

WELCOME TO
OUR CHILDREN'S CENTRE
ARBUTUS (INFANT) PROGRAM

*Located at 4001 Seymour Place
Victoria, B.C.*

Phone : 250-475 – 6227

E-mail address : infant@ourchildrenscentre.com

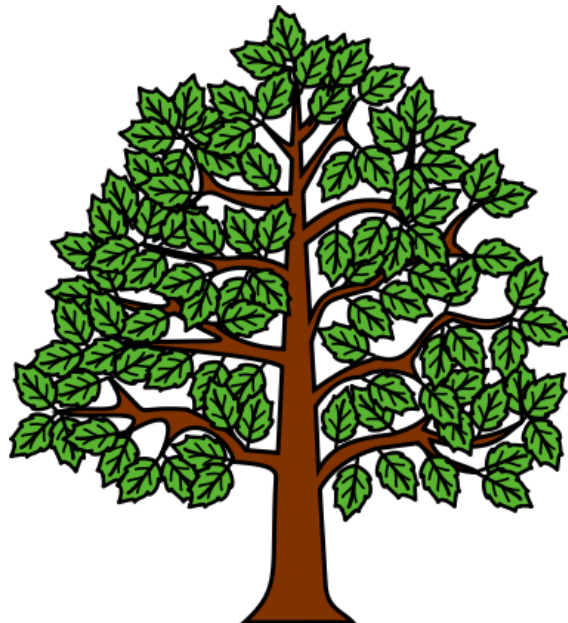


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INTRODUCTION:

Our Children's Centre Society acknowledges that the land on which we live, work, play, and learn is within the traditional territories of the Coast Salish and belongs to the Lekwungen (Songhees, Esquimalt) and WSANEC communities. We are grateful to reside and thrive on their land.

Our Children's Centre Society first began operating in February of 1992 to offer quality, accessible childcare primarily for the children of BC Buildings Corporation employees. Since that time daycare has been made available to any members of the general public. Our Children's Centre (OCC) provides for 45 full-time childcare spaces divided between the Infant, Toddler and Preschool Programs.

In the Infant Program, we have 8 full-time spaces for infants cared for by two primary educators and a Team Lead.

Please note the pronouns “their”, “they” and “them” in this document are used to indicate both an individual child and parent/guardian as well as children and multiple family members.

PROGRAM GOALS

Our Children's Centre Society (OCCS) is committed to meeting the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of your child(ren). Our objectives are to assist infants in developing at their own rate in a safe, nurturing, supportive, and respectful environment. We work in partnership with parents to provide a high level of quality care for all the children and follow, to the best of our ability, the Province of British Columbia's Early Learning Framework; you can check-out this document by clicking on the link:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/early-learning/teach/early-learning-framework>.

Our program aims to meet your child's needs in a consistent and progressive manner. Opportunities that enhance children's individual development through exploration and social experiences are many and varied at OCC.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that infants need a nurturing, consistent, and stimulating environment in which to develop and practice new skills. The Infant Program provides innovative programming within a caring learning environment. Fun and enjoyment, as well as mutual trust and respect for all involved in the Infant Program are valued here. Specifically, we feel it is important that each educator and family member informs infants of his/her/their departure. Our talking to children about what is going on around them and letting each child know about up-coming routines (e.g., diapering and nap time) are essential communications at OCC.

We believe that repeatedly offering favorite activities and play overall are important for the infants' development and mastery of emotion identification, self-regulation, language, intellectual, social, and motor skills. That infants learn best when they can move freely - "to do what they can do" – is a belief shared by the educators in the Infant Program. We give children choices as often as possible then observe, reflect and promote learning based on their response to these child-directed decisions. Allowing children to perfect existing abilities is more important than pushing infants to develop new skills before they are ready. Through positive reinforcement, a view of the self as a unique and valuable individual is encouraged.

We provide opportunities for children to bond with all the educators involved in the Infant Program. Likewise, we all strive to develop a mutually supportive relationship with every family.

We believe that following each child's individual routine to the best of our ability is extremely important. Therefore, we encourage families to communicate any information that they believe is vital in ensuring their infant's needs are met; parents and other caregivers should communicate any information, questions or concerns to the team Lead, or, if unavailable, any other Infant Program employee. We value ALL your communications!

Our **open-door policy** encourages parents to spend time with their child in the Infant Program. While it is not a requirement that you let us know in advance of your visit, informing us of your plans before you arrive will ensure your trip is a rewarding one (e.g., that we are not on an outing and that your child is awake). We encourage visiting adults to sit on the floor to help our children feel at ease.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

After your child has been admitted into the Infant Program and before starting daycare, you will be provided with an orientation and paperwork to fill-out. This

mandatory meeting, held at a time that is convenient for your family, will allow us to learn about your child's individual routine (e.g., feeding, napping, diapering), attachment, and learning needs. Please ensure your child's immunizations are up-to-date and all registration and related forms are completed and brought to OCC before your child starts care.

