



# PLANNING & DESIGN GUIDELINES for CHILD CARE CENTRES

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Ministry of Children and  
Youth Services  
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l'enfance et à la jeunesse



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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Purpose of the Guide**

The purpose of this Guide is to provide guidance in the planning, design and renovation of licensed child care centres and licensed nursery school facilities.

The Guide is intended to support the development of facilities that are child and family-oriented, environmentally safe and secure, promote healthy growth, are aesthetically pleasing, functional in their design, and cost effective to operate. The centre design, use of space and colour, safety and security considerations, are crucial to the child's development and experience.

The Guide is intended to provide a tool for operators and their consultants in designing a child care facility as well as for Licensing Staff with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) who have the responsibility for assessing appropriateness of design proposals in meeting licensing standards.

### **Users of this Guide**

This Guide is intended to be used by all individuals involved in the site selection, design, and operation of a child care centre in the province of Ontario. Users of the Guide include but are not limited to:

- Child Care Operator
- Provincial Licensing Staff
- Consolidated Municipal Services Managers (CMSMs)
- District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs)
- Architects
- District School Boards
- Other consultants

At the earliest possible point in discussing the development of a child care facility, ensure the design professional is in receipt of your functional plan. The functional plan will outline your program physical space needs, budgets and staffing requirements.

It is the responsibility of the design professional to design the building to Building Code requirements. For this reason references to specific sections of the *Ontario Building Code (OBC)* are not noted in this document except in instances where it is recommended the designer specifically reference an item in addition to their normal review and compliance with the *OBC*.

## Standards and Regulations

Child Care facilities are regulated under the:

- *Day Nurseries Act (DNA) R.R.O. 1990, Regulation 262*
- *Building Code Act, 1992 and O. Reg. 403/97*
- *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), 2001*
- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2004*
- *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*
- *Canadian Standard for Children's Playscapes and Equipment (CSA)*
- **Other Authorities: Municipal Fire, Health and Zoning Departments.**

Permanent play structures are not required.

All new and existing playground surfacing must comply with *Canadian Standard for Children's Playscapes and Equipment (CSA)* (see Appendix IV)

All new and newly renovated playground equipment must conform to the *CSA*.  
All playground plans must be submitted to MCYS for approval *before* implementation.

The criteria contained in this Guide are based on the standards found in the *DNA* and Regulation. Wherever possible, Best Practice design suggestions that support children's optimal growth have been provided.

The operator must consult at the earliest possible stage of development with their Ministry Regional Office, prior to embarking on any child care building or renovation project to determine the required approvals from the Ministry staff. Program Advisors with the Ministry will assist with questions about the regulation and review and approve all facility plans.

**Potential child care operators and their consultants should ensure the currency of all acts, codes and regulations quoted or referred to throughout this Guide.**

# PROJECT PLANNING CHECKLIST

## 1. Preparation of Functional Plan

- Consultations/Research/Review of applicable acts
- Facility Activities and Program
- Staffing
- Operating/Capital Costs
- Physical surroundings

## 2. Consultant Selection

## 3. Site or Building Selection

- New, lease or shared facility
- Due Diligence**
  - Environmental
  - Zoning
  - Building audit/condition report

## 4. Design Stage

### *Preliminary*

- Consult with Ministry
- Architect prepares preliminary design
- Operator provides all relevant program information including budget and timelines
- Architect investigates applicable planning/legislative/code requirements
- Construction estimate/timelines

### *Final*

- Ministry approval
- Final design for client sign off
- Approval of project budget and construction estimate
- Operator submits updated project budget and estimate for construction
- Prequalify and select general contractors to bid on construction

## 5. Working Drawings

- Architect completes Working Drawing and Specifications
- Architect applies for building permit and other approvals
- Operator submits tender document to solicitor/insurance company for review
- Written approval to tender

## 6. Tender

- Tender – confirm bonding requirements
- Tenders evaluated, Board recommendation to award a construction contract
- Contractor prepares and submits a construction and cash flow schedule

## 7. Contract Administration - Construction Phase

- Architect reviews construction progress
- Architect administers the construction contract and certifies construction payments
- Architect reviews and makes recommendations for all change orders
- 10% hold back on each construction draw

## 8. Substantial Performance/Occupancy

- Submission of warranties, data manuals, record drawings and required certificates

# Recommended Development Planning Guide

## Development Planning Process

The following process should be followed for new and renovated projects that require a building permit.

### 1. Functional Plan

Depending on the size and scope of the project, it is recommended that the operator prepare a Functional Plan. The Functional Plan forms the basis for making decisions on the physical environment and provides the design consultant with an understanding of what components need to be included to make the building function.

The Functional Plan defines the operator and program needs and provides a detailed record of what should happen in a new facility and should include:

- A statement of the goals, qualitative features, philosophy and objectives of the proposed facility.
- The number and approximate size of: program, housekeeping, washroom, storage and exterior spaces.
- Circulation (corridors, elevators, stairs etc), walls, and utility space.
- A description of the group to be served, the number of users, including staff and client group.
- Activities that occur in and outside the building and the relationship of activities to each other.
- Confirmation that space complies with *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*.

### 2 Construction Budget

A construction budget must be developed and adhered to throughout the project. The following costs usually make up the total project cost and are included to demonstrate the need to clearly identify all costs and ensure they are accounted for:

- Estimated cost of construction
- Contingency allowance (5%)
- Consultants (up to a maximum of 15%)
- Permits
- Servicing (site, hydro, telephone, datawiring etc.)
- Legal fees
- Construction insurance
- Site/building acquisition costs
- Appraisal
- Survey
- Condition, subsurface/geotechnical and environmental reports



- Signage
- Disbursements and general overhead (if approved)
- Applicable taxes and rebates

The construction budget can be developed by the architect or quantity surveyor. In the preliminary phase of development the cost is usually expressed as a “square foot” estimate. As the project develops and greater detail becomes available a more extensive elemental costing that breaks down the various building components is performed.

### **3. Consultant Selection**

#### Types of Consultants

During the various stages in the development of a project and depending on the scale of the project, the operator may need to retain the services of the following consultants:

- Functional programmer
- Lawyer
- Architect
- Engineers (mechanical, electrical structural, environmental, civil)
- Cost consultant (quantity surveyor)
- Project manager (for larger projects)
- Land surveyor
- Interior designer
- Landscape architect

#### **Consultant Selection Process**

For many facility types, the *Ontario Building Code* requires that an architect prepare plans and specifications for construction or renovations. Normally a competitive process is used to select a consultant.

The type of consultant required will depend on the nature and scope of the project. Normally a standard form of agreement provided by the consultant is used to set out the responsibilities and fees. For an architectural consultant, the Ontario Association of Architect's Fee Schedule normally determines fees. Where practical, consultants should be retained for a fixed fee for a predetermined deliverable.

Consultants retained must have appropriate professional designation, for example an architect should be licensed by the Ontario Association of Architects (a self-regulating organization governed by the *Architects Act*) to practice in Ontario.

#### 4. Site Selection

The selection of a site, whether it be undeveloped land or a site with an existing building, must be appropriate to the requirements of the Functional Program and budget and comply with the requirements of the *Ontario Building Code (OBC)* Classification of Use: Child Care Facility - Group A, Division 2.

Factors to consider include:

- Zoning requirements and municipal by-laws including historic/heritage designation. Every municipality has by-laws guiding the type of building that can be built on a site and the type of occupancy. Investigate the planning approval process and time lines (if required).
- Appropriateness of location for child care:
  - Proximity to other service providers;
  - Proximity to required services, parks;
  - Adequacy of existing public transportation;
  - Environmental impact such as solar exposure to most rooms and playground, wind etc.;
  - Placement of the building in relation to existing landscaping; and
  - Neighbourhood characteristics in areas such as setbacks, scale, massing, materials and colours.
- Economic feasibility, i.e. comparable cost to other properties, affordability for renovation to meet program, municipal and provincial requirements.
- Suitability for construction, i.e. soil conditions, access and drainage, environmental issues. Ensure confirmation that any existing buildings to be renovated are structurally sound and that no hazardous substances are present or that removal of any identified hazardous substances is feasible.
- Existing services, i.e. hydro, water, sewers, gas, telephone, etc. Municipal services such as snow removal, fire, garbage collection are investigated.
- Size is adequate to meet program requirements, including outdoor space, parking, and drop-off zone.
- Suitability for playground i.e. grade considerations that may affect play value of site.
- Compliance with accessibility requirements under the *ODA* and *OBC*.

#### 5. Project Implementation

##### Design Development

Design drawings are prepared based on a number of factors including fire and building codes, local by-laws, energy efficiency and on the operator's Functional Plan and approved budget. At the completion of this stage of design development, the consultant should provide a revised budget and project schedule to the operator. It is important the operator participate in the design development process to ensure their program requirements are met based on the functional plan. The completed design drawing

submission is forwarded to the regional office. The Ministry reviews the plans to determine compliance with requirements set out in Ontario Regulation 262-S.5 and the Ministry Director approves the plans under the *Day Nurseries Act*.

The design submission should include:

- A complete set of scaled design drawings (i.e. site plan including location and size of playground, elevations, floor plans). It is helpful to indicate furnishings and finishes on the drawings.
- Revised construction estimate.
- Revised project budget.
- Project schedule for development and project completion.

The Ministry's regional office will provide written feedback on the submission, which may also include a request for clarification on the submission and/or additional information.

Once the design drawings have been approved by the Ministry's Director, the operator can provide approval to proceed with the preparation of working drawings and specifications.

