

SUGAR-N-SPICE KIDDIE HAVEN INC.

Safety in the Community Policy

PURPOSE

The mission of Sugar N Spice Kiddie Haven Inc. (SNS) is to create a safe and rich learning environment for the children attending its centres.

The staff of SNS believe that children 'learn by doing'; the staff promote and provide opportunities for the children to fulfill their natural curiosity to understand and experience the world around them.

To ensure the children participate in positive experiences, safety is a priority for SNS staff when leaving the doors of the centres to explore its surrounding neighbourhoods, as well as the community in general.

As incidents and events can occur unexpectedly, it is important that SNS staff are prepared to assess emergency situations and to react quickly and appropriately.

This policy outlines best practices for the staff of SNS when planning field trips, as well as when out and about in the community. It is based on the concept of emergency preparedness which asserts that the more prepared, the better the outcome in an emergency situation.

This policy is not intended to replace the Enhanced Safety Plan of SNS which establishes clear and concise procedures for staff to ensure safe indoor and outdoor environments for the children attending its centres. The following policy is intended to enhance these guidelines and provide staff with additional information related to planning activities and supervising children in the community.

A. Planning:

SNS has developed the following policy in compliance with standards for child care as listed in The Best Practices Licensing Manual for Early Learning and Child Care Centres (herein referred to as the Licensing Manual). The Licensing Manual provides an overview of the child care standards related to outings and cites relevant sections of *The Community Child Care Standards Act (CCSA)*.

Section 6(8) of the CCSA states:

- A licensee who takes the children on outings away from the licensee's child care centre shall:
- (a) obtain permission from the child's parent or guardian before taking a child on an outing;
 - (b) give 24 hours notice to the child's parent or guardian of an outing that requires transportation; and
 - (c) take the information referred to in clauses (1)(a), (b), (c), (e), (f), and (g) on an outing.

When planning activities in the community, SNS staff are to give consideration to the type of outing or field trip, parental consent, the size of the group leaving the centre, transportation, parent reminders, and volunteer involvement.

- a) **The type of outing or field trip** – Staff are to identify outings and field trips that will provide positive learning experiences, and that are beneficial to the health, safety, and well-being of the children. To this end, staff will consider:
- the purpose/goals of the outing or field trip
 - the benefit for those scheduled to attend (children, staff, volunteers)
 - if the outing or field trip is age appropriate
 - if the location and/or planned activity is deemed safe in general
 - if the outing or field trip is approved by the Executive/Assistant Director

If the staff of SNS have not previously attended the location of the field trip, they may choose to visit the site ahead of time in order to familiarize themselves with the surroundings prior to arriving, to assess any safety issues, to find out if there are any rules that must be followed while visiting the site, to determine if there is an ideal time to visit in order to avoid large crowds, to identify eating areas and/or restrooms, etc.

Staff should also determine if any additional planning is needed for the outing or field trip in order to accommodate children who have special needs and/or specific health care concerns (including allergies).

If SNS staff decide to organize an on-site field trip, i.e., inviting an entertainer to attend a centre, the same degree of consideration will be given to the purpose/intent of the event and the safety of the children as noted above for activities that are intended to occur in the community. Refer to Appendix B of this policy for information on best practices for staff during specific types of incidents/emergencies that may occur during events held in SNS centres.

- b) **Parental consent** – The Licensing Manual indicates that parents must be advised of each outing or field trip planned by child care staff, the method of transportation to be used, as well as the supervision to be provided. SNS staff will ensure that parents of the children to participate in the outing or field trip are provided with adequate information about the activity so that written consent can be given with a clear understanding of activities to occur (i.e., if a field trip to a farm is planned, parents should be informed that the children may have direct contact with the animals on site).

SNS staff should also advise parents that they can notify the Executive/Assistant Director directly if needing to reach staff about their child(ren) while on the field trip or outing. The Executive/Assistant Director or designated staff person will in turn contact one of the SNS Supervisors or staff on the outing and/or field trip to share any information communicated by the parent about his/her child(ren).