GRADUAL ENTRY

As this may be one of the first experiences your child has away from their home, gradual entry into the program is required. This process is designed to help your child become familiar with our routines and promote a successful transition to care. Visits generally start one month prior to when daycare is needed. Initially and ideally, you and your child will spend ½ hour to an hour in-length in the Infant Program rooms or yard with each visit gradually increasing to eventually include a snack and morning nap. The half-day maximum for gradual entry days is set to best ensure your child has a successful introduction to the centre and the needs (e.g., crib availability*, comfort level around unfamiliar people, etc.) of clients currently in care are met. An Infant Program educator will coordinate with you your gradual entry schedule.

To help your child and you become familiar with the Infant Program and all who attend here, you will be asked to sit on the floor with your child and allow them to explore. When you and your child are together in the same Infant Program room, diapering and feeding are your responsibility. ***Please note that in order to follow licensing requirements, the parent/guardian must be on the premises during the Gradual Entry process.***

The suggested schedule for gradual entry into the Infant Program is.:

Week 1: Meet and greet with the parent/guardian.

Week 2: In order for the child to build a relationship with the educators, the parent/guardian would help their child feel comfortable in the indoor or outside Infant Program space and preferably stay with their child for approximately 1- 1 ½ hours.

Week 3: After assisting their child to feel safe and comfortable in the Infant Program space, the parent/guardian “steps away” from the program for a longer period of time (i.e., 1 – 2 hours); this timeframe would ideally include the snack portion of our routine.

Week 4: The child would stay for the whole morning routine: free play, snack-offering and, if a crib is available, naptime

PROGRAM

The daycare schedule in the Infant Program includes one morning and one afternoon snack time, one or two naps (depending on the needs of each individual child) and lunch interspersed with indoor and outdoor free play and exploratory experiences. All aspects of our schedule are offered to promote the emotional, social, intellectual, and physical needs of the children.

To the best of our ability, we try to provide food offerings and naps based on the needs of each individual child. Should your child be comforted by a stuffed animal, special blanket, or transitional toy, please feel free to bring this/these items for their naptime or ease of re-entering the Infant Program. To prevent concerns over sharing, as well as their loss or breakage, we request that other play items remain at home.

The children are encouraged and free to play and explore at their individual developmental levels. A variety of toys, materials, art supplies and sensory items are provided and exchanged for different objects on a regular basis both inside and out of doors. As children benefit from time spent outside regardless of weather conditions, please plan for your child to be outdoors in sunny, rainy and snowy conditions; please note we will do our best to ensure your child is prepared and comfortable outside (e.g., “sunscreened”, dressed in boots and rain pants, etc.). We frequently take the children on field trips to parks, Swan Lake, the nearest pet store, and other areas of interest. Emergency cards, a first aid kit and a cell phone are carried on these excursions.

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

It is to be expected that infants will struggle with how to cope with and express sadness, annoyance, irritation, anger, frustration, and worry as well as excitement and happiness; all are emotions that make us human! We believe every behavior presents an opportunity to learn. Very young children need guidance in learning socially acceptable behavior. Each emotionally charged situation allows us to explain feelings, encourage empathy and provide alternative solutions. Through setting, and explaining the reason behind, clear and consistent limits and then following through on these parameters by intercepting inappropriate behavior, we will help children gain confidence in their ability to safely handle challenging situations and learn problem-solving skills as well. We use a variety of guidance techniques in our everyday interactions with your child: promoting healthy behavior through positive reinforcement, role-modeling appropriate language by using “I” messages and positive comments, redirection, etc. Please note that the best way of specifically assisting an infant to learn safe and helpful coping skills will vary based on the child and the circumstances of the situation.

When you are in the company of your child, we ask that you be responsible for any diapering or feeding that is required by your infant during the visit. Following these measures ensures additional quality time for you and your child, eliminates any possible confusion your infant may feel about who is meeting their needs, and gives the educators extra time to spend with the rest of the children in-attendance.

CLOTHING/OTHER ITEMS FROM HOME

Please label all clothing and other personal belongings (e.g., blankets, stuffed animals etc.) and bring-in a photograph of your family that we can display in the playroom.

