety of programs all based on the theory and works of Dr. Maria Montessori. All programming includes a healthy meal program, music and movement, French, and arts.

### **Infant Room:**

This program is designed for children 6 to 24 months old and is staffed with 1 teacher for every 3 children. Dr. Montessori's philosophies are followed which stress the importance of allowing infants to move freely in their environment. Gross and fine motors are developed. Tactile, visual, and cognitive senses are stimulated using a wide range of materials. Baby sign language is taught and encouraged until they develop the ability to use sound.

### **Toddler (Pre-CASA) Room:**

Designed for children 18 months to 36 months old with 1 teacher for every 5 children. The children are now beginning to gain more independence in their environment. We help them by focusing on self-help skills such as toileting, dressing, courtesy, and continued language

development. We also provide the children the necessary tools to develop friendship and respect with their teachers, peers, and their environment.

### **Casa 1 & 2 Room:**

Designed for children 30 months to 6 years of age who are fully toiletied. The room is staffed with 1 teacher for every 8 children. Academics are presented using a wide range of concrete and manipulative materials. Children are encouraged to work at their own pace in a noncompetitive environment as they explore all five areas of the classroom.

### **Operating Hours & Holidays**

	Infant Room	Toddler Room	CASA Room
Age Group	6 - 24 months	18 - 36 months	2 ½ - 6 yrs
Montessori Program	8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.	8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.	8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Extended Hours	7:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.	7:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.	7:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.

TLMA operates between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Monday to Friday, excluding the following holidays during the school year and summer.

New Year Day    Family Day    Good Friday    Easter Monday    Victoria Day  
 Canada Day    Civic Holiday    Labour Day    Thanksgiving    Christmas Day    Boxing Day

**If weather conditions become severe, we do reserve the right to close the school**

### **Important Days (2025-2026 School Year)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| October 08, 2025: Field Trip                   | January 22 - 23: TLMA Open House                  |
| October 09, 2025: Thanksgiving Feast           | March 17, 2026: P.A Day (Camp Day)                |
| October 10, 2025: P.A Day (Camp Day)           | April 28 - May 01, 2026: Virtual Observation Day  |
| October 28 - 30, 2025: Virtual Observation Day | May 08, 2026: Report Card                         |
| November 04, 2025: Picture Day                 | May 15, 2026: Parent’s Interview Day (Camp Day)   |
| November 14, 2025: Report Card                 | June 12, 2026: Graduation and Spring Concert      |
| November 21, 2025: Parent’s Interview Day      | June 26, 2026: Last Day of School & Family Picnic |
| December 19, 2025: Christmas Concert           |   |

## Holidays during the School Year and Summer

Winter Break: January 2, 2026

Family Day: February 16, 2026

March Break: March 18 - 20, 2026

Good Friday: April 03, 2026

Easter Monday: April 06, 2026

Victoria Day: May 18, 2026

Summer Break 1: June 29, 30, July 02, 03, 2026

Canada Day: July 01, 2026

Civic Holiday: August 03, 2026

Summer Break 2: August 31 - September 04, 2026

Labour Day: September 7, 2026

Thanksgiving Day: October 12, 2026

Winter Break: December 24, 29, 30, 31

Please be advised that our childcare facility will remain open on **PA Days and Parents' Interview Days**. While the **Montessori program will not be in session** on these days due to our lead teachers participating in Professional Activities, we will be offering a **one-day theme-based camp** for the children. TLMA will conduct surveys to determine which families plan to participate in the day camp.

Parents' Interview Days will be held on **November 21, 2025 and May 15, 2026**. These meetings provide an opportunity for families to meet with their child's educators, discuss academic and developmental progress, and address any concerns.

- **Scheduling:** Interviews will be scheduled in advance based on family availability.
- **Montessori Program:** The Montessori program will not be in session on these days.
- **Childcare Availability:** Childcare will be provided throughout the day for families who require it.

**Tree of Life Montessori Academy (TLMA) will remain fully open during the summer**, offering a **summer camp** for both our currently enrolled families and members of the community.

The summer camp will operate during our regular hours of operation. TLMA will conduct a survey to determine which families plan to participate in July and August. **Payments will be calculated monthly**, consistent with the regular months.

Please note that the **TLMA facility will be closed during the Summer Break** to allow our team to prepare for the new semester starting in September.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation. If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact us.

## Fees

This is a list of current rates for programs operated by Tree of Life Montessori Academy **valid as of Jan. 1, 2026.**

Room	Age	Daily Base Fee	Ratio	Montessori Program	Full Day Schedule
<b>Infant</b>	6 - 24 months	\$22.00	1:3	8:00 A.M.– 5:00 P.M	7:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.
<b>Toddler</b>	18 - 36 months	\$22.00	1:5	8:00 A.M.– 5:00 P.M	7:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.
<b>CASA</b>	2.5 – 6 years	\$22.00	1:8	8:00 A.M.– 5:00 P.M	7:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

**\*Base Fees**

Daily Fee : \$22.00 / Day

Monthly Base Fee: \$462.00 / Month

**\*\*Non-Base Fees**

**\*\*\*In-house Activity Fee:** TBA

Field Trip Fee: TBA

**Important Note:** The rates for children 0-6 years old are based on CWELCC.

Please note that we require **4 WEEKS WRITTEN NOTICE** to process any change to a child’s enrollment.

\* Base Fee: Daily rate is considered to be “base fees.”

\*\* Non-base Fees: Late fees, NSF fees and/or any fees beyond the base fees are determined on an as-needed basis and are considered to be “non-base fees”. Non-base fees are not eligible for fee reductions through CWELCC.

\*\*\* In-house Activity Monthly Fee includes Music, Arts, Language, and other special Montessori Education programs run by Specialized educators. In-house activities are available only to families who have signed the consent form included in the registration package.

**NOTE\*** All Fees must be paid in advance; all fees must be paid before the first day of a new month or before the first day of care.