### **Working Drawings and Specifications**

Working drawings and specifications are an extension of the design drawings. They provide more detail than design drawings with regard to materials, type of construction, mechanical systems etc. and are used both for application for municipal approvals and tender. The construction and project budget should be reviewed and updated at this time.

### **Approvals**

Prior to construction, application must be made and approvals provided by: Municipal and Provincial authorities with jurisdiction (i.e. planning, fire, health, building departments, etc.).

## **6. Tendering**

### **The Tendering Process**

Prior to tendering for a contractor, the operator must satisfy themselves:

- They will receive municipal approval for the project,
- Will have their finances in place,
- The proposed design meets the program requirements and is within budget, and
- They will have the approval of all required jurisdictions.

The usual type of construction contract entered into with a general contractor is a

“stipulated sum contract”.

The project can be advertised in an open public tender or depending on the requirements of the funder and the scale of the project the contractors can be prequalified in advance of the tender.

The requirement for open public tendering is applicable for both methods. The selection process must be open, fair and transparent. Selection criteria and an evaluation process must be developed and documented.

All contractors who meet the eligibility requirements must be invited to submit a bid. Under no circumstance can the operator or their consultant set a predetermined or arbitrary number of contractors.

## **Bonding Requirements**

### ***Overview***

A bond is a form of insurance that is used to protect the operator in unforeseen circumstances during construction.

There are three types of bonds:

#### **Bid Bond**

A bid bond is to guarantee the good faith of the bidder for the project. If the bidder's tender is accepted, the bidder is obligated to enter into a formal contract with the operator within the time specified and to meet all other requirements set out in the specifications and instructions to bidders.

#### **Performance Bond**

A performance bond provides indemnity to the operator up to the amount of the bond in case the general contractor defaults on the construction contract.

#### **Labour and Materials Bond**

A labour and materials bond guarantees that all claimants will be paid for the labour and material furnished to the general contractor for use on the project in the event the general contractor defaults.

Bonding requirement values should be confirmed with the funder.

## **Receipt of Tender Bids and Award of Contract**

The operator will receive and review all bids from prospective general contractors. The bids will normally be evaluated by the architect.

## **7. Construction and Construction Administration**

The architect will review and monitor the progress of the work, attend site meetings, review the submission of shop drawings and samples as well as review the schedules submitted by the contractor.

In addition the architect will prepare monthly certificates of payment proportionate to the progress of the project. Changes to the work or contemplated changes are prepared by the architect and approved by the operator.

When the project is substantially complete the contractor submits documentation such as data manuals, warranties, record drawings, verification reports and certificates.

A final claim and a Certificate of Completion is completed by the architect or engineer certifying that the project has been constructed in accordance with the approved plans.

## **EXTERIOR DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Site Selection and Site Development**

Please refer to page 9 for considerations regarding Site Selection.

### **Existing Buildings and Conversions**

The operator should not assume that an existing building or space that has an existing or similar use complies with the requirements for a Child Care Facility. A review and analysis must be conducted to confirm compliance with:

- Municipal Zoning Regulations
- *Ontario Building Code (OBC)* Classification of Use: Child Care Facility - Group A, Division 2
- *DNA*
- As well as other authorities having jurisdiction.

In addition, a review of the existing building's construction and building systems should be commissioned to confirm that the as-built components are in conformance with the above regulations, and Acts. A condition survey or building audit may be required to confirm this. An environmental audit should also be commissioned.

### **Design and Site Considerations:**

#### **Community Issues**

- Consider impact of playground noise on the neighbourhood.
- Consider impact of vehicles and increased traffic especially with respect to drop off and pickup of children.
- Construction of fences may require consent of neighbours.
- Site lighting must be designed not to "flood or spill" into adjacent property.

#### **Building Orientation**

- Locate and mass building in a manner that maximizes solar gain and takes into account environmental factors such as wind, snow, snow drifting, rain and water run-off etc.
- Consider shape of building and selection of materials to create exterior "micro climates".

#### **Entrance**

- The main entrance floor level should be located as close as possible to natural grade to help facilitate access for all occupants.
- Provide a level and weather protected area at the entrance large enough to accommodate strollers, staff or parent bicycles, benches.

- Ensure service vehicles operate away from the entrance and drop-off points, Depending on scale and number of children, provide approximately 3-6 meters of level space for drop-off point.

## **Security**

- The front entrance should be equipped with a security system and/or intercom.
- Ensure strollers and/or storage do not block entrance - in order to prevent Fire Code Contravention.
- Access to the building should be through a single point of entry preferably near an administrative office; this would help in supervision of all visitors.
- During normal hours of operation, additional required entry/exit doors should remain locked to the exterior, permitting exiting only.
- Maintain sight lines from the interior to exterior as well as from vehicle to site, especially where cars or trucks may be reversing. Consider the height of children when plantings and furnishings are planned for these areas.
- A fence surrounding the entire property (or selected areas) can be provided in order to limit access to the building.

## **Walkways/Access**

- Colour cues and tactile warnings should be provided where there are hazardous areas near walkways and other pedestrian areas.
- Use only smooth, firm, uniform and non-slip paving materials on pathways.
- Provide adequate drainage to prevent standing water. Ensure down spouts spill away from walkways and ramps.
- Ensure sloped areas accessible to children do not lead to roadways.
- Design landscaping to direct children away from roadways.
- Install guards where there are potential hazards.
- Provide a means for snow and ice removal at the entrance, walkways, and on roof top playgrounds.
- Refer to *OBC Section 3.8 Barrier Free Design* for design of ramps, guards and handrails.
- Provide hand rails for all exterior stairs. Design should be appropriate for both adults and children. Terminate guards and handrails in a manner that do not create a hazard for children and adults.
- In designing the ramps keep in mind that they might be used for strollers and deliveries.

## **Signage and Lighting**

- Provide necessary signage to mark centre, entrance, parking, fire routes etc.
- Install adequate site lighting.
- Ensure lighting is on a photo electric cell.

## **Storage**

- Allow for secure storage and pick up of garbage and recycling material located away from public areas.
- There should be adequate weather protected area for storage of toys and equipment. If possible it is recommended that storage for outdoor equipment be accessible from both within the centre as well as from the playground.

## **Mechanical Equipment**

- Carefully plan locations of mechanical and electrical equipment.
- Location should be accessible for servicing, not block site lines, be suitably locked and secured and if noisy located away from public areas and operable windows.
- Some equipment can be screened with plantings and fencing.

## **Parking**

- Sufficient parking should be provided for staff and visitors that meet the local zoning bylaws.
- Parking for parents should be convenient to the main entrance.
- Avoid crossing of traffic areas between parking and entrance to the child care centre.
- On-site parking should be separated from pedestrian traffic and outdoor areas for children. The parking area should be separated with continuous curb or landscaping. The use of a curb will help control drainage.
- Parking areas do not have to be rigidly laid out. They should be worked around the natural topographical features so as to de-emphasize the presence of the vehicles.
- Additional parking requirements should be identified when centre has space available for community use or when centre is part of a multi-use facility.
- If on-site parking cannot be achieved, consider availability of street parking (subject to Municipal approval).

## **Drop-off**

- If a vehicular drop-off and pick-up of children is provided, it must be safe.
- Allow cars to pass, provide a widened area off the access road, but within the road allowance (local zoning bylaws permitting).
- A direct-paved vehicular driveway to the front entrance is necessary for wheelchair bound children or staff.
- When the child care centre is located in a school, the drop-off area should be isolated from the school bus drop-off and turning areas.



# INTERIOR DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

## PROGRAM SPACES BY AGE

This section provides a summary by age group of all aspects that must be in compliance with the *DNA* and Regulation. Best practice considerations are provided after each requirement chart.

### **General:**

Activity areas or playrooms are the key areas where children's program takes place. They must be designed to ensure safety, provide clear supervision by staff at all times and contain a range of program areas that are age appropriate and support learning. The room should be designed, finished and furnished to encourage children to be engaged in a safe and comfortable environment.

The room should include a variety of open spaces along with smaller more intimate spaces. The space should be designed to be flexible and support a variety of activities such as quiet and active play, creative play, resting, and eating. The finishes, colours, layout, furnishings and staff amenities need to be carefully considered to support these various activities.

The design should encourage children to both explore the room, engage in different activities while providing the clues and the design elements that allow other activities to occur simultaneously.

The shape of the room is important:

- Avoid rooms with sharp or acute angles that limit program flexibility. Rooms that are "L" shaped can be difficult to supervise and long narrow rooms may limit natural light.
- The room should have both visual and spatial connections to adjoining activity areas.
- By altering the height of the room and providing some semi-secluded areas, quiet activity space can be created.

Planning for and providing ample storage for both materials and equipment is important. Anticipating the areas in which cots will be stored must be considered. If stored in the playroom, cots are counted as an obstruction and can not be included as part of the calculation for capacity. Well designed and adequate storage contributes to the organization and accessibility to things needed for each program and group of children. Keeping the space uncluttered improves the flow of movement from one activity space to another and minimizes children interrupting the play of others.

A child care facility is often measured by the number of child care spaces it provides and by the size of the building required to provide those spaces.

- Rooms constructed to accommodate the maximum number of children in a group and fully utilize staff to child ratios will provide a cost effective staffing model

- Consider rooms with sufficient floor space to accommodate a flexible choice of age groups and sizes.
- The mix of age groupings will determine the overall space requirements.
  - For a group of 15 to 30 children ages 6 to 10 years located in one space, it is recommended that the room be set up to provide separate activity areas to promote a small group activity environment, privacy and a sense of order.
  - For a group of 15 to 30 children ages 6 to 12 years, two separate rooms or one clearly divided room could be utilized and the children divided by age groups.
  - If licensed for more than 30 children ages 6 to 12 years, the maximum group size is 30. It is recommended that children be separated by age groups in separate rooms.
- Additional space for observation areas, multipurpose rooms, reception area, parent rooms, etc while not required should be considered.