Please be mindful that your child's clothing may get stained and dirty at daycare and plan for your child to be dressed accordingly. Parents need to supply disposable diapers, and at least 2 extra changes of clothes for their child. Soiled pants, shirts, socks, snow, and rain gear, etc. will be sent home for laundering. Please consider supplying for your child the following:

For warm weather:

- Outdoor shoes, shorts, hats, t-shirts,
- Sunscreen. *

* Sunscreen is to be supplied by parents and administered by educators unless families request otherwise. The daycare keeps some of their own hypoallergenic, tear-free, and child-friendly sunscreen at the centre; this can be used on your child should they not have any (more left) of their own sunscreen product at the centre.

In Cold Weather:

- warm coats, non-absorbent footwear, mitts, warm hats, and mud suits.

SNACKS/LUNCHES

Parents are required to prepare at home and provide daily enough nutritious food and drink for 2 snack offerings and a lunch for their child. Brita filtered water is available here to refill water cups/bottles. Please cut all fruits and vegetables into bite-sized pieces and ensure other prepared meals are also sliced into manageable bites. To avoid allergens, please only bring to the daycare foods your child has already safely ingested at home in the past.

Any food that requires heating needs to be provided in a separate container. If you plan to bring small Bento boxes, please consider packing items from a variety of food groups in each box. In order that we can easily locate all of your child's snack and lunch items, please ensure all of your child's food can fit in one bag. Please also note that you

are welcome to leave at daycare extra non-perishable food - for days when your child needs these - in the space provided.

For the safety of the children, please clearly label with your child's name all bottles, paper, plastic and foil packages, loose fruit, and vegetables (e.g., bananas) and food containers. Please note that unlabeled food items may not be served to your child. Please also have bottles (e.g., of formula) prepared and ready to serve.

Birthdays or other celebrations

If you are planning to bring in a special shared snack* In celebration of your child's special day or other occasion, please inform staff at least 48 hours in advance. Following this measure will ensure we can inform families of the treat and thus allow their child to participate in this shared snack. Unfortunately, without 48 hours advance notice, we cannot guarantee that food items can be shared with others.

***Produce Policy. Please note that, except in circumstances involving a known allergic reaction, the Infant Program allows all fruits and vegetables to be served to all children. These food items include but are not limited to edibles harvested in our garden, as well as vegetables and fruit brought, for the specific purpose of sharing, by parents or guardians.**

HOURS OF OPERATION

OCC is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 A.M. – 5:30 P.M

Unless special permission is granted by the manager, infants should not be at OCC for longer than nine hours. Please refer to the OCC Policy Manual for information on late fee fines.

STAFF SHIFTS*

Opening shift: 7:00 am – 3:00 pm, suggested break 11:30 am – 12:00 pm

Middle shift: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, suggested break 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Late shift: 9:00 am – 5:30 pm, suggested break 1:00 – 2:00 pm

To accommodate the needs of individual children, the group as a whole and the program in-general, educators' workday hours and break times may change on a day-to-day basis.

* Please note that as per government-set licensing regulations, we must maintain a ratio of at least 1 educator per 4 infants. Substitute educators are hired when staff are ill or on holidays.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

When you arrive in the morning, please help your child get settled in the program (before you leave).

Please ensure the sign-in/out sheet is fully filled-in with all the required information. Except in extraordinary circumstances (e.g., to address pandemic safety concerns), you are responsible for putting your child's lunch, bottles, diapers, clothing and any other of their belongings in the appropriate refrigerator, basket, and cubby.

When leaving or retrieving your child, please make sure that a staff member is aware of your child's whereabouts and ensure the sign-in/sign-out form is completed. Unless an Infant Program educator has been notified by the parent of any changes, your child may only be picked up by a person whose name appears on the registration form or alternate contact list.

You must tell us in-person or prior to your child's retrieval if the "pick-up person" will be different from the one indicated on the sign-in/out sheet.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

There are many factors involved in ensuring an infant's optimum growth and development; good health is a particularly important one. Daycare is a very stimulating experience for young children and requires a great deal of energy. Infants who are ill require a relaxed atmosphere and more individual attention than the Infant Program can provide. If your infant is sick, please refrain from bringing them to daycare.

Staff must be informed of allergies, and health conditions that require special attention and notified as well if your infant has not slept through the night.

If a child becomes ill while in attendance in the centre, a parent or guardian will be called to pick up their child as soon as possible. If we cannot reach you, your alternate contact will be contacted. We must ensure that your child gets prompt, appropriate medical attention. Certain communicable diseases warrant return to daycare after a specified quarantine period; Appendix A* and/or your doctor or health nurse will advise you of this timeframe.