Fee payments can be paid through one of the following options:

- 1) Internet Banking - [info@treeoflifemontessori.net](mailto:info@treeoflifemontessori.net), **in message section please ensure you put the name of your child and the month of payment**
- 2) Cheque/MoneyOrder - payable to Tree of Life Montessori Academy, and
- 3) Cash Payment—in person

A tax receipt will be issued annually for all child care fees paid from the previous calendar year. It is the responsibility of families to pay their assessed fees. TLMA may withdraw service if fees are not paid.

Covid Related Absences: Fees are not refundable if the child is absent due to Covid related reasons such self-isolation.

***IMPORTANT:*** Should TLMA be forced to close for a day or be required to close due to any natural disaster or emergency (flood, gas leak, fire, power failure, water shortage, etc.) fees are still payable. In case of a lengthy closure, the TLMA will relocate.

### **Late payment fee / NSF payment \$45 dollar NSF fee**

All child care fees must be paid in advance. All fees must be paid by the first day of the month (or the first day of care) at drop off time for the current month of services. If payment is not received by the first day of the month at pick-up time a late payment fee will be applied to your account at the rate of \$5 per day. In order to ensure accurate supplies to keep the daycare running, fees need to be on time. After 3 days of late fees added to your account your care will be suspended until fees are paid. After 3 late payments, or 2 NSF cheques, fees may be required 2 weeks in advance, or service may be suspended. Each situation is dealt with on an individual basis. An NSF or returned cheque is subject to a \$45 administration fee.

### **Refunding or Crediting Prepaid Overpayments**

Tree of Life Montessori Academy (TLMA) is committed to ensuring that families are charged accurately and fairly. Where necessary, TLMA will refund or credit parents for any overpayments of child care fees.

An overpayment is defined as the difference between:

- 1) The previous (“old”) base fee, and
- 2) The updated (“new”) base fee charged to the parent.

Overpayments may occur when fee rates change after a family has already paid in advance. Overpayments may occur in situations where parents pre-pay child care fees in advance, including (but not limited to):

- 1) Annual tuition payments
- 2) Lump-sum prepayments
- 3) Prepayment of multiple months or weeks of child care fees

If an overpayment occurs, TLMA will ensure that the parent receives a refund or account credit for the overpaid amount.

TLMA may choose to:

- 1) Refund the overpayment directly to the parent, or
- 2) Apply the overpayment as a credit toward future fees.

If parents wish to apply the overpayment toward their next fee payment, they must inform TLMA in writing via a formal email.

TLMA will process refunds using one of the following methods:

- 1) e-transfer, or
- 2) cheque,  
depending on the family’s preference and TLMA’s administrative procedures.

Parents will be formally notified of any overpayment and the refund or credit details via email. This communication will outline the amount of the overpayment and the method by which it will be refunded or credited.

TLMA will maintain clear records of:

- 1) The old base fee and new base fee amounts
- 2) The prepaid amount
- 3) The overpayment calculation
- 4) The refund/credit issued
- 5) The method of refund (e-transfer or cheque) or applied credit.

### **Flat Monthly Rate**

The monthly rate does not change depending on the number of days in a month. It has been calculated by taking the number of billable days throughout the entire year and dividing it by 12. This process provides both the school and families with a consistent budget and makes the invoicing process much easier.

### **Age Groupings and Rate Changes**

Quite often, we do not have the ability to move a child up to the next age grouping on schedule. Sometimes they are moved up to the next classroom early, and sometimes they are moved up late. To be fair and consistent with all families, rates are determined by your child's age, not the classroom they are in.

### **Vacations and Absences**

Please note that monthly rates do not change if your child is on vacation or absent for any other reason. Your child's space will be reserved during this time and therefore we do not have the ability to sell that space to anyone else. This includes any time taken off for Christmas, March, and Summer Breaks.

### **Schedule Changes**

We schedule our teachers according to the daily hours that you submit with your registration package, therefore we require a minimum of two weeks' notice to make any changes. We will always do our best to accommodate your schedule. Due to limited capacity, not all requests to increase or change days can be approved.

## **Prohibited Practices**

Young children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and with adults, rather than from a negative or punitive approach intended to manage unwanted behavior.

Research from diverse fields of study show that children who attend programs where they experience warm, supportive relationships are happier, less anxious and more motivated to learn than those who do not. Experiencing positive relationships in early childhood also has a significant long term impact on physical and mental health, and success in school and beyond.

Tree of Life Montessori Academy Program Statement sets out approaches that support positive interactions between children, families, staff and the community.

### **Tree of Life Montessori Academy will NOT permit:**

- Corporal punishment of the child which may include but is not limited to, hitting, spanking, slapping and pinching;
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- Locking the exits of the child care center premises for the purposes of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will

If, at any time, a staff member or placement student were to implement any of these practices, the appropriate children's protection agency would be notified and disciplinary actions would be taken, including notification to the College of Early Childhood Educators as required. Incidents of this nature would be reported to the Ministry of Education as a Serious

Occurrence.

All staff and placement students are guided by the TLMA Program Statement & Implementation policy, which they review and sign annually.

## **Admission Procedures**

Once your child's admission and start date have been confirmed, the TLMA Supervisor will schedule a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian prior to admission to the centre.

During this meeting, the Supervisor will review the Child Admission Package and gather information, such as, parent contact information, your child's doctor's contact information, health related information, etc. The Centre Supervisor will provide an overview of the TLMA program, and the centre's policies and procedures.

This meeting is also an opportunity for you to share information about your child and family, and to ask questions. We encourage you to share as much information about your child and family with us as you feel comfortable to help us provide the best care and services for you and your child.

The following information must be provided at the time of admission and should be updated as changes occur:

## **Emergency Contact**

At admission, staff will request information regarding emergency contacts. We are required by the Ministry of Education to ensure that each child has the information of at least one emergency contact person in the event that the parent/guardian is unavailable or cannot be reached. Parents must provide the centre with the name and contact information of at least one person.