## DNA REQUIREMENTS FOR INFANT GROUPS

Definition: Under 18 months

| Requirements  | DNA Reference   |
|---|---|
| Staff Ratio   | Schedule 3  |
| 3 staff to 10 children  | 10  |
| Spaces used by children must be on or below second storey, unless otherwise approved by a Ministry Director |   |
| S9  |   |
| Play Activity   | S8(a)(i), Schedule 3                                    |
| 2.8m <sup>2</sup> of unobstructed floor space per child   | S6(1)   |
| Minimum lighting level 55 Dekalux   | S11   |
| <b>Glazed window area equivalent to 10% of floor area</b>   | <b>S10</b>  |
| Infants unable to walk separated from other children during active play                                     | 53(4)(a)  |
| Sleeping Area   |   |
| Separated from play activity space  | S8(a) (ii)  |
| Other   |   |
| Washing, dressing, toileting, isolation   | S5(2)1  |
| Storage   |   |
| Toys, indoor play material, equipment   | S5(2)2  |
| Food  | S5(2)3  |
| Records   | S5(2)4  |
| Medical supplies, cleaning materials, equipment, hazardous substances                                       | Inaccessible to children<br>S5(2)5, S5(3),<br>S37(1)(b) |
| Heating and electrical equipment  | Inaccessible to children<br>S5(2)6, S5(3)               |
| Beds and linen  | <b>S5(4)3</b>   |
| <b>Eating and Resting</b>   | <b>S5(4)1</b>   |
| Food Preparation Area   | <b>S5(4)2, S42</b>                                      |
| Small Food Preparation Area – within room for heating bottles and food                                      |   |
| <b>Staff Rest Area</b>  | <b>S5(4)4</b>   |
| <b>Storage for Outdoor Play Equipment</b>   | <b>S5(4)5</b>   |
| <b>Office Area</b>  | <b>S5(4)6</b>   |
| Designated place of shelter in the event of emergency evacuation  | S27(1)(f)   |
| Equipment and Furnishings   |   |
| Dress/diaper change table/counter adjacent to sink  | For every 10 children<br>S15.1                          |
| <b>Bedding for each child</b>   | <b>S15.3</b>  |
| Cradle or crib for each child   | S15.4   |
| First Aid kit and manual in a readily available location  | S36   |
| Fire safety and emergency information procedure plan posted in conspicuous place in each room               | S27(1)(c)   |
| Minimum temperature maintained at twenty degrees Celsius  | S12   |
| Area for posting of activities, emergency phone numbers and meal menus                                      | S28, S41(1), 53(2)(a)                                   |

Note:

- Provide quantity of washrooms and fixtures in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code (OBC)* S4
- Provide barrier free access in accordance with the *OBC* and *ODA* S4

Items in *italic/bold* are required for programs that operate for six hours or more in a day

Refer to *DNA* for exact wording of the above text

## Infant Group

An infant playroom should be designed to ensure safety and security that allows each infant to be on his or her own schedule. Rooms should be warm, enriched, and welcoming to children and parents alike. Infants respond best to an environment in which they can explore in large open spaces. Rooms and equipment should be well-maintained, sanitary, child height and organized. Toys should be accessible on open shelves in well-defined areas. There should be texture in the learning environment with a variety of surfaces and finishes. Room colours, wall hangings, pictures, etc. should reflect cultural diversity. Furniture should be stable to allow infants to practice their motor skills by pulling themselves up, "cruising", and exploring the room.

### Requirements:

- A play activity room for not more than 10 children with an unobstructed floor area of 2.8m<sup>2</sup> per child.
- Infants unable to walk are to be separated from other children during active play.
- A separate, quiet sleeping area that is separated from any play activity space for each ten children or less based on the licensed capacity.
- Washing, dressing, toileting, space for isolation, storage.
- Change table
- For programs 6 hours and more per day, the room shall have:
  - an unobstructed glazed window area equivalent to not less than 10% of the floor area
  - storage for beds and linens,
  - space for eating, resting (children and staff);
  - food preparation area;
  - office area;
  - storage for outdoor equipment.
- Refer to DNA and Functional Plan.

### When a separate sleeping room is provided incorporate the following *OBC* requirements:

- *OBC Requirement: 3.7.1.3* Provide sleeping accommodation having not less than .93m<sup>2</sup>. (10 sq ft) of floor surface area for each child with not less than 2300 mm (7 ft 7 in) ceiling height over the entire room area.

## **Design Considerations:**

### **Spatial**

- Although the regulation requires a separated sleep area, a sleep room that is adjacent and separate from infant and play activity room is strongly recommended for quiet rest and minimum interruptions.
- Spatial and visual connection between sleep area (room) and infant's play area is required for safety and supervision.
- Location of the sleeping area is a primary consideration.
- The lighting and location of the crib area needs to allow for sleeping.
- Cribs should be located away from windows if there is a concern about drafts.
- Adequacy of space to be determined by satisfactory crib layout.
  - Crib sizes vary.
  - Maximum crib dimensions 750 mm x 1350 mm (2 ft 6in x 4 ft 6 in).
  - Aisle space to be 900 mm (3 ft) wide.
  - Space between cribs to be a minimum of 450 mm (1 ft 6 in).
  - When developing crib layout consider possible access for caregiver in wheelchair.
- Recommend a fridge and designated food preparation area in the room.

## DNA REQUIREMENTS FOR TODDLER GROUP

Definition: 18 months or over up to and including 30 months

| Requirements  |                                       | DNA Reference            |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Staff Ratio   | Maximum Number of Children in a Group | Schedule 3               |
| 1 staff to 5 children   | 15                                    |                          |
| Spaces used by children must be on or below second storey, unless otherwise approved by a Ministry Director |                                       |                          |
| Play Activity   |                                       | S8(b), Schedule 3        |
| 2.8m <sup>2</sup> of unobstructed floor space per child   |                                       | S6(1)                    |
| Minimum lighting level 55 Dekalux   |                                       | S11                      |
| <b>Glazed window area equivalent to 10% of floor area</b>   |                                       | <b>S10</b>               |
| Other   |                                       |                          |
| Washing, dressing, toileting, isolation   |                                       | S5(2)1                   |
| Storage   |                                       |                          |
| Toys, indoor play material, equipment   |                                       | S5.(2)2                  |
| Food  |                                       | S5(2)3                   |
| Records   |                                       | S5(2)4                   |
| Medical supplies, cleaning materials, equipment, hazardous substances                                       | Inaccessible to children              | S5(2)5, S5(3), S37(1)(b) |
| Heating and electrical equipment  | Inaccessible to children              | S5(2)6, S5(3)            |
| <b>Beds and linen</b>   |                                       | <b>S5(4)3</b>            |
| <b>Eating and Resting</b>   |                                       | <b>S5(4)1</b>            |
| <b>Food Preparation Area</b>  |                                       | <b>S5(4)2, S42</b>       |
| <b>Staff Rest Area</b>  |                                       | <b>S5(4)4</b>            |
| <b>Storage for Outdoor Play Equipment</b>   |                                       | <b>S5(4)5</b>            |
| <b>Office Area</b>  |                                       | <b>S5(4)6</b>            |
| Designated place of shelter in the event of emergency evacuation  |                                       | S27(1)(f)                |
| Equipment and Furnishings   |                                       |                          |
| Dress/diaper change table/counter adjacent to sink  | For every 15 children                 | S15.2                    |
| <b>Bedding for rest periods for each child</b>  |                                       | <b>S15.3</b>             |
| <b>A cot for each child</b>   |                                       | <b>S15.5</b>             |
| First Aid kit and manual in a readily available location  |                                       | S36                      |
| Fire safety and emergency information procedure plan posted in conspicuous place in each room               |                                       | S27(1)(c)                |
| Minimum temperature maintained at twenty degrees Celsius  |                                       | S12                      |
| Area for posting of activities, emergency phone numbers and meal menus                                      |                                       | S28, S41(1), 53(2)(a)    |

Note:

Provide quantity of washrooms and fixtures in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code (OBC)* S4

Provide barrier free access in accordance with the *OBC* and *ODA* S4

Items in *italic/bold* are required for programs that operate for six hours or more in a day

Refer to *DNA* for exact wording of the above text

## **Toddler Room Considerations**

A toddler room should be designed to encourage and support independence, while strengthening social skills. Materials and developmentally-appropriate toys should be easily accessible on open shelves. Child-sized furnishings and equipment, designated areas with concrete guidance cues (i.e. quiet area, cognitive area, and book corner) and the flow of the room must also be considered.

Toddlers are busy children, so they need open spaces to move and experiment with a variety of toys and equipment. Room colour, natural lighting, a space to move and develop growing muscles, and a variety of textures must be factored into an inclusive physical environment for toddlers. Areas for small group activities with multiple toys that promote parallel and social play, will help the toddler develop decision making skills.

### **Requirements:**

- A play activity room for not more than 15 children with an unobstructed floor area of 2.8m<sup>2</sup> per child.
- Washing, dressing, toileting, space for isolation, storage.
- Change table.
- For programs 6 hours and more per day, the room shall have:
  - an unobstructed glazed window area equivalent to not less than 10% of the floor area;
  - storage for beds and linens;
  - space for eating, resting (children and staff);
  - food preparation area;
  - office area; and
  - storage for outdoor equipment.
- Refer to DNA and Functional Plan.