If your child's temperature drops below 101 degrees Fahrenheit without the assistance of fever-reducing medications and a note from your health care practitioner states a diagnosis of fever-related teething, your child may return for care in the Infant Program less than 24 hours after the fever's onset.

If your child is being administered health care provider-recommended antibiotics, parents must keep the child away from OCC for the first 24 hours of treatment each time the antibiotics are started. This measure must be followed regardless of whether the antibiotic has been used in the past.

*Please note: The criteria for exclusion is listed in Appendix A (at the end of this handbook). These protocols are based on the recommendations of the Capital Regional District Public Health Authorities and must be followed even if they differ from your physician's counsel; in other words, while it is understandable that a physician may consider only the individual child's health, we must ensure the safety of our group of children.

Prescription and non-prescription medication

Infant educators can only administer medication if the Permission to Administer Medication form has been clearly and completely filled-out. Please read the OCC Policy manual for more details.

Cleanliness/Safety Procedures

We may ask that you take your shoes off prior to entering the Infant Room. This measure may be needed to keep the carpet play area clean for our crawling infants.

We disinfect our toys and surfaces on an on-going basis throughout the day. A spray bottle of licensing approved hospital-grade sanitizer solution is used for the purpose of sanitizing toys that have been mouthed. We also encourage and model frequent hand washing using soap and water and drying hands thoroughly with a cloth or paper towel.

Please see Appendix B (at the end of this manual) for emergency evacuation procedures.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Communication and cooperation between parents and educators are important for the well-being of your child. Suggestions, questions, and discussions in the form of face-to-face contact, by phone, in written form or via e-mail* are welcomed by every staff member at the daycare. You are also welcome to arrange for a meeting with one of the educators in the Infant Program. Examples of our written communication include our snack/lunch and diapering/nap/sunscreen charts, communication books, and Dojo (a closed Facebook-like application) postings. All educators share the responsibility of posting on Class Dojo text and photos both to individual families and the Infant Program group. Please consider using this app. to share your reflections as well.

We welcome you to join us in our activities: picnics, field trips or during any of the routine play and exploratory experiences inside and outdoors! If you wish to take your child out for lunch, or for a walk during the day, please feel free to do so (but please inform us of approximate departure and return times).

As (the not-for-profit) Our Children's Centre Society is run by a board of directors composed of parents whose children attend the daycare, parental participation is necessary for daycare to exist here. If you are unable to serve on the board of directors, please consider helping in other ways (e.g., yard work party events, fund-raising etc.). Your involvement in parent-led endeavors, in addition to supporting the daycare centre can also help you connect with other parents and guardians: another valuable resource for child-related information and social/emotional support.

* Please only communicate non-urgent inquiries and information as emails are often only checked once per day.

MOVEMENT

A child's movement to the Toddler Program will be determined by the manager in conjunction with the Infant Program Team Lead. As each childcare space provides different opportunities, challenges and explorations for the children, the manager uses a variety of guidelines to help determine when a child will move to a program designed for older children. In addition to Toddler Program space availability, chronological age, and developmental readiness are considered in deciding when a child will be moving to care for older children. Consequently, an infant may be 2 years of age before starting their attendance in the Toddler Program.

When a space becomes available in the Toddler Program, the child deemed ready for care there will begin an internal gradual entry process. These steps provide the child with the opportunity to settle into the new program at a comfortable pace and mirror the child's initial gradual entry into the Infant Program. Parents will be advised as soon as possible of their child's scheduled move.

The following is an example* of the schedule for the internal gradual entry process:

Week 1: 8:45 – 11:15 (snack and indoor/outside play)

Week 2: 8:45 – 12:00 (snack, indoor/outdoor play, and lunch)

Week 3: 8:45 – 2:30 (snack, indoor/outdoor play, lunch, and nap)

Week 4: 8:45 – 3:20 (snack, indoor/outdoor play, lunch, nap, snack)

Your child's gradual entry will start approximately one month prior to their enrollment in the Toddler Room.

** All times are approximate, and routines will vary depending on the child's comfort level and daycare attendance, availability of extra space in the Toddler Program etc.*

BIOGRAPHIES

Jiejing 洁璟 (Lead)

Jiejing was born and raised in Shanghai, China, and made her journey to Victoria, Canada in 2018. Accompanied by her husband, Carlos, and their three-month-old son, Juan, Jiejing embraced the opportunity to work, play, and build a life in the beautiful lands of the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations.

With a Bachelor of Science Degree in Applied Psychology from Shanghai Normal University, specializing in educational psychology and human resources, Jiejing's passion for working with children began early in her career. It was during her time at an international kindergarten in Shanghai that she met her husband. Since then, Jiejing has

accumulated years of experience working with children of various age groups both abroad and in Canada.