## **Pick Up Instructions**

At the time of admission, please share any specific restrictions, instructions or custody arrangements with the centre supervisor concerning release or access to your child. Please be prepared to provide legal documentation concerning custody arrangements. We also request that you provide the Supervisor with information on any changes that may come up.

## **Children's Immunization**

Licensed child care centres are required to collect and retain up-to-date immunization for all children not attending school. Please ensure that you provide current and up-to-date immunization information to the centre.

If your child has not been immunized, the parent must provide one of the following:

- Written medical exemption by a qualified medical practitioner, which clearly states the medical reasons why a child cannot be immunized. or
- Complete the Immunization Exemption Form identifying that you have chosen not to immunize your child on the grounds that the immunization conflicts with your conscience or religious beliefs.

Please note that if an outbreak of a communicable disease occurs, any child who is not adequately immunized will not be able to attend care unless the child receives the required vaccine or until the outbreak is over.

For the current recommended immunization schedule, visit [toronto.ca/immunization](http://toronto.ca/immunization).

## **Gradual Admission**

If it is possible for your family, we recommend that your child become acquainted with our classroom setting gradually to support a smooth and positive transition for your child. Over the course of your child's first several days at the centre, we encourage you to start with a short visit, lengthening it each day. This gradual transition helps to make your child's adjustment to their new environment a more positive and successful experience.

Parents and staff are encouraged to work together to develop a transition plan that supports your child during this time. If this is not possible for your family, please speak directly to the Supervisor who will work with you to support your child in their admission to the centre.

## **Withdrawing Your Child from Care**

We require four weeks' written notice if you plan to withdraw your child from the centre for any reason. Even if your child does not attend during that four-week period, payment is still required. If the required notice is not received, you will be charged a penalty equivalent to the

full cost of four weeks of care. Payment of this penalty along with any other outstanding fees must be made prior to your child's re-entry into the child care system.

In the event of any concerns (raised by staff, parents/guardians or even children) a meeting can be scheduled to address the issues. The meeting will involve the board of director members, and involved staff members and the parents/guardians involved. The concerns will be clearly stated (ex. late payment, failure to adhere to center policies, behavioral problems etc.) and discussed.

Meeting minutes will be taken, and solutions will be sought in a non-judgmental manner. A plan will be designed to resolve the issue. A second meeting will be scheduled to review the situation within a reasonable time frame. In the event the issue cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction, a 2 week written notice of termination of services will be given.

## **Demission of Your Child**

On occasion, TLMA may find that they are unable to continue to provide care for your child. This takes place when:

A space is not available in the next age group when your child is of age to move to the next age group.

The Supervisor will review the demission information with you at the time of admission. A form will be provided for your signature to confirm that you have received and understand this information.

TLMA works to provide as much notice to parents as possible, when demission may happen. In these circumstances, the centre will work in partnership with the family and the subsidy worker to find alternate child care arrangements.

## **Drop Off Procedure**

From **7 a.m. to 9 a.m.**, if your child is in the **Casa classroom**, they will be greeted at the main door by one of our teachers. If your child is in the **Infant or Pre-Casa classroom**, they will be greeted at the door. Parents must drop their child off directly to the room in which they are enrolled. For the safety of your child, it is important that parents confirm that a staff member is in the room and knows that your child has arrived. If you are dropping off outside of this window, please call to announce your arrival and a teacher will meet you at the door. Your child will be guided into school, and their teacher will help them remove their shoes and bring them to class. If they are crying, please don't fret. Be assured they will be comforted by one of our caring teachers. In most instances, they will settle down quickly.

Staff will document the arrival of your child when they enter the room. If there are any issues of which staff should be aware regarding your child's health, it should be shared with the teacher at the time of drop off. This is also a good time to share information with your child's teacher about your observations regarding your child's development or interests that will help the staff in planning activities for your child and the others in the room.

## **Pick Up Procedure**

Your child learns to expect you at a certain time each day. Please pick-up your child promptly at the specified time. Children will be released only to authorized persons who are designated on the child's pick-up list. The end of the day can be a hectic time for parents wishing to discuss their child's progress with the teacher. It is important that you make sure that the staff is aware that your child is leaving the program for the day. At pick up, please also take a moment to speak to your child's teacher who will tell you about your child's day. The staff will document the departure of your child each day.

Many families have a support system of people who will also pick up their child at the end of the day. Please ensure that the staff are aware when alternate arrangements for pick-up have been made by providing us with the person's name and contact information. Children will not be released to any person without authorization or confirmation from the parent. The person will be required to provide identification. If staff are not aware of alternate arrangements, staff are required to confirm with the parents by phone and verify identification before releasing the child. We encourage you to provide contact information in advance for anyone who the child may be released to other than yourself.

## **Security**

Only staff are given access to enter our school. All families and visitors will be required to ring the doorbell to gain entry. We also have a video surveillance system installed which records all entrances, exits, and classrooms.

## **Communication**

Face-to-face interactions at pick up are an excellent way to briefly communicate about your child's day. Please keep in mind that their teacher does have to return to their class quickly, however if you would like to have more time with your child's teacher you may schedule a meeting at any time.

### **Email**

For any communication regarding invoicing, schedule changes, or questions for the office please send an email to [info@treeoflifemontessori.net](mailto:info@treeoflifemontessori.net) or [admin@treeoflifemontessori.net](mailto:admin@treeoflifemontessori.net).

### **Backpack**

For toddler and casa students, please send your child with a backpack labeled with their name. It will be used to transport your child's work and belongings. Students will take their work home once a week to avoid having them rush through a project in order to have something to take home every day. Much of the learning taking place in a Montessori classroom is hands-on; therefore, do not be disappointed if your child does not bring home much paperwork.

### **Late Pick Up of Your Child**

TLMA operates from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. Parents should plan to leave enough time to pick up their child, communicate with the staff about their child's day and gather all belongings prior to the centre's closing time.