### **Spatial**

- Provisions for a cot for each toddler enrolled for six hours or more per day. If cots are stored in playroom they are considered to be an obstruction and should not be included as part of the calculation for capacity.
- Separate storage closet with double doors for storage of cots (Cot size: 2 ft x 5 ft 3 in)
- Allow space for table set up at meal times.

### **Finishes and Materials**

- Staff preparation area to include counter with sink with above and below counter lockable storage cabinets.
- Activity counter with sink for toddler use, 450 mm (1 ft 6 in) high. Design should permit access to child in a wheelchair.

## DNA REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESCHOOLER GROUP

Definition: 31 months of age to including 5 years of age

| Requirements  | DNA Reference                                       |
|---|---|
| Staff Ratio   | Schedule 3  |
| Preschool: 1 staff to 8 children  | Maximum Number 24;                                  |
| JK/SK: 1 staff to 10 children   | of Children in 20                                   |
| SK: 1 staff to 12 children  | a Group 24  |
| Spaces used by children must be on or below second storey, unless otherwise approved by a Ministry Director |   |
| Play Activity   | S8(c), Schedule 3                                   |
| two groups: 16 children; 8 children   |   |
| 2.8m <sup>2</sup> of unobstructed floor space per child   | S6(1)   |
| Minimum lighting level 55 Dekalux   | S11   |
| <b>Glazed window area equivalent to 10% of floor area</b>   | <b>S10</b>  |
| <b>Minimum 2 hours of outdoor play; weather permitting play</b>   | <b>S3(4)(d)</b>                                     |
| Other   |   |
| Washing, dressing, toileting, isolation   | S5(2) (1)   |
| Storage   |   |
| Toys, indoor play material, equipment   | S5(2)(2)  |
| Food  | S5(2)(3)  |
| Records   | S5(2)(4)  |
| Medical supplies, cleaning materials, equipment, hazardous substances                                       | Inaccessible to children S5(2)(5), S5(3), S37(1)(b) |
| Heating and electrical equipment  | Inaccessible to children S5(2)(6), S5(3)            |
| <b>Beds and linen</b>   | <b>S5(4)3</b>                                       |
| <b>Eating and Resting</b>   | <b>S5(4)1</b>                                       |
| <b>Food Preparation Area</b>  | <b>S5(4)2, S42</b>                                  |
| <b>Staff Rest Area</b>  | <b>S5(4)4</b>                                       |
| <b>Storage for Outdoor Play Equipment</b>   | <b>S5(4)5</b>                                       |
| <b>Office Area</b>  | <b>S5(4)6</b>                                       |
| Designated place of shelter in the event of emergency evacuation  | S27(1)(f)   |
| Equipment and Furnishings   |   |
| <b>Bedding for rest periods for each child</b>  | <b>S15.3</b>  |
| <b>A cot for each child</b>   | <b>S15.6</b>  |
| First Aid kit and manual in a readily available location  | S36   |
| Fire safety and emergency information procedure plan posted in conspicuous place in each room               | S27(1)(c)   |
| Minimum temperature maintained at twenty degrees Celsius  | S12   |
| Area for posting of activities, emergency phone numbers and meal menus                                      | S28, S41(1), S3(2)(a)                               |

Note:

Provide quantity of washrooms and fixtures in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code (OBC)* S4

Provide barrier free access in accordance with the *OBC* and *ODA* S4

Items in *italic/bold* are required for programs that operate for six hours or more in a day

Refer to *DNA* for exact wording of the above text



## Preschool Room Considerations

A preschool room should be designed for children to engage in large and small group activities while further enhancing ever-growing independent and self-help skills. A preschool room should have a large carpeted area for group socialization. Distinct and well-defined areas (e.g. science and discovery area, literacy area), as defined by placement of furniture and equipment, will allow for self-directed guidance and facilitate the flow of activity within the room. A larger bathroom space and cubby area, with child-size amenities, will further enhance self-help skills. As always, room size, wall colour, natural lighting, and providing a variety of textures, within an inclusive setting, continue to be paramount.

### Requirements:

- A play activity room for not more than 24 children with an unobstructed floor area of  $2.8\text{m}^2$  per child.
- Washing, dressing, toileting, space for isolation, storage.
- For programs 6 hours and more per day, the room shall have:
  - an unobstructed glazed window area equivalent to not less than 10% of the floor area;
  - storage for beds and linens;
  - space for eating, resting (children and staff);
  - food preparation area;
  - office area; and
  - storage for outdoor equipment.
- Refer to DNA and Functional Plan

### Junior Kindergarten/Senior Kindergarten

- A play activity room for not more than 20 children with an unobstructed floor area of  $2.8\text{m}^2$ .
- All other design considerations are the same as for the preschool group.

### Senior Kindergarten

- A play activity room for not more than 24 children with an unobstructed floor area of  $2.8\text{m}^2$ .
- All other design considerations are the same as for the preschool group.

### Spatial Considerations:

- Provide areas for gross and fine motor play, eating, learning, and resting.
- Provision of a cot for each child, set up at rest times. Separate closet with double doors for storage of cots. Cot size: 600mm x 1575mm (2 ft x 5 ft 3in). If cots are stored in playroom they are considered to be an obstruction and should not be included as part of the calculation for capacity.
- Allow space for table set up at eating times.
- It is recommended that cubbies be separated to prevent the spread of lice.

**Materials and Equipment**

- Staff preparation area to include 900 mm (3 ft) high counter with sink and above and below counter lockable storage cabinets.
- Provide activity counter with sink for children's use with a height of 500 mm to 550 mm (1 ft 8 in to 1 ft 10 in). Design should permit access to child in a wheelchair.

## DNA REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL AGE GROUP

Definition: 6 years of age to including 12 years of age

| Requirements  |                                       | DNA Reference            |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Staff Ratio   | Maximum Number of Children in a Group | Schedule 3               |
| 1 staff to 15 children  | 30                                    |                          |
| <hr/>   |                                       |                          |
| Play Activity   |                                       | S8(d), Schedule 3        |
| 2.8m <sup>2</sup> of unobstructed floor space per child                                       |                                       | S6(1)                    |
| Minimum lighting level 55 Dekalux   |                                       | S11                      |
| <b>Glazed window area equivalent to 10% of floor area</b>                                     |                                       | <b>S10</b>               |
| <b>Min. 2 hours of outdoor play; weather permitting play</b>                                  |                                       | <b>S3(4)(d)</b>          |
| Other   |                                       |                          |
| Washing, dressing, toileting, isolation   |                                       | S5(2)1                   |
| Storage   |                                       |                          |
| Toys, indoor play material, equipment   |                                       | S5(2)2                   |
| Food  |                                       | S5(2)3                   |
| Records   |                                       | S5(2)4                   |
| Medical supplies, cleaning materials, equipment, hazardous substances                         | Inaccessible to children              | S5(2)5, S5(3), S37(1)(b) |
| Heating and electrical equipment  | Inaccessible to children              | S5(2)6, S5(3)            |
| <b>Eating and Resting</b>   |                                       | <b>S5(4)1</b>            |
| <b>Food Preparation Area</b>  |                                       | <b>S5(4)2, S42</b>       |
| <b>Staff Rest Area</b>  |                                       | <b>S5(4)4</b>            |
| <b>Storage for Outdoor Play Equipment</b>   |                                       | <b>S5(4)5</b>            |
| <b>Office Area</b>  |                                       | <b>S5(4)6</b>            |
| Designated place of shelter in the event of emergency evacuation                              |                                       | S27(1)(f)                |
| <hr/>   |                                       |                          |
| Equipment and Furnishings   |                                       |                          |
| <b>Bedding for rest periods for each child</b>  |                                       | <b>S15.3</b>             |
| First Aid kit and manual in a readily available location                                      |                                       | S36                      |
| Fire safety and emergency information procedure plan posted in conspicuous place in each room |                                       | S27(1)(c)                |
| Minimum temperature maintained at twenty degrees Celsius                                      |                                       | S12                      |
| Area for posting of activities, emergency phone numbers and meal menus                        |                                       | S28, S41(1), S3(2)(a)    |

Note:

Provide quantity of washrooms and fixtures in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code (OBC)* S4

Provide barrier free access in accordance with the *OBC* and *ODA* S4

Items in *italic/bold* are required for programs that operate for six hours or more in a day

Refer to *DNA* for exact wording of the above text

## **School Age Considerations**

School-age children attend child care centres which are often located in schools. The programs are typically provided before and after school, at lunch, and during school holidays. A relaxed environment with comfortable areas for quiet activity, small groups of friends and areas for homework completion are important. Special projects that could span several days need adequate space. School-aged children also require areas such as gymnasiums for group sports and additional space for projects that extend over a number of days.

The room should be designed and set up to reflect the needs of this older age grouping, respecting the need for both group and independent activities.

### **Requirements:**

- A play activity room for not more than 30 children with an unobstructed floor area of 2.8m<sup>2</sup> per child.
- Washing, dressing, toileting, small food preparation, space for isolation, storage.
- For programs 6 hours and more per day, the room shall have:
  - an unobstructed glazed window area equivalent to not less than 10% of the floor area,
  - space for eating;
  - staff rest area;
  - food preparation area;
  - office area; and
  - storage for outdoor equipment.

## **Areas Common to all Programs**

Consult DNA and Functional Plan for applicability of the items listed below.