Driven by her dedication to the well-being and growth of children, Jiejing pursued online studies to earn a Basic Early Childhood Educator certificate in B.C while working as a substitute educator at OCCS. Currently, she is actively working towards her Infant/Toddler certification. Witnessing the daily progress and accomplishments of children under her guidance brings Jiejing immense joy and fulfillment.

Growing up in a culturally diverse environment has instilled in Jiejing an open-minded perspective and a genuine curiosity about the world. She constantly seeks to broaden her horizons - eagerly observing and absorbing different ideas and perspectives. Jiejing's passion for multicultural understanding extends beyond her professional life, as she engages in hobbies such as painting, crochet, photography, and immersing herself in the study of diverse cultures and languages.

Jiejing strives to make a positive impact on the lives of children - guiding them as they grow, learn, and discover their unique talents and abilities. Jiejing's journey is an ongoing one, as she fearlessly appreciates new challenges and opportunities in her pursuit of providing the best possible care and education for young minds.

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Joanne

Joanne was born and raised in Victoria, BC. Joanne appreciates the Coast Salish/WSANEC lands that she works, plays and lives on and the knowledge that the First Peoples have shared with us. Joanne is an only child who was raised by her mom upon her dad's death. Her family includes blood relations and non-blood relations spread around the globe (in Canada, the USA and Europe). She is divorced and has 2 adult stepchildren that she is involved with.

Joanne has had her Early Childhood Certificate since 2004 but has been working in the field as an assistant since 1992. She has worked in a variety of settings: childminding, family childcare, infant centres, toddler centres, preschool centres and out of school care programs.

Joanne has babysat, volunteered at a hospital for children with diverse abilities, and was a Sunday school teacher. Joanne has been a member of Girl Guides of Canada most of her life. She belongs to a faith community. Joanne also loves to bake, cook, be in the outdoors, and do a variety of crafts.

Joanne decided to become an Early Childhood Educator when she was in her teens as she enjoys interacting with children and seeing them grow and develop into their own beings; this brings her great joy!

Frances

Write up Coming Soon!!

**APPENDIX A: CONDITIONS FOR EXCLUSION FROM THE INFANT
PROGRAM**

- **Acute cold** (most contagious during its initial stages) - with infected, thick, and coloured discharge, and/or present in conjunction with other symptoms (see below).
- **Communicable diseases** (chicken pox etc.) - must be reported to the daycare as soon as possible and Public Health Standards for the safe return to daycare must be observed.
- **Cough** - frequent bouts of 3-5 times per hour, if choking or vomiting results.
- **Diarrhea** (twice in one day) – after having one solid bowel movement, the child can return to care.
- **Fever (101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher)** - usually accompanied by general symptoms such as listlessness and may be an early sign of illness that requires a doctor's attention, child can return when the fever has remained below 101 degrees Fahrenheit for 24 hours without medication OR fewer hours if a doctor has diagnosed the cause as teething.
- **Inability to cope** – possibly lethargy-related, unable emotionally and/or physically to participate in the program.
- **Infected skin or eyes** - the child can return to care after being examined by a doctor and receiving medical clearance, conjunctivitis (pink eye) must be treated and eyes clear before the child may re-start daycare.
- **Lice** – the child may return to care after treatment with over-the-counter shampoo such as Nix or Kwellada (follow package directions carefully), and successful removal of all nits.
- **Vomiting** – as both vomiting and diarrhea are symptoms that may indicate a bacterial or viral (gastrointestinal) infection that is very easily passed on from one child to another the child can only return to care 24 hours after the last bout of sickness.

Please refer to the OCCS Policy Handbook for further information on Health Policies. If you require clarification on these or any other policies, please ask an Educator or the Manager.

APPENDIX B: INFANT ROOM EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

1. When the alarm rings, the Team Lead and/or other assigned educator begins transferring children into mobile emergency cribs.
2. The educator left in the room:
 - a) closes all the windows and doors and turns off all the lights.
 - b) takes the Sign-In sheet, and the emergency backpack (containing emergency cards, and First Aid kit),
 - c) does a quick last-minute check to ensure all children have been evacuated,
 - d) heads outside to help other staff members move the cribs to safety.
3. Staff and children exit through the side gate and proceed to the playground at the east end of the parking lot.
4. A second head count of the infants is conducted using the Sign-In sheet as the record of attendance.
5. Staff wait for further information from the applicable authority (e.g., fire department, police, manager etc.).
6. Children can only leave the daycare program once their parent or guardian has filled-out the Sign In sheet. Whether or not children can return to Our Children's Centre, will be determined by members of the staff.