If a situation arises where you will be arriving late to pick up your child, please notify the centre as soon as possible. In these circumstances, we encourage you to have alternative pick-up arrangements in place so your child is picked up as soon as possible

If the centre has not been contacted by the parent(s) to notify staff that they will be late to pick up their child, staff will attempt to reach one of the child's emergency contacts that you provided. If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be reached by 6:30 p.m., as a last resort, staff will contact the appropriate Child Protection Agency.

If repetitive late pick-ups occur, the Supervisor will meet with the parent to discuss and determine whether the TLMA hours meet the family's needs. If continued lateness is expected

or continues, the Centre Supervisor will support the family to explore alternate child care arrangements that are more suitable to the family's needs. A notice of withdrawal from care may be issued for unresolved patterns of lateness.

## **Outdoor Play**

Outdoor play at TLMA is an integral part of the daily schedule and plays an important role in the development of children's overall well-being. The Child Care and Early Years Act requires that children attending care in a licensed centre must participate in at least two hours of outdoor play daily, weather permitting.

TLMA recognizes the value of the learning experiences, developmental opportunities and health benefits that participating in outdoor play year round provides. Outdoor play time is used as an opportunity to expand on children's learning and encourage physical activity to support optimal success in the future. Both spontaneous and planned learning experiences are implemented during this time.

It is important that children be dressed for the various types of weather to ensure they can actively participate in the outdoor program. Please ensure that adequate and suitable clothing and footwear is provided year round for your child.

At times, due to the weather children's outdoor time may be extended or shortened to ensure that children are active, engaged and comfortable. Staff monitor the children's comfort and activity level in the varying weather conditions to determine the length of time children will remain outside. We strive to provide outdoor environments that provide children with various levels of activity to suit the time of year and weather. Extra drinking water, water activities and additional quiet experiences in the shade are implemented during the summer and more physically active, high energy experiences are implemented during the colder winter months.

TLMA implements sun safety practices and encourages parents to provide child safe sunscreen and protective clothing such as a wide-brimmed hat for outdoor times. The staff will assist children to apply sunscreen to the exposed skin areas prior to going outside.

## **Weather Advisories - Smog/Heat Or Cold/Wind-Chill Alerts**

During very hot or cold months, TLMA policy on outdoor time is as follows. The Supervisor informs the day care staff of any broadcast advisories. If there is an extreme weather alert, the children's outdoor time is shortened or canceled. During the summer months, parents are responsible for applying sunscreen in the morning prior to dropping off their children at the TLMA centre. The staff will re-apply as needed throughout the day. We will do our best to limit outdoor time during hot weather to before and after 4:00 p.m. - when the sun is less intense.

Clothing in the summer should include:

- sun hat or cap, bathing suit, towel, water shoes, sunscreen (Please label with child's name) fully enclosed rubber soled shoe, such as, running shoes or "running sandals" Please ensure your child has these on a daily basis.

Clothing in the winter should include:

- Waterproof gloves or mittens, neck warmer, snow pants, winter hat, boots, winter coat. Also provide a pair of indoor shoes - boots are not permitted indoors.

If the weather reaches below -15°C with windshield, outdoor time is canceled.

## **Community Walks**

TLMA is an integral part of the local community and strives to implement a variety of learning experiences for children to explore and participate in their community through walks to local sites. Parents will be notified of planned local walks on the individual room Program Plans.

We encourage parents to share suggestions and resources within the community that the children may enjoy exploring. Parents will be consulted and notified in advance of all off-site excursions during the planning phase and will be provided with a consent form to complete prior to their child's participation.

## **Your Child's Nutrition at TLMA**

Our programs offer a variety of nutritious foods for lunch, morning and afternoon snacks. Foods selected promote good health and give each child the opportunity to enjoy new foods as good eating habits are established. Menus incorporate the healthy eating guidelines of Canada's Food Guide and meet the CCEYA regulations. Weekly menus are posted in

advance for your information. A Sample Menu is included in your Parent Handbook Package.

Meal times for all children are viewed as an opportunity for positive and social interaction. Meal times also provide learning experiences and support the development of self-help skills; such as, serving their own lunches, feeding themselves, etc.

Infants are fed according to their individual needs. We will provide you with an Individual Feeding Form for you to identify the foods and consistency of foods that your child is able to eat. This document will be reviewed with you regularly for updates and changes as your child grows and develops. If your infant is on expressed breast milk or formula, you will need to provide a prepared bottle for each feeding at the centre.

If your child has a health related, special diet or any food related allergies, please let the centre know immediately so that arrangements can be made to provide an alternate food item or menu.

Parents must provide written instructions from a medical practitioner explaining the details of the health related food restriction or allergy. This information will be kept in the child's file and updated when necessary. These arrangements need to be made prior to starting.

Parents who choose to provide food for their child must ensure that TLMA food restrictions are met and that the food is clearly labeled with the child's name. The centre will ensure the food is stored safely and served to your child at the appropriate meal time. Parents may only provide food for their own children, all food ingredients used including the place of purchase will be required to be shared daily with the staff or supervisor and needs to be recorded on our substitution lists.

## **Birthday Snacks**

In order to ensure that all children's food allergies and restrictions are met, the centre will provide a cake to acknowledge and celebrate each child's birthday. TLMA will not accept any outside food, for celebrations you may send a loot bag but it needs to be a nonfood item. Ex: no sweets or baked goods.

Please be advised that we are a **nut-free environment**. Please read food labels carefully and do not send them to the centre if they may contain any nuts. We will double check all items and ensure they comply with our standards. If it has a long list of modified ingredients that we cannot pronounce, it will probably not be served.

Please see the attachment for details [Birthday Celebrations Guidelines](#)

## **Footwear**

We request that all children wear comfortable sturdy, non marking, well-fitting shoes as there will be plenty of movement and active play. Running shoes are always best. We do ask that **everybody** removes their “outdoor shoes” in the front lobby to help us keep our school clean. All footwear needs to be labeled with your child’s name or initials.