- Entry
- General Circulation
- Office
- Staff Room
- Washrooms
- Staff Washroom
- Children's Washroom
- General Storage
- Caretaker's Closet
- Exterior Equipment Storage
- Cubby Storage
- Diapering Change Areas
- Laundry
- Kitchen

## **Entry**

The main entry should be designed to both provide a welcoming environment and a necessary level of supervision and security. Ideally the entry should lead directly to the child care facility; this reduces the amount of circulation space and improves supervision. In situations where the entrance is remote from the facility by way of a corridor, the designer should employ adequate signage and way-finding elements, such as colour, finishes and lighting to improve the route. The operator should ensure that there are not multiple entrances or exits along the corridor route that could pose a security risk.

It is also important to consider the above factors when determining the location and access to the playground.

The entrance should be large enough to accommodate parents, staff and children during peak hours. The design should take into account that this is a social area where people tend to linger and talk. Consideration should be given to locating the cubby area as close to the entrance as possible. An area for posting notices, seating and display art would contribute positively to the character of the space.

## **General Circulation – Corridors**

The facility should be designed to reduce the number and length of corridors. This can be accomplished by carefully laying out the various program components with the support spaces spilling into the activity areas. Grouping the various support spaces around the activities spaces provide the opportunity to create a dynamic interactive facility, improves sight lines and can reduce the overall size of the facility.

## **Office**

The office in a child care centre can serve more than one function. It can be designed to accommodate administration, staff and parent meetings, and it can provide a quiet isolation area for a sick child, with adult supervision.

The office should be located in an area of the centre that is strategically located to greet parents and visitors and to allow the Supervisor to have a good view of the centre's activities. The office should also be within "hearing range" of the main activity areas.

### **Requirements:**

- Office space.
- Locked storage for records.

### **Considerations:**

- Space should provide privacy when needed.
- Large enough to accommodate a meeting table and chairs.

- Room for desk, chair, record storage and resource material.
- Place for a cot for a child who is ill.
- Windows to observe interior and exterior entry to the centre and to provide natural light.
- Data wiring to support high speed internet, telephone, intercom, fax machine and security equipment.

## **Staff Room**

A staff room is a place where child care staff can have their lunch, short breaks and rest from their daily duties. It is important therefore, that an area be set aside just for them, in an atmosphere that is calm and soothing so that they can return to their work refreshed and relaxed.

Staff rooms can be shared in multi-purpose facilities (i.e. schools).

### **Requirements:**

- Staff room

### **Considerations:**

- Situated so that staff are readily available in the event of an emergency.
- Relaxing retreat from child-centred activity.
- Built-in storage or lockers for personal belongings.
- Shelving for library and resource material.
- Data wiring for internet access, telephone.
- Convenient to office and adult washroom.
- Message board.
- Comfortable furnishings.
- Small fridge for staff lunches.

## **Washrooms**

### **Requirements**

### **Required Number Of Plumbing Fixtures For A Child Care Facility**

The following section is provided as a general guideline to assist in the preliminary planning of the facility. The childcare operator's consultant is responsible to ensure that the design meets the requirements of the *OBC* and all other requirements of authorities having jurisdiction, i.e. Public Health. The following are some of the requirements of the *OBC* pertinent to the preliminary planning of the child care centre. The text has been edited for ease of reference. All information should be verified by the client group's consultant for accuracy, relevance and currency.

| <b>Age of Children</b> | <b>Max, Number of Children per Toilet and Sink</b> |
|------------------------|--|
|------------------------|--|

|         |                             |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| under 2 | 10 (unisex)                 |
| 2 to 5  | 10 (unisex)                 |
| 6 to 9  | 15 for males/15 for females |
| over 9  | 30 for males/26 for females |

Refer to *Ontario Building Code* for number of washrooms required for staff and other occupants of the building.

### **Staff Washroom**

A washroom for staff and other adults in the centre (parents, students, visitors) is necessary to ensure privacy and personal hygiene. Adult washrooms can be shared in multi-purpose facilities (i.e. schools).

#### **Considerations:**

- Convenient to staff room and office.
- Clearly marked (male/female).
- Provide a change counter .

### **Children's Washroom**

#### **Considerations:**

- It is strongly recommended the public does not have access to children's toilet facilities during the hours of program operations.
- If the washroom contains not less than two toilets the room shall be designed so that toilets and sinks are not visible from the entrance to the room.

#### **Fittings and Fixtures**

- Locate mirror, soap dispenser and paper towel holder at height suitable for children.
- Counter Heights:
  - Appropriate counter height for toddlers 450 mm (1 ft 6 in).
  - Appropriate counter height for preschoolers is 550 mm (1 ft 10 in).
- Child height toilets provide more autonomy to toddlers and removes fear of falling.
- Where only regular height toilets are specified, sturdy stepping stools are recommended.
- If a door or gate is installed to the room, hardware should permit easy entry and exit by staff.
- Avoid toilet cubicles that may hinder staff assistance, visual surveillance, and interaction between children.
- Ensure electrical outlets and hot water taps are inaccessible to children. Install hot water temperature limiter to prevent scalding.



### **Spatial Consideration**

- Washroom should be directly accessible from play activity room to allow:
  - Easy access by children.
  - Privacy and independence for children.
  - Supervision by staff without leaving the playroom.
- Should be convenient to outdoor play areas.
- May be a shared facility for infant/toddler groups.
- Provide private facility for each sex for school age children.
- When there are two activity rooms a centrally located washroom, accessible from both rooms is recommended.

### **General Storage**

A well-planned closed storage area is a vital component of a child care centre and yet the amount of space allocated for it is underestimated. This area provides a place for staff to safely store materials and equipment, as well as items used on a rotation basis. If there is not sufficient closed storage, items tend to clutter the hallways and at times, part of the activity rooms. Not only is this dangerous, it adversely impacts upon the most needed program space for children. In addition, it is difficult to maintain control of inventory, equipment and materials unless they are stored in an organized manner.

#### **Requirements:**

- Lockable storage space for records, toys, indoor play materials and equipment, cleaning materials, hazardous substances, equipment and heating and electrical equipment.
- Provide heat detectors, smoke alarms, sprinklers as required by *OBC*.

#### **General Considerations:**

- Unobstructed floor and wall space that is well organized, efficient and convenient for staff accessing and/or putting equipment away.
- Consider the type of toys, indoor play material, and equipment and design appropriate size with consideration of items to be stored.
- Area of .55 m<sup>2</sup> (6 sq ft) per child recommended.
- Include storage of triple strollers if separate stroller storage is not provided.
- Program storage located off a corridor, should be convenient to activity rooms and multi-purpose space.
- Provide adjustable and fixed shelving as appropriate.
- Storage cupboards should be durable and easy to maintain with laminate finish and solid hardwood or vinyl edges.
- Storage rooms should be ventilated to eliminate odours and dampness.
- General storage should be accessible from a barrier-free path of travel.
- Stroller storage location should permit ease of maneuvering and access to and from outdoors. Triple stroller size: 1800mm long x 525 mm wide x 900 mm high (6 ft. x 1ft. 9 in. x 3 ft.).

## **Caretaker's Closet**

### **Requirements:**

- Storage for cleaning materials and equipment and other hazardous substances.
- Provide locked door.
- Comply with *Workplace Hazardous Information System and Occupational Health and Safety Act R.R.O. 1990, Regulation 860 (WHMIS)*.

### **Considerations:**

#### **Spatial**

- Proximity to area served.
- Design for functional efficiency.
- A room or space for the storage of janitorial supplies shall be separated from the remainder of the building by a required fire separation.

#### **Finishes:**

- The closet should have imperious surfaces selected for ease of maintenance.

#### **Material and Equipment:**

- A recessed floor and curved service sink with floor drain.
- Adjustable shelving of varying shelf widths.
- Hook strips for hanging brooms, mops, pails and vacuum cleaning hose is desirable.
- Provide exhaust ventilation.

## **Exterior Equipment Storage**

### **Requirements:**

- Lockable storage.
- Storage for outdoor play equipment.

### **Considerations:**

- The space should be designed for the storage for toys and play equipment.
- More than one storage room or shed could be provided to suit designated play areas. If shed is provided as part of the play space, ensure that it does not create a blind spot and compromise supervision of children and is not included in the play area measurement.
- Convenient access to a laundry sink or a sink in the caretaker's room for sanitizing toys.
- Shelving as appropriate, and large hooks on walls to hang tricycles, toboggans etc.
- Provide either a wide single door of 1050 mm (3 ft 6 in) or a double door for easy removal of equipment.
- Durable and easy to maintain. Should be constructed to be vermin-proof, well ventilated and have a concrete or paved floor that is sloped to drain.
- Lockable and accessible to staff only.

## **Cubby Storage:**

No requirements

### **Considerations:**

#### **Spatial**

- A separate room off a corridor or space along a corridor for the storage of boots, coats, strollers and other personal effects.
- This area should be convenient to the room it serves but separated enough as to not distract or disturb programmed activities.
- It is desirable for it to be located in a manner that children do not first walk through (with muddy boots) the program space to access the cubby.
- There should be one cubby per child.
- Designed to prevent the transference of lice.

#### **Materials and Equipment**

- Millwork should be designed to be abuse and water resistant and scaled for the anticipated users.
- Flooring should be slip resistant and non porous.
- An area or counter for dressing a child makes this task safer and more convenient. A child height bench is required for putting shoes and boots on and off. As these areas can become busy and congested during peak periods, ensure the room is large enough to allow clients to access the storage area while not blocking corridors.

- This space should be well lit and ventilated. Consideration should be given in the design for storage of wet clothing and boots. Small partitions (gables) should be provided between cubbies.