- c) **Size of the groups** – The Licensing Manual recommends that child care centres provide a better ratio of adults to children to ensure that children are adequately supervised on outings or field trips. The staff of SNS will ensure that child to adult ratios as prescribed by the licensing requirements of the Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Program (MELCC) are maintained at all times.

- d) **Transportation** – SNS staff will ensure that appropriate methods of transportation are used for outings or field trips. When using a school bus to transport the children, staff should identify safe loading/unloading areas at the field trip site and discuss these areas with the bus driver prior to arrival to the scheduled destination; high traffic areas should be avoided if possible. Staff should also plan for any safety concerns that might be encountered while en route to or from the site of the field trip or outing. For more information on possible emergencies involving a bus, please see Appendix B.

If SNS staff decide to take a group of children for a walk in the neighbourhood surrounding its centres, information on the destination (if any), the route to be taken, as well as which staff/children are leaving the centre must be provided to a SNS Supervisor or designate staff person who plans to remain on-site.

- e) **Parent reminders** – SNS staff will provide parents with verbal and written reminders of outings and field trips that are planned. They will also notify parents of departure times, the expected duration of the outing or field trip, as well as provide direction on appropriate clothing items for their child(ren), footwear, etc.

- f) **Volunteer involvement** – SNS recognizes the important role of volunteers and promotes the involvement of parents and family members in its centres. Outings and field trips not only provide volunteers with the opportunity to participate in fun and educational activities with their child(ren), but their presence impacts the adult to child ratio allowing for better supervision in the community.

SNS has developed an information sheet that is provided to parents and/or family members who are interested in participating in outings and field trips. See Appendix A for a copy of the information sheet for SNS centres.

B. The day of the outing or field trip:

SNS staff will ensure the following safety measures are in place for all outings or field trips. Please note that these safety measures compliment the safe indoor and outdoor space procedures that are currently outlined in the SNS Enhanced Safety Plan for its centres.

- Bring first aid bags complete with hand sanitizer. Child emergency information is located in each bag (this includes personal health information on each child, emergency contact information, etc.). Medication(s) and epi-pen(s) are also placed in these bags for administration as needed.
- Emergency child identification tags must be located in the first aid bags. In the case of an emergency such as fire, accident, etc., staff must put the identification tags on all children.
- Carry cell phones and ensure they are readily available for emergency use.
- Parent Permission slips must be signed in advance but do not need to be taken on the field trip/outing. Note that a list of all children who are participating in the field trip must be completed; one copy of the list is to remain at the SNS site, while a second copy is to be held by a staff person who is attending the field trip.
- Any lunch and/or snack items (if required) are kept cool at all times. Staff will wear gloves when providing children with lunch and/or snack items and follow food handling guidelines.
- Pack extra water
- Keep an accurate count of children. Frequent counts of the children are necessary, i.e., before departing, upon arrival, several times during the outing, before returning, before exiting the bus, etc.
- To increase the visibility of the children during an outing/ field trip staff must place them in SNS pinnies at all times.

Prior to leaving the centre, SNS staff should research possible traffic delays, changes in the bus schedule, and/or weather conditions. Wherever possible, staff should notify parents of possible delays when leaving and/or returning to the centre due to construction, weather, or travel conditions. Contingency plans for outings and field trips should be discussed with and approved by the Executive/Assistant Director and/or designate.

Staff should review with the children any 'rules' or expectations for behaviours while on the outing or field trip (i.e., do not leave the group, do not approach unfamiliar people, let staff know if something or someone is making them feel uncomfortable, hand hygiene, etc.). Remind them that the staff, parent volunteers, bus driver(s), tour guides, etc., deserve their

respect and attention. Explain that unsafe or disruptive behaviour is unacceptable; remind them that everyone must work together and cooperate to be safe and enjoy themselves.

Upon arrival at the site of the outing or field trip, staff should designate an emergency meeting place.

C. Debriefing:

At the end of an outing or field trip, SNS staff should make a note in the daily communication log book of any safety concerns or incidents that arose during activities, as well as actions taken in response to them. This information will assist staff in reducing negative outcomes when accessing the community, as well as work to prevent any future occurrences. Staff evaluation of outings and field trips also informs the planning process of activities for the children in general.