## **A Change of Clothing**

Please send in an extra set of seasonally appropriate clothing. Extra clothes should be placed in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child’s name. Please ensure there are at least 2 sets of each clothing ex. 2 socks, 2 pants, 2 tops. They will be used in case they get dirty outside, have a spill at lunch, or the occasional bathroom accident. All loose items should be labeled with your child’s name. Soiled clothing will be sent home at the end of the day.

We generally begin toilet training the children at 18 months of age when they begin in the toddler classroom. We are ready to help with training as soon as you and your child are ready. We will need 4 changes of clothes and a commitment to continue the training at home to begin. We have an excellent list of toileting tips if you need them.

Please note we are not equipped with diapering facilities in the Casa classroom. We do understand that occasional accidents happen. However, children who are over 30 months old, and are still wearing diapers, will be moved up to Casa on a case by case basis. Your child may be required to remain in the toddler classroom until they are fully toilet-trained. Again, as soon as you are ready, we are ready to help with toileting.

## **Diapers and Wipes**

If your child is not yet toiletated, please bring in a large amount of diapers and wipes for us to keep on hand. These will only be used for your child. As your supply gets low, our teachers will notify you to bring more in.

In the infant room, all supplies of breast milk or formula, bottles, diaper cream etc needs to be labeled with your child's name.

## **Nap Time**

Casa and toddler students have a daily rest time of 2 hours daily between 12:30 pm and 2:30 p.m. Each child will be provided with their own individual cot and sheet. We ask that you provide a blanket for nap time as well as any comforting soft item that your child may need to rest easily i.e. stuffed animal, soother, etc. All children will rest for 1 hour after, and if they wake up there is a 1 hour quiet time where they will engage in quiet activities.

## **Photos**

We like to take a lot of photos and videos at Tree of Life Montessori Academy. Both group and individual photos are posted daily on our website board which is Transparent Classroom for you to see. We don't do a lot of advertising, but we do like to utilize social media which creates buzz, keeps our school full, and lets us do our thing. We might do promo videos for the school, Montessori tutorials.

All photos are used for documentation of learning purposes, and to create memories with their class peers. A consent form will be filled out upon registration if you would like your child's photos shared on social media or if you want your child to not be a part of the photos and videos.

## **Smoke Free Policy**

Smoking (or holding a lit cigarette or vape pen) is prohibited in all areas of Tree of Life Montessori Academy including the outdoor play areas, pathways, and parking areas whether children are present or not.

## **When Your Child is Sick**

Each day when your child is dropped off at the centre staff are required to do a basic health check to ensure your child is able to participate in the program that day. Please let the staff know at this time an update on your child. If your child is not well, we encourage you to keep them at home or visit a medical practitioner if necessary.

Staff practice daily infection control measures to prevent and manage illness to the best of our ability. We encourage you to do the same by using the hand sanitizer at the Centre and by keeping your child at home when they are not well. If your child is showing ill symptoms at home (e.g. unexplained rash, fever, vomiting, diarrhea), your child should not attend care and

should remain home, usually 24 hours symptom free without acetaminophen or until they are well enough to return and participate in the program.

Should your child become sick at the centre, the staff will monitor the child and will inform you. Depending on the type of illness, the staff or Centre Supervisor may contact you to arrange for the child to be picked up for their own well-being. When your child is returning to care after having a serious illness or communicable disease, we will require a note from your medical practitioner to confirm that the child is free from infection. These practices support a health and safe environment for children, parents, staff and visitors to the Centre. It is common for some children to be more susceptible to illness in the first few months of attendance. We recognize that this can be concerning and stressful for parents; therefore, we encourage you to ensure that you have plans in place in the event that your child may not be able to attend care. With time, most children develop immunity and adjust to being in a group environment.

For more information regarding common communicable disease and exclusion times, please visit the [Toronto Public Health](#) website or speak to the Centre Supervisor. If Toronto Public Health declares the centre to be in outbreak, the sick child will not be able to attend care for **48 hours** of being symptom free.

## Medication

- If your child requires medication, the centre staff will administer prescription medication. Prescription medication must be provided in the original bottle/packaging, clearly labeled with the prescription label on it, with your child's name, Doctor information and instructions for administering. Parents must complete and sign the appropriate medication administration form before the medication can be administered by our staff.
- Non-prescription or over the counter medication must be accompanied by a written prescription by a medical practitioner.
- A new medication administration form will need to be completed and signed for any changes in medication or medication instructions.
- For the safety of the children, we ask that parents hand any medication directly to the staff so that it can be securely stored away from the children's reach.
- Parents are required to take home any expired medication that is no longer to be administered to the child at the centre or for disposal at a pharmacy.
- Puffers that are given on a regular basis can stay at the centre, but they will only be administered according to the prescribed label and you need to communicate with the staff or supervisor on start and stop dates. Only supervisors or designates will administer these medications.

## **Individual Medical Plan**

An Individual Medical Plan will be developed and put in place for any child requiring medication for a chronic or acute condition or diagnosis or who requires medication on an emergency basis. All individual medical plans will be developed in partnership with the child's parent/guardian. All plans will be reviewed and signed off annually or as changes are made by all employees, students, and volunteers.

## **Allergies and Anaphylactic Allergies**

- If your child has an allergy that requires the administration of an auto-injector, please notify the supervisor immediately to ensure that the necessary documentation and actions are taken to ensure your child's health and safety. You will be required to provide written and specific details of your child's allergy and symptoms of an allergy reaction from a medical practitioner including a prescribed auto-injector. All allergies will be listed and posted in each of the programs or wherever children go. All employees are aware and can respond appropriately to any potential reactions. A copy of the TLMA Anaphylaxis Policy and Procedure and all required documents will be provided to you.
- To ensure the well-being of children who have anaphylactic allergies, it is imperative that an auto-injector is available at the centre at all times, the staff will keep it in their emergency bags to ensure it is with the child and staff at all times.
- A child, who requires an auto-injector due to a severe allergy, will not be accepted into care without their prescribed and current auto-injector. If a child no longer requires an auto-injector, a note from a medical practitioner confirming this information will be required. These practices are in place for the health and safety of your child.