## **Diapering Change Areas**

### **Requirements:**

- Toileting area.
- The change counter and the food preparation counter must be apart to prevent potential cross contamination.
- The diaper change area sink cannot be used for food preparation or program activity use.

### **Considerations:**

- Safety and hygiene are primary considerations in the design of this area. Children cannot be left unattended.

### **Spatial**

- These areas should be located near or in a washroom and the orientation of a change counter should permit visual surveillance of program room.

### **Materials and Equipment**

- Storage for wipes, diapers etc. should be located within reach but ensure that any overhead storage cannot accidentally drop on the change area.
- Make sure storage areas are conveniently located and of a size to store oversized items such as diapers.
- The change area can be a table or counter space for every 10 children, based on licensed capacity.
  - It should be adjacent to a sink and toilet and suitable for dressing and changing the diaper of one child at a time.
  - Change counter size: 1200 mm long x 750 mm wide x 900 mm high (4 ft long x 2 ft 6 in wide x 3 ft high).
  - Change counter should have a rounded raised edge of approx. 100mm to 150mm (4" to 6") to protect the child from rolling over.
  - The surface should be constructed from an impervious material and have a coved back- splash. In toddler areas a step should be provided to help in the lifting of the child.

## **Laundry Area**

### **Requirements:**

- Lockable storage.
- Storage for linens.

### **Considerations:**

#### **Use**

- Area for sorting, washing, drying clothes, and sanitizing outdoor toys.
- Storage for linen and bedding.

#### **Spatial**

- Efficient work flow in washing, drying, and folding of linen and children's clothes.
- Laundry room should be lockable so that children cannot access washer/dryer.
- In vicinity of kitchen.
- Laundry room should be accessible from a barrier free path of travel.
- One laundry area may be shared by two or more groups.

#### **Equipment and Materials**

- Size of equipment should take into account drying of children's outdoor wear.
- Determine space necessary for washer and dryer. Provide water supply, drains and vent.
- Vent exhaust to exterior.
- Space constraint at small centres may dictate a closet type facility with stackable washer and dryer.
- Large facility may require commercial washer and dryer.
- If space permits, provide counter with double sink or laundry tub.
- Area for secure storage of cleaning materials and equipment and other hazardous substances, inaccessible to children.
- Counter when provided should be wheelchair accessible.
- Finishes should be non-slip, impervious to moisture, and easy to maintain.

## **Kitchen**

Kitchens can be designed either as a full on-site meal preparation area or as a receiving kitchen to which a caterer would deliver meals and snacks on a daily basis. During the functional planning stage of the centre, discussion should include the type of meal service anticipated, so that the kitchen space can be designed appropriately. Consideration of capital costs, operating costs, availability of community catering services etc.

### **There are two types of kitchens:**

1. Kitchens with On-Site Food Preparation
2. Kitchens Receiving Catered Food

Operator should refer to their Functional Plan to determine whether meals and snacks will be prepared on site, or catered.

### **General Kitchen Exhaust Considerations**

As a commercial exhaust system represents a large capital investment, the operator should check with local health and building departments to determine both need and requirements for system. The *OBC* notes:

- In some instances a commercial exhaust hood may be required. A grease interceptor may also be required. Refer to the requirements in *Part 6 and A-9.10.1.4.(1)* of the *OBC* and *NFPA 96 “Installation of Equipment for the Removal of Smoke and grease-laden Vapours from Commercial Cooking Equipment”*, which in turn references *“Commercial Cooking Equipment”*.

While *NFPA 96* does not apply to domestic equipment for normal residential family use, it should apply to domestic equipment used in commercial, institutional and similar cooking applications where the potential of smoke and grease-laden vapour exceeds that for normal residential family use.

### **Requirements:**

- Space designated for preparation of food if meals are to be prepared on premises.
- Compliance with local Health and *OBC* requirements.
- Secure storage.

### **Considerations:**

#### **Materials and Equipment**

- The floor and surfaces should be impervious, easily cleaned, and comply with current regulations under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*.
- All surfaces, walls, passageways and ceiling finishes should be easy to clean.
- Counters should have a continuous back splash.
- Cabinet exteriors and interiors to be impervious and easily cleaned.
- Provide separate sinks for washing of dishes, cutlery, pots and pans.
- Provide a dedicated basin for washing hands.
- Provide sufficient floor drains to facilitate cleaning.
- Adequate electrical outlets for specified equipment.

#### **Spatial**

- Situate kitchen area in a location that it may serve two or more programs.
- A washroom should not be located next to the kitchen area nor should the kitchen be a passageway to the washroom.
- Consider flow from preparation to clean up.
- There should be efficient work flow area with minimal potential for cross contamination.

- Minimize possibility of cross-contamination.
- No door should open directly to outside, windows should not open directly on food preparation surfaces.
- For larger kitchens choose a location that minimizes impact of noise on play activity and sleeping areas.
- Provide visual area for children to observe. Vision panel to allow children to view food preparation activities is an asset.

### **Storage**

- Be in proximity to receiving entrance.
- Securable storage. Sufficient space for storage of perishable foods for a minimum of at least one day.
- Provide secure, lockable storage for medical supplies, kitchen cleaning materials and equipment and other hazardous substances.
- Sanitation
  - Securable cleaning supply closet.
  - Temporary holding space for garbage and recycling bins.
  - Designate area for storage of recyclable material.
  - Space is required for covered waste receptacles in the kitchen.

### **Other**

#### **For small food preparation areas:**

- Provide counter, base cabinet and upper cabinets for food and utensil storage.
- Provide an area for:
  - Warming bottles. Fourplex receptacle for bottle warmers.
  - Microwave space with electrical outlet.
  - Small refrigerator. If bar refrigerator is appropriate, installation at 750 mm (2 ft 6 in) above floor level is recommended to minimize back strain on staff.
  - Provide an area to chart and file children's eating patterns.
  - Cabinets to be lockable.
  - Dishwasher – consult Public Health for requirements.

## **ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

The following should be considered in the design of a child care facility. Consult with the designer regarding durability, energy efficiency, maintenance, and other sustainable design considerations in the selection of materials and equipment:

### **Noise and Sound Transmission**

- Wall types with increased sound transmission class ratings (STC) should be considered when sound control is important. A minimum 55 STC between sleep room (if provided) and balance of space is recommended and a 50 STC rating for the balance of all other spaces that are intended to be separated from other rooms.
- Full height demising walls are recommended where it is important to isolate noise.
- Design mechanical ductwork to limit transfer of sound between areas.
- Sound-moderating acoustic tile ceilings and absorbent wall finishes can reduce noise impact.
- In existing buildings, suspended ceiling grids and/or sound attenuation panels can be installed.
- Quiet and intimate areas can be created within rooms by varying ceiling heights.

### **Natural and Artificial Light**

#### **Natural**

- Natural light and views are a high priority. Operable windows are preferred even when building is air conditioned. Window openings should be at a higher level, out of children's reach.
- Exterior windows promote engagement with the outside world.
- Windows that open into corridors or between rooms help children to see themselves as part of a larger community. They also permit visual surveillance by staff from adjoining rooms.
- Each room must have clear window glass that is the equivalent of 10% of the floor space to ensure natural light.
  - Light can be "shared" from one room to the next by enlarging existing windows or cutting out windows between rooms, however, it will not be counted in the calculation of direct light.

#### **Artificial**

- Florescent lighting is the most efficient and cost effective form of artificial lighting.
  - If they are to be used, it is recommended that bulbs are selected that provide the most natural colour mix.
  - Fixture covers can lessen the glare of florescent lighting.
  - Whenever possible florescent lighting should be supplemented with incandescent or halogen lights and sconces installed on a separate light switch.
- A range of lighting will provide program areas with the light needed for specific tasks or atmosphere.



- Minimum lighting level 55 Dekalux
- Dimmer switches should be provided in sleep and/or quiet areas.
- Each room should have its own light switch.

## **Windows**

- Windows shall be provided with a regulator preventing them from opening more than 100 mm (4 in.) where it is possible for a child to access the window or for all windows located above the first floor.
- Consider making the upper portion of the window a minimum 1000 mm (3') above the floor.
- Select high performance windows and screens to reduce operating costs and to reduce drafts.

### **Window Coverings**

- Easily cleaned or vacuumed window treatments, such as shades should be used. Curtains can cause health concerns.
- Cords should be eliminated or secured in a manner that if they are kept out of reach of children.
- In sleep areas window coverings should effectively block the light, be accessible to staff and easy to use.
- Use of PVC mini-blinds can be hazardous to the health of children and should not be used.

## **Doors**

### **Hardware**

- Install lever door hardware throughout.
- Consider accessibility, i.e. level of hardware etc.
- All doors must be operable from the interior without the use of a key.
- Building code requirements can conflict with program and security requirements; therefore consider security and exiting issues early in the design process.
- Check with local fire and building departments regarding use of magnetic locks and electronic hold open devices for doors.
- Door closures should be slow-release as they close.
- Analyze different keying and access systems. Options include proximity readers, card system, numeric pads, and keys. Ensure selected system is compatible with auto door opener and security system.
- Install locks on all storage, closet, and cabinet doors.

### **Doors**

- At room entrance “dutch” doors with glazed top and bottom panels are recommended.
- Provide solid core doors with double glazed vision panels when sound transmission is a concern. Provided sound seal gasket and impact bumpers to further reduce noise.

- Sleep Room (if provided) and Play Activity Room doors should be wide enough to allow easy maneuvering and evacuation of cribs in case of emergency. Consider 1000 mm (3 ft 4 in) wide doors.