Appendix A. Information sheet for parents



If you plan on joining us on a field trip this summer, here are some tips to make your experience safe and enjoyable:

- Please be at the center 15 minutes before we are scheduled to leave.
- Remember to dress appropriately for the weather, i.e, hat, jacket, sunscreen, and proper footwear are necessary!
- Bring a water bottle.
- If the field trip is scheduled over the lunch time, feel free to bring your lunch. Please remember that some children have allergies, so please no nut, peanut, or fish products.
- No hot coffee or drinks are allowed around the children or in the centre.
- You will be paired up with your child in a group with a staff. You might also be partnered up with one of your child's friends. Please stay with the group so that head counts of the children can be done accurately.
- Please remember that your child is being counted in ratio with the group. As such, you are expected to stay with the group at all times. If you are leaving the field trip with your child, please inform the staff.
- You are welcome to come on the bus, but if it is full you might be asked to take your own car. Only your child can ride with you in your car as their friends are in the care of the staff.
- We request that no photos or videos be taken with a camera or your phone on the outing. This is for privacy and confidentiality reasons.

Thank you for volunteering your time, we appreciate your help! We hope you enjoy the field trip and spending time with your child!

SNS staff

Appendix B. Incidents in the community

This section provides best practices for staff during emergency situations involving a bus, as well as during indoor or outdoor field trips.

1. **Bus Emergencies**

a. **Vehicle accident involving the bus:**

- Work with the bus driver to evacuate the children if necessary. If evacuation is not necessary, then wait with the children on the bus until emergency workers/police arrive.
- Assess all children by checking each child and verbally communicating with them making sure no children are injured.
- Request emergency assistance by calling 911 or staff assistant if needed. Wait for instructions from 911 or treat minor injuries with first aid.
- Keep children calm and assure them that they are safe and okay.
- If staff are injured, assure that ALL children are adequately supervised.
- Call Director/Supervisor at your location.
- Inform Chair of Board and Co-ordinator of accident.
- Parents will be notified about the situation via email or letter.
- If children need to be hospitalized, contact parents and keep a list of children needing hospitalization and name of hospital they will be going to. A staff or two (depending on the ratio and severity) should be designated to accompany the child(s) and medical emergency staff to the hospital and remain until parents arrive.
- If there is danger of explosion or fire, evacuate the children immediately to a safe place away from the bus.

b. **Bus in contact with downed power line:**

SNS adheres to the recommendations of Manitoba Hydro for situations in which a vehicle comes in contact with a downed power line. MB Hydro advises to never touch a downed power line or try to move one with any type of object. Moving power lines is extremely dangerous, and could result in serious injury or death.

MB Hydro recommends the following steps if a vehicle comes in contact with downed power lines:

- Stay where you are, if at all possible. It may be dangerous to exit from the vehicle.
- If you can safely back the vehicle away from contact with the lines, do so.
- Warn others to stay clear of the power lines.
- Have someone contact MB Hydro to de-energize the lines (24hour phone line: 1-888-MBHydro or 1-888-624-9376).

As a last resort, if it is necessary to leave the vehicle, it is important not to simply step out of the vehicle one foot at a time as your body will make a path for electricity to ground.

- Keep your feet together.
- Hold your arms tightly at your sides.
- Jump clear without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time.
- With feet together, shuffle or hop a safe distance away from the downed line and vehicle.

Staff can learn more about exiting a vehicle that is in contact with a downed power line by visiting the MB Hydro website at:

https://www.hydro.mb.ca/safety/electricity/downed_power_lines.shtml

c. Medical emergency of child/staff during bus ride:

- If a child or a staff requires medical attention, the bus driver must be advised immediately.
- Call 911 if required, otherwise follow first aid/CPR as instructed.
- Notify child or staff contacts of emergency.
- Notify Director/Supervisor.
- Keep others calm and reassured that help is on its way.

- Director will notify Co-ordinator and Chair of Board.
- Parents will be notified about the situation via email or letter.