## **A Respectful Environment**

We believe that all children and adults have the right to feel safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party. TLMA expects that all employees, parents and persons who are doing business with us conduct themselves in a respectful manner. This is an expectation of all persons entering into TLMA facilities.

If at any point a parent/guardian or employee feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

Failure to adhere to this expectation may result in denied access to the center.

## **Parental Involvement**

- If you have any questions after reading this handbook, please feel free to ask. Please also keep up to date with all communication that is sent through email. These notices will keep you informed of the school events and changes. If you are not receiving the notices, please just let us know so we can add you to the list.
- When we hold special events, such as concerts, information nights, and workshops, please do your best to attend. We understand that not everyone is able to be present, but we do see the best result in your child's education when you attend these events. Your involvement is crucial for your child's success.

## **Waitlist / Registration Policy**

TLMA develops a waitlist and registration policy to facilitate families' access to our programs in accordance with TLMA's obligations under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 and its regulations, and TLMA's Privacy Policy.

### **Procedures**

- Parents who wish to enroll their child in a TLMA program must register their child by completing a registration form and submitting an annual registration fee (\$250.00). If there is availability in the program that the parent is requesting, confirmation will take place for the program.
- If there is no space available in the program that the parent is requesting, the child is automatically placed on the waitlist for that program.
- TLMA does not charge any fees or request any deposits for registration on a waitlist or removal from a waitlist.
- Space in a TLMA program is offered to waitlisted parents in accordance with priority. Children are placed numerically on the waitlist based on the date and time that the registration is received by TLMA. Children currently enrolled in a TLMA program will have priority, and move to the top of the waitlist, over a child who is not currently registered in a TLMA program, if they wish to add another program or add a sibling at a later date.
- When a space in a program becomes available, parents will be notified via phone call or email. The above-noted priority system is subject only to TLMA's policy to give higher priority to children in extenuating circumstances who require urgent care, such as

children who are in care of a Children's Aid Society.

- Parents may inquire with respect to their waitlist status at any time by contacting the Tree of Life Montessori Academy. TLMA will disclose the child's position on the waitlist to parents who have requested information about their status.

### **Removal from a waitlist**

Every three months from the date of registration, parents on the waiting list will receive a phone call asking them whether they would like to remain or be removed from the waiting list. If, after having been removed from a TLMA waitlist, parents' circumstances change, and they wish to return to a TLMA program, the parents must contact the centre and re-register for the programs they require.

### **Canceling a Waitlist Registration**

Families who wish to cancel their registration on a waitlist must submit a request through a phone call or via email to the centre.

### **Privacy**

The TLMA waitlisted registrations are secured in the centre office and are covered under the TLMA privacy policy.

### **Anaphylactic Policy and Procedures**

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that can be life-threatening. It requires avoidance strategies and immediate response in the event of an emergency. These policies and procedures are intended to help meet the needs and save the lives of children with severe allergies and provide relevant and important information on anaphylaxis to parents, staff, students, volunteers and visitors at the child care centre.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for an anaphylactic policy for child care centres. The requirements set out in this policy align with Sabrina's Law, 2005.

#### **Individualized Plans and Emergency Procedures for Children with Life-Threatening/Anaphylactic Allergies**

- Before attending the TLMA, the supervisor/designate will meet with the parent of a child to obtain information about any medical conditions, including whether the child is at risk of having or has anaphylaxis.

- Before a child attends the centre or upon discovering that a child has an anaphylactic allergy, an individualized plan and emergency procedures will be developed for each child with anaphylaxis in consultation and collaboration with the child's parent, and any regulated health professional who is involved in the child's care that the parent believes should be included in the consultation.
- All individualized plans and emergency procedures will include a description of symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction that are specific to the child and the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency based on the severity of the child's symptoms.
- The individualized plan and emergency procedures for each child will include information for those who are in direct contact with the child on a regular basis about the type of allergy, monitoring and avoidance strategies and appropriate treatment.
- All individualized plans and emergency procedures will be made readily accessible at all times to all staff, students and volunteers at the child care centre and will be kept in a case, fanny pack, or small backpack that can easily be carried by the child or staff. They will also be kept in the attendance binder, posted in the room, kept with the epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen), and in the child's file.
- **All** individualized plans and emergency procedures will be reviewed with a parent of the child annually to ensure the information is current and up to date.
- Every child's EpiPen must be carried everywhere the child goes.

### Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Anaphylactic Allergens

- The following strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents must be followed at all times by employees, students and volunteers at the child care centre.
- Do not serve foods where its ingredients are not known.
- Do not serve items with 'may contain' warnings on the label in a room where there is a child who has an individualized plan and emergency procedures specifying those allergens.
- Ask the caterer or cook to provide the known ingredients for all food provided. The ingredients will be reviewed before food is served to children to verify that causative agents are not served to children with anaphylactic allergies.
  - In cases where a child has food allergies and the meals and snacks provided by the TLMA cannot meet the child's needs, ask the child's parent to supply snacks/meals for their child. All written instructions for diet provided by a parent will be implemented.
- Where food is provided from home for children, ensure that appropriate supervision of children is maintained so that food is not shared or exchanged.
- Encourage parents who serve foods containing allergens at home to ensure their child

has been rid of the allergens prior to attending the centre (e.g. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)

- Do not use craft/sensory materials and toys that have known allergens on the labels.
- Share information about anaphylaxis, strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens and treatment with all families enrolled in the child care centre.
- Make sure each child's individual plan and emergency procedure are kept-up-to-date and that all staff, students, and volunteers are trained on the plans.
- Refer to the allergy list and ensure that it is up to date and implemented.
- Update staff, students, and volunteers when changes to a child's allergies, signs and symptoms, and treatment occur and review all updates to individualized plans and emergency procedures.
- Update families when changes to allergies occur while maintaining the confidentiality of children.
- Update or revise and implement the strategies in this policy depending on the allergies of children enrolled at the centre.