## **Finishes**

### **Floor - General**

- Consideration should be given to the existing floor temperature in infant and toddler areas. For example, if the floor is a concrete slab over an unheated space consideration may be given to selecting a floor material or a floor system to mitigate this problem.
- Select floors that are durable, easy to clean, and maintain.
- Consider installing sheet flooring material and vinyl tile in various colours and patterns.
- The surfaces of ramps, landings and stair treads shall have a finish that is slip resistant and have either a colour contrast or a distinctive pattern to demarcate the leading edge of the stair tread, landing, as well as, the beginning and end of ramp.
- In rooms where: food and/or drink are prepared, stored, or served, and in washrooms, floors and floor coverings shall be tight, smooth and non-absorbent.
- A coved base should be installed.
- It is recommended the entry vestibule floors should be non-slip with coved base.

### **Sheet Flooring**

- All sheet flooring should have welded seams.

### **Carpets**

- Carpets are not recommended throughout a centre.
- If carpet is desirable, consider carpet tiles.
- Choose non-abrasive materials with a non-slip backing.
- Care should be taken that carpet edges are bound and flat to avoid tripping. Secure area rugs to prevent tripping hazards.
- In sleeping areas, carpet should be dense and low pile, glue down type for ease of crib movement.
- Conducive to high frequency of clean/washing.

### **Walls**

- Install abuse-resistant gypsum board.
- Install cement board in all wet areas.
- Install wall protectors and corner guards on the lower half of the wall in high use areas.
- Consider materials such as vinyl wall covering for durability and ease of maintenance, Vinyl provides a tackable surface from floor to ceiling.

### **Paint**

- Choose high-quality, washable paint.
- Carefully consider the various paint sheens available and the appropriateness for each area and surface.

### **Millwork and Cabinets - General**

- Counters to have post-formed, coved back-splash. Counters to be surfaced with impervious material that is easy to maintain.
- Provide solid edging in either vinyl or wood on all cabinet doors and shelves.
- It is recommended that all millwork be constructed with durable and easily cleanable surface such as plastic laminate or melamine (including the interior of the cabinets).
- Provide locks on door and drawers where required.
- Use heavy duty 110 degree hinges and full extension drawer slides.

### **Size and Design**

- Cabinets designed to store equipment or personal belongings intended to be accessible to children should be low to promote children's independence.
- The design of moveable storage units contributes to program flexibility.
- Refer to specific program areas for recommended dimensions.

### **Handrails**

- Install handrails at a height that is suitable for children.
- Diameter of handrail should be graspable by children.
- Handrail to be graspable the entire length of the stair.
- Provide handrails on all stairs regardless if it is an *OBC* requirement.

## Safety and Security

### Glazing

- Interior and exterior glazing: provide protective firm, laminated and or tempered glass in areas that glass could be broken. Laminated glass and safety film provides a higher level of security than tempered glass. Refer to *OBC* for additional requirements.
- Interior doors should have a view window 100mm x 610 mm (4" x 25") so that all spaces in the building can be supervised. Provide interior windows to improve sight lines.

### Attachment of Equipment/Materials

- Provide solid blocking in walls. Attach cabinets, book cases, grab bars, hand rails, guards, etc. through wall board and into blocking or other approved fastening device.

### Plumbing

- Provide gooseneck, single lever faucets with high limit temperature control for all hand basins.

### Electrical

- Locate electrical outlets in sufficient number to prevent unnecessary extension of cords for equipment and fixtures.
- Install safety coverings on all electrical outlets not in use.
- Ensure safety of children when specifying electric baseboard heaters.
- Consider location of lighting in relation to security cameras.
- Establish location for security monitor and recording device. Remote latches, auto door openers, and intercom must also be coordinated with each other as part of the entire system.
- Consider use of sound monitoring devices in areas such as the sleep room/area.

### Fire

- Ensure heat detectors, smoke alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are installed in locations as required by *OBC* and local Fire Department. If sprinklers are required ensure that adequate coverage is provided to all areas, including storage rooms and closets.
- Supply and install fire extinguishers.
- Prepare and post a fire safety and emergency plan.
  - Safety plan to be submitted to Local Fire Department for approval.
  - The approved Fire Safety Plan must be used to prepare and post a fire safety and emergency plan.
- Ensure areas for posters, artwork, etc. do not exceed permitted wall area for combustible materials. Consult with local Fire Department.

### Projections and Furniture Placement

- Controls of casement type windows tend to be at children's eye level and may cause injury.
- Avoid window projections into room and outer playground.

- Avoid protruding window sills with square edges.
- All fire exits must remain accessible in the case of an emergency, this is a *Fire Code Requirement*. Design entrance ways, corridors and all required exits large enough to ensure furnishings, equipment, strollers etc. that are used in the day-to-day activities of the centre have adequate space.
- Ensure furnishings do not obstruct barrier free path of travel.
- Secure furniture such as book cases or other items that could topple directly off the wall. Select, place and design furnishings in a manner that don't create a hazard for children. For example, do not have openings of a size where a child may get their head stuck.
- Carefully consider location of bulletin boards, dispensers or other objects that have materials or contents that may spill, become detached or grabbed by children.

## **Environmental Factors**

- Condensation and mould have become a major issue in buildings. Ventilation, good air circulation and exhaust, as well as, employing good building practice is critical.
- It is important to ensure that decayed or wet ceiling tile, plaster or gypsum board is replaced and that the cause of the problem is remediated.
- Basement areas should be inspected by companies having expertise in mould detection and remediation.
- Duct work and mechanical systems should be cleaned at the end of the project and prior to occupancy. New air filters should be installed.
- Paints, sealant and adhesives with low VOC should only be used.

## **Mechanical Systems**

- Ensure placement of heating and cooling vents do not blow directly on change counter or sleeping cots.
- Design ductwork to minimize sound transmission from one room to another. Special attention to be given, when provided to sleep rooms.
- Ensure hot radiation operates at a safe temperature or design radiators to be inaccessible to children.
- Ensure all valves and controls are inaccessible to children and access panels are either lockable or tamper proof.

### **Ventilation**

- Provide adequate exhaust ventilation in all laundry rooms, washrooms, change areas, and storage rooms. Refer to *OBC*.
- Use quality equipment to minimize noise and vibrations.

## **Energy Conservation**

- Review options and analyze operating and replacement costs when selecting materials and systems.
- Install motion detectors and light sensors to control lighting and conserve on energy.

- Install “set back” thermostats (temperature must be maintained at 20C while children are on premises)
- Install awnings to control solar gain in the summer.
- Upgrade windows and insulation.
- Install weather stripping and thresholds at all exterior doors.
- Provide vestibules to control heat loss at entrances.

## **Furnishings**

- Indicate furniture layout on concept drawings. Selected equipment and furnishings to be co-coordinated with respect to electrical locations requirements, phone outlets and data wiring. Furnishings and equipment should fit into proposed space.
- When designing or purchasing moveable furnishings, ensure they are sturdy and not prone to toppling.
- Consider floor space and storage requirements for furnishings that are to be stored or folded away.

## **Telephone and Data Wiring**

- Determine location of telephone, security and data/internet outlets early in design process and ensure the work is both coordinated and included in the contract.
- Review the various options for data wiring, telephone and security systems with service providers.

## **Notices, Signage and First Aid**

- Provide space for:
  - Posting licence and licensing poster.
  - First Aid Kit and instructions.
  - fire safety plan.
  - emergency phone numbers.
  - menu posting.
  - program posting.
  - Accessible bathrooms
- In all areas accessible to children avoid using bulletin boards with pins.
- Budget for installation of interior and exterior signage.
- For exterior signs, check local sign by-laws for allowable size and location.

# **DNA REQUIREMENTS FOR DAY NURSERIES PROVIDING SERVICE TO HANDICAPPED CHILDREN**

|   | <i>DNA</i><br>Reference |
|---|-------------------------|
| <p>Definition</p> <p>"handicapped child" means a child who has a physical or mental impairment that is likely to continue for a prolonged period of time and who as a result thereof is limited in activities pertaining to normal living as verified by objective psychological or medical findings and includes a child with a developmental disability</p> | S1                      |
| <p>Compliance</p> <p>Compliance with the requirements of the latest addition of the <i>Ontario Building Code</i> made under the <i>Building Code Act</i></p> <p><i>Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001</i><br/><i>Human Rights Code</i><br/><i>Canadian Charter of rights and Freedoms</i></p>  | S4(1)e                  |
| <p>Location</p> <p>Each room that is for the use of handicapped children must be on or below the second storey unless otherwise approved by a director</p>  | S9                      |

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Note:

All new construction must provide barrier free access

Barrier-free access must be provided in accordance with the *OBC* and *ODA*

Refer to the *DNA* for exact wording of the above text.

S4

## **BARRIER-FREE DESIGN**

The following section is provided as a general guideline to assist in the preliminary planning of the facility. The child care operator's consultant is responsible to ensure that the design meets the requirements of the *Ontario Building Code (OBC)* and all other requirements of authorities having jurisdiction. The following are some of the requirements of the *OBC* pertinent to the preliminary planning of the child care centre. The text has been edited for ease of reference. All information should be verified by the operator's consultant for accuracy, relevance and currency.

### **Definition**

**Barrier-free:** *That a building and its facilities can be approached, entered, and used by persons with physical or sensory disabilities.*

The barrier-free requirements apply to all child care facilities and playgrounds.

Accessibility "within" a floor area means that in general, all normally occupied spaces are to be accessible. The concept of wheelchair accessibility does not extend to building service facilities or to all floor levels other than the level in which the main entrance is located unless the other floors are served by an elevator. Access, in addition to rooms, includes such facilities as, service/reception counters, drinking fountains, balcony, washrooms, general work areas, laundry areas etc.