-

2. Indoor field trip emergencies

a. Medical/accident emergency

- Follow medical/accident procedures as outlined in the Enhanced Safety Plan.
- If child or staff needs to be hospitalized, designate a staff to be present with ambulance ride and child/staff to hospital until parents or contacts arrive.
- Keep all children calm and away from the situation.
- Notify Director/Supervisor.
- Director will notify Co-ordinator and Chair of Board.
- Parents will be notified about the situation via email or letter.

b. Fire /Dangerous chemicals/ Gas Leakage Emergency

- Follow instructions from management at place of field trip removing children to a safe area away from the building.
- Notify Director/Supervisor.
- Director will notify Co-ordinator and Board Chair.
- Parents will be notified about the situation via email or letter.

c. Intruder on premises

- Staff should trust their instincts; if they feel uncomfortable in a place or situation, they should gather the children and leave immediately.
- Follow instructions from management at place of field trip as to removing children to a safe area.
- Notify Director

- Director will notify Co-ordinator/Supervisor and Board Chair.
- Parents will be notified about the situation via telephone, email, or letter (dependent on the severity of the incident and the outcome).

3. Outdoor Field Trips

a. Weather related emergency

- Follow emergency procedures as per Enhanced Safety Plan.
- Give instruction from field trip location management as to where the children will go.
- If no management or direction is available, then proceed finding a safe place of shelter.
- Designate staff to remove or direct children to safe place.
- Notify Director/Supervisor
- Director will notify Co-Ordinator and Board Chair.
- Parents will be notified via email or letter.

b. Dangerous Person

- Follow emergency procedures as per Enhanced Safety Plan .
- Give instruction from field trip location management as to where the children will go.
- If no management or direction is available, then proceed finding a safe place of shelter hiding the children from the situation.
- Designate staff to remove or direct children to safe place.
- Wait for direction from Police.
- Notify Director/Supervisor.
- Director will notify Co-Ordinator and Board Chair.
- Parents will be notified via email or letter.

c. Medical/Accident Emergency

- Follow medical/accident procedures as outlined in the Enhanced Safety Plan.
- If child or staff needs to be hospitalized, designate a staff to be present with ambulance ride and child/staff to hospital until parents or contacts arrive.
- Keep all children calm and away from the situation.
- Notify Director/Supervisor.
- Director will notify Co-ordinator and Chair of Board.
- Parents will be notified about the situation via email or letter.

4. Walking Field trip

- **Follow all procedures as outdoor field trips listed above.**
- Any staff taking a group of children for a walk in the community must carry a cell phone.

5. Use of Public Transportation (Winnipeg Transit)

Most often SNS utilizes school buses to transport children to and from the destination of a field trip. However, there may be instances in which staff plan to transport children using public transportation, i.e., via Winnipeg Transit. This option of transportation is reserved for the School Age Program.

When coordinating a field trip using Winnipeg Transit, SNS staff are to identify the most direct route to the destination and notify the Executive/Assistant Director and/or designate of the route that is planned; estimated arrival times back to the SNS site should also be communicated.

Refer to page 7 for additional information on the roles and responsibilities of SNS staff during bus emergencies; please note that while the information on page 7 refers to an emergency involving a school bus, the general expectations for staff during this time can be applied to similar types of emergencies that can occur on Winnipeg Transit. Situations of special note:

Disruptive passenger:

- Disruptive behaviour such as alcohol, bad language or violence should be reported to the bus driver immediately.

- Staff should keep children safe and away from the disruption.
- Staff and children should not approach the disruptive passenger.
- Staff should notify Director of the behaviour

Limited seating:

- All children should be seated before the staff.
- If children are to remain standing, they must have access to handrails to hold on to for safety or other support
- If children are seated in various locations on the bus, staff must accompany the different areas if possible
- Staff should be near children who are standing

Sources of information for policy:

The Best Practices Licensing Manual for Early Learning and Child Care Centres (2006), Manitoba Family Services

Downed Power Lines, Manitoba Hydro (www.hydro.mb.ca)

Safety and Field Trips, <http://www.preschooleducation.com/art74.shtml>

Field Trips for Young Children, http://www.wstcoast.org/pdf/WCCRC_FieldTrips_for_Young_Children.pdf