#### Rules for Parents Who Send Food with their Child

- Ensure that parents label food brought to the TLMA with the child's full name and if applicable, the date the food arrived at the centre.
- Parents must advise TLMA of all ingredients in food supplied by the parent or any ingredients to which children may be allergic.
- Parents must record any food substitutions in the Food Substitution Log each time they bring food for their child.

For a full version of the TLMA Anaphylactic Policy and Procedure, visit [treeoflifemontessoriacademy.net](http://treeoflifemontessoriacademy.net) or request a printed copy from the TLMA center administration office.

## **Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

### **General**

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.
- All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Tree of Life Montessori Academy (TLMA) and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.
- Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.
- An initial response to an issue or concern may be provided to parents/guardians within 2-5 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.
- Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

## **Conduct**

Tree of Life Montessori Academy 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, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

### Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is 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 will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly. Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit the Child Welfare Government Site.

## **Duty to Report**

Every person in Ontario is required under the Child and Family Services Act to report his/her belief that a child may be in need of protection: "A person who believes, on reasonable grounds, that a child is, or may be in need of protection shall forthwith report the belief and information, upon which it is based, to a society."

The legislation specifically requires individuals who perform professional or official duties with respect to children such as the "operator or employee of a day nursery" to report suspicions of child abuse. If in the course of their professional duties, the supervisor and/or staff of the centre have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may have been abused, the suspicion, and the information upon which that suspicion is based, must be reported immediately to a Children's Aid Society.

A professional, who works with children, can be charged and fined for failing to report. It is the responsibility of the child protection agency to investigate and follow-up on the situation, as

necessary.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected while in care, the parent will be advised by the TLMA employee to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly. Any concern or complaint made by a parent or visitor that **suggests an allegation of abuse will be reported to a local Children's Aid Society by the TLMA** employee who received the complaint.

## **Confidentiality**

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff and students, 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 a Children's Aid Society).

For a full version of the TLMA Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures, visit [treeoflifemontessoriacademy.net](http://treeoflifemontessoriacademy.net) or request a printed copy from the TLMA center administration office.

## **Supervision of Students and Volunteers Policy**

Tree of Life Montessori Academy welcomes both placement students and volunteers into the various programs offered in our child care program. We believe it is a valuable part in gaining experience in a child care environment. Volunteers and students also play an important role in supporting staff in the daily operation of child care programs.

TLMA Supervision of Students and Volunteers Policy is developed to provide supervising staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Students and volunteers will always be supervised by an employee and never permitted to be alone with any child or group of children who receive child care. Students and volunteers will not be counted in staff to child ratios.

Student and Volunteer Supervision Procedures: Roles and Responsibilities

### **The TLMA must:**

- Ensure that all applicable policies, procedures and individual plans are reviewed with students and/or volunteers before they start their educational placement or begin volunteering, annually thereafter and when changes occur to the policies, procedures and individualized plans to support appropriate implementation.
- Ensure that all students and/or volunteers have been trained on each child's individualized plan, medical plans and anaphylaxis plan for all the children.

- Ensure that all students and/or volunteers have a health assessment and immunization as directed by the local medical officer of health.
- Ensure that a vulnerable sector check (VSC) is provided within 6 months of start. The student and/or volunteer will be required to sign off on Annual Offense Declarations and kept on file for all students and/or volunteers in accordance with the child care centre's criminal reference check policy and procedures and Ontario Regulation 137/15.
- Ensure that expectations are reviewed with students and/or volunteers including, but not limited to
  - how to report their absence;
  - how to report concerns about the program;
  - Roles and responsibilities while on duty
- Inform students and/or volunteers that they are never to be included in staff to child ratios or left alone with children.
- Appoint supervising staff to the students and/or volunteers, and inform them of their supervisory responsibilities.
- Inform students and/or volunteers of their duty to report suspected child abuse or neglect under the Child and Family Services Act.

**The supervising staff must:**

- Ensure that students/volunteers are never included in staff to child ratios.
- Ensure that students/volunteers are supervised at all times and never left alone with children.
- Introduce students and/or volunteers to parents/guardians.
- Provide an environment that facilitates and supports students' and/or volunteers' learning and professional development.
- Provide students and/or volunteers with clear expectations of the program in accordance with the established program statement and program statement implementation policy.
- Provide students and/or volunteers with feedback on their performance.
- Work collaboratively with the student's practicum supervising teacher.
- Monitor and notify the centre supervisor/director of any student and or volunteer misconduct or contraventions with the centre's policies, procedures, prohibited practices or individual plans (where applicable) in accordance with the child care centre's written process for monitoring compliance and contraventions.

**Students and/or volunteers must:**

- Maintain professionalism and confidentiality at all times, unless otherwise required to implement a policy, procedure or individualized plan.
- Notify the supervisor or designate if they have been left alone with children or have any other

concerns about the child care program (e.g. regarding staff conduct, program statement implementation, the safety and well-being of children, etc.).

- Submit all required information and documentation to the licensee, supervisor or designate prior to commencing placement or volunteering, such as a valid VSC, health assessment and immunization.
- Review and implement all required policies, procedures and individualized plans, and sign and date a record of review, where required.
- Review allergy lists and dietary restrictions and ensure they are implemented.
- Respond and act on the feedback and recommendations of supervising staff, as appropriate.
- Report any allegations/concerns as per the “Duty to Report” under the *Child and Family Services Act*
- Complete offense declarations annually, no later than 15 days after the anniversary date of the last VSC or offense declaration (whichever is most recent) in accordance with the child care centre’s criminal reference check policy.
- Provide an offense declaration to the supervisor/designate as soon as possible any time they have been convicted of a Criminal Code (Canada) offense

## **Emergency Management Policy**

In the event of an emergency, all parents will be contacted immediately via email and/or SMS. A copy of our entire Emergency Management Policy is available to view on our website [treeoflifemontessori.net](http://treeoflifemontessori.net) or request a printed copy from the TLMA center administration office.

## **Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy**

TLMA doors open at 7AM and close at 6PM. Please use the front door for entry and please use the buzzer at the bottom of the stairs and staff will open the door for you, take your child(ren) inside, and sign them in!

Accepting a child into care TLMA must:

1. Document the time of arrival on the attendance.
2. Ask the parent if the pick-up procedure is the same or if authorized individuals will be picking up the child.
3. Note if any supplies for the child needs replenishing.
4. Ask the parent/guardian how the child is doing today!

Where a child in care has not arrived as expected

TLMA staff must:

1. Inform Centre Supervisor, staff and/or Supervisor will call family to confirm if the child will still be coming in or if the child will be absent for the day.
2. Staff and/or Centre supervisor must confirm with family any absences for the child. 3. Authorized/Emergency contacts will be contacted if parent/guardian cannot be reached, please ensure to remind contacts to bring photo ID for staff to verify who they are, no child will be released if they are unable to confirm who they are

### **Releasing a child from care**

TLMA supervising staff must:

1. **Only** release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to.
2. Ask and check the authorized persons photo identification upon pick-up, in the case that an authorized person is picking up that day.
3. Confirm with another staff member if the individual picking up the child is on the child's authorized pick-up list, if the staff does not know the individual.

### **Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)**

TLMA staff must:

1. Call the parent/guardian after 15 minutes and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
2. Proceed with contacting the authorized person(s) on the child's file to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre. This is if the authorized pick-up is supposed to pick-up the child.
3. Shall contact emergency contacts if the parent/guardian and the authorized people cannot be reached.
4. Ensure to write all messages or changes in your classroom journal

### **Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed**

TLMA must:

1. Ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. Contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
3. Contact Emergency contact listed on the child's file, after completion of step 1 and 2 listed above.
4. Contact CAS if no contact with the family has been made.

### **Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures**

TLMA staff must:

1. Only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adults. Under no circumstances will the children be released from care to walk home alone. If the person is under 18 years of age they cannot be released. Only adults can pick up.

## **Snow Day Policy**

This policy outlines the procedures for closures or schedule changes due to severe winter weather, ensuring the safety of children, families, and staff.

### **Closure Determination**

Tree of Life Montessori Academy may close, delay opening, or operate with reduced services due to extreme weather conditions. Decisions will be based on:

- Severe snowfall, ice storms, or extreme cold warnings issued by Environment Canada.
- Closure of local school boards (TDSB, TCDSB) and public transportation disruptions.
- The safety of staff and families traveling to and from the center.

### **Notification Procedure**

- Closure or delayed opening will be communicated by **6:30 AM** via:
  - Email and/or text message to all registered families.
  - A notice on our website and social media pages.
  - Voicemail update on the center's phone line.

### **Late Openings & Early Closures**

- If a delayed opening is necessary, we will open by **9:00 AM**, subject to weather conditions.
- If an early closure is required, parents will be notified as soon as possible and are expected to pick up their children within **two hours** of notification.

### **Fee & Refund Policy**

- **No refunds, credits, or make-up days** will be provided for weather-related closures.
- Regular fees apply, as operational costs remain.

### **Parent & Staff Responsibilities**

- Parents should have an emergency backup plan for childcare on snow days.
- Staff are expected to check for updates and notify the center of any travel delays.

### **Exceptional Circumstances**

In extreme cases (e.g., prolonged power outages, severe emergency warnings), extended closures may be necessary. Families will be kept informed with ongoing updates.

## **Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Program**

At Tree of Life Montessori Academy, we are proud to participate in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program. This initiative, introduced by the Government of Canada, aims to make high-quality childcare more affordable for families across the country.

### **What is CWELCC?**

The CWELCC program is part of a national strategy to reduce childcare fees and increase accessibility to early learning and child care services for children under six years old. The program's primary goals include:

- Reducing childcare fees for parents and guardians
- Enhancing the quality of early learning programs
- Supporting the professional development of educators
- Expanding access to childcare spaces

### **How Does CWELCC Benefit You?**

Participation in CWELCC allows us to provide the following benefits:

1. *Fee Reductions*: Eligible families will receive reductions in childcare fees for children under

the age of six. Fee reductions will occur incrementally, with the ultimate goal of achieving an average of \$10 per day for childcare by 2026.

2. *High-Quality Programming*:Funding from the CWELCC program helps us maintain and improve the quality of our Montessori-based curriculum, ensuring your child receives the best care and education.

3. *Inclusive Access*:We are committed to providing an inclusive environment and expanding our services to welcome more families into our community.

### **Eligibility**

Families with children under six years old enrolled at Tree of Life Montessori Academy are eligible for the CWELCC fee reduction program. Specific details about eligibility criteria and reductions will be communicated directly to families.

### **Fee Adjustments and Billing**

Eligible families will see the fee reductions reflected in their monthly invoices. Adjustments will be made automatically based on the program's funding schedule. If you have questions about your fees or eligibility, please contact our administration team.

### **Your Role as Parents**

To ensure your family can benefit from the CWELCC program:  
Provide accurate and up-to-date information during registration.  
Notify us of any changes in your family's circumstances that may affect eligibility.  
Stay informed about program updates shared by the Academy.

### **Contact Us**

If you have any questions about the CWELCC program and how it applies to your family, please feel free to contact us at [info@treeoflifemontessori.net](mailto:info@treeoflifemontessori.net)  
We are here to assist you in understanding and benefiting from this program.