### **Barrier-Free Entrances**

Provide an accessible route from parking area to accessible principal entrance.

Every building with three or less entrances requires one barrier-free entrance.

All barrier-free entrances must lead to outdoor sidewalks or ramps that conform to a barrier-free path of travel.

Entrance doors must be equipped with power door operators and when the barrier-free entrance enters into a vestibule, the door leading from the vestibule to the main floor shall also be equipped with a power operator.

### **Exterior Walks**

Exterior walks as part of a barrier-free path of travel must:

- not be interrupted by steps or abrupt changes in level.
- have a permanent, firm, slip-resistant surface.
- have a width not less than 1100mm (3 ft. 7 in.) and a gradient not exceeding 1:20.
- be designed as a ramp when exceeding a gradient of 1:20.
- be free from obstructions except for handrails projecting not more than 4 in. from either side.



- have a minimum head clearance height of 1980mm (6 ft. 6 in.).
- have a level area adjacent to entrance doorways which conforms to *Clause 3.8.3.4.(1)(c)* of the *OBC*.

A barrier-free path of travel requires an unobstructed passage width of not less than 1060mm (3 ft.6 in.) and may have a maximum beveled level change of no more the 13mm (1/2 in.).

## **Barrier-Free Washrooms**

A barrier-free path of travel shall be provided to a barrier-free washroom designed to accommodate disabled persons in conformance with the appropriate requirements in *Articles 3.8.3.8 to 3.8.3.12* of the *OBC*.

All required hardware should be:

- securely attached to the walls
- mounted at the required heights.

## **Doorways and Doors**

Every doorway within a barrier-free path of travel shall have:

- a clear width of not less than 810mm (2 ft. 8 in.) when the door is in the open position.
- determine the size of door with respect to the width of corridor on either side of the door.
- thresholds for doorways shall not exceed 13mm (1/2 in.) above the finished floor.
- adequate room on both sides of the door including space for the angle/position of approach, 610mm ( 2 ft.) when the door swings towards the occupant and 300mm (1ft.) when the door swings away from the operator.
- door “knobs” must be lever type.
- closers for doors to operate within the required forces.

## **Ramps**

Ramps located within a barrier-free path of travel must have:

- a minimum width between handrails of 870mm (2 ft. 10 in.).
- a maximum gradient of 1:12.
- a level area of at least 1500mm (4 ft. 11 in.) at the top and bottom of the ramp where doors are located.
- a level area of at least 1500mm (4 ft. 11 in.) at intervals of not less than 9m (29 ft. 6 in.) along the length of the ramp.
- continuous handrails on both sides of the ramp.
- a wall or guard on both side of the ramp.

Floors or walks within a barrier-free path of travel having a gradient of 1:20 or more shall be designed as ramps.

## Accessibility Signs

The international symbol for accessibility for disabled persons must be installed to indicate the location of barrier-free entrances, facilities, means of egress, and other areas designated for use by disabled persons.

## Parking for the Disabled

Parking for the disabled should be located as close to the barrier-free entrance as possible.

Car wheelchair parking requires:

- a width no less than 2700 mm (9 ft)
- an access aisle of 1500 mm (5 ft) beside the car.

Van wheelchair parking requires:

- a width no less than 3000 mm (10 ft)
- an access aisle of 1500 mm (5 ft) beside the van.

Van wheelchair *parallel* parking requires:

- a width no less than 2600 mm (8 ft 8 in)
- a length of 7400 mm (24 ft 8 in).

## Outdoor play

Need for play and fun is the same for all children regardless of their level of ability or disability. Design professionals can contribute a great deal through their creative approach in planning and design of universal outdoor play that will respond to the needs of all children.

Consideration should be given to afford children or adults with special needs access to the playground via transfer stations or ramps.

## Access

- Children with special needs should be able to access the outdoor play as well as all transportation points easily.
- Provide hard-paved paths which connect to all activity areas.
- Recommended passing width for wheelchairs is 2100 mm (7 ft).
- Steps and abrupt changes in the surface and levels of circulation paths should be avoided.
- When providing washrooms that are accessible from the playground, ensure that the washroom is barrier-free.
- If play structures are provided, they should be accessible to all children regardless of their abilities.

## **Nature Play Area**

Provide a nature play area for children.

If a garden has been planned for, provide raised planting beds so that they are within reach of a child in a wheelchair. The fall height of the raised planting bed may require safety surfacing if a standing surface is present.

## **Miscellaneous**

- Install emergency strobe lights for hearing impaired.
- Ensure the mounting heights of light fixtures, and other equipment are at an accessible height.

# DNA REQUIREMENTS FOR OUTDOOR PLAY AREAS

## Outdoor Play Areas

| <i>DNA</i> Requirements   | <i>DNA</i> Reference |
|---|----------------------|
| <b>General</b>  |                      |
| Provide quantity, design and type of play equipment and furnishings appropriate to the needs and age of the children enrolled.  | S14(1)(2)            |
| <b>Size</b>   |                      |
| Minimum outdoor play area of 5.6m <sup>2</sup> per licensed child for programs that run 6 hours or more   | S21(1)               |
| If licensed for greater than 64 children, then space above may be divided by fence into two or more areas, to allow all children to use play space at one time. Maximum number of children per fenced area not to exceed 64 children at one time. | S21(2)               |
| <b>Location</b>   |                      |
| Is located at grade and adjacent to the premises unless otherwise approved by a director.   | S22(a)               |
| Designed so staff can maintain constant supervision of the children.  | S22(c)               |
| <b>Age</b>  |                      |
| If used by children under 6 years of age; fenced to a minimum height of 1.2m and has one or more gates that are secured at all times.   | S22(b)               |
| Infants not yet able to walk are separated from other children during active play.  | S53(4)(a)            |
| Children under 30 months of age are separated from other children during active play, except in the case of handicapped children.   | S53(4)(b)            |
| <b>Storage</b>  |                      |
| Storage for outdoor play equipment.   | S5(4)5               |

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Note:

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Provide barrier free access in accordance with the <i>OBC</i> and the <i>ODA</i> | S4 |
| Refer to <i>DNA</i> for exact wording of the above text                          |    |

## Playground

### Requirement:

- For day nurseries that run for more than 6 hours a day, a playground must be provided.
- The playground must be located at grade and adjacent to the premises. A playground may, with Director's approval, be located in another location, such as a rooftop playground.
- For playgrounds used by children under 6 years of age, a fenced area with a minimum height of 1.2m (4 ft.) must be installed with a gate. The maximum number of children per fenced area is 64.
- The playground must be designed to ensure constant supervision by staff. Blind spots created by equipment or sheds etc. must be avoided. Screening and walls that offer opportunities for "through-vision" are recommended.
- Children not-yet-able-to-walk must be provided with a safe space separate from the rest of the children.
- Children under 30 months of age must be separated from older children during active outdoor play. This can be achieved by a separate playground area or through schedule usage.
- Secure storage for outdoor equipment.
- Ministry policy requires that surfacing meets *CSA* standards where permanent structures are in place.
- Ministry policy requires new permanent play structures meet *CSA* standards. This must be verified in writing by a third party certified playground inspector.
- Note: DNA does not require permanent play structures on playgrounds.
- Where a permanent play structure is not provided, the operator is responsible for ensuring other play materials and equipment are available to meet children's developmental needs.

### General Design Considerations

#### Fencing

- A perimeter fence of at least 6 ft. is recommended.
- Higher fences may be required for areas that annually receive a heavy snowfall.
- Fencing should be selected that will allow privacy, noise reduction and safety, with some vision for children's interest.
- When a fixed object is installed in front of the fence, (planter, bench etc) the height of the fence should be measured from the top of the object.
- Fencing should be of a material and strength to prevent children from getting out of the yard.
- Fences to be designed to be non-climbable.
- Ensure there are no sharp edges or points protruding through the top of the fence.
- Plan for snow piled against fence, benches, etc. when considering height.
- Fences should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing.

- Chain link is easily climbable, visually unattractive unless it is obscured by a hedge or vine.
- Aluminum fencing with vertical pickets and a top rail is a cost effective alternative.
- Painting a fence a warm bronze colour will help to minimize its presence.
- When pickets are being used, ensure spacing between pickets prevent the passage of a spherical object no larger than 100 mm (4 in.) in diameter to limit the possibility of a child getting their head stuck between pickets.

### **Other**

- Individual exterior stairs/step risers should be maintained at a height of between 5 in. and 6 in.
- Washrooms should be easily accessed and adjacent to the playground.

### **Emergency Considerations**

- Provide easy and secure access from the building to the playground.
- Provide primary and secondary exits from the playground.
- Provide a telephone or intercom system that can be easily accessed from the playground in case of an emergency.

### **Environmental Factors**

- Surfacing that meets *CSA* standards must be in place where permanent structures are in place
- All new fixed playground equipment must meet the *Canadian Safety Standards for Children's Playscapes and Equipment*.
- Provisions for wind, sun, shade, air quality and winter conditions must be made.
- The placement of stationary equipment must be made in consideration of direct exposure to the sun.
- Layout of equipment must ensure staff supervision at all times.
- Avoid the use of chemically-treated wood.

### **Rooftop Playgrounds**

- Conduct noise and air quality tests in the location of rooftop playgrounds located in urban areas, and plan for increased shade and shelter for both hot and cold weather conditions.
- Ensure the roof can sustain the additional load of the playground.
- Consider methods of snow removal and drainage.
- Assess impact of wind on elevated play decks and take required precautions by securing equipment and providing well secured wind/shade screens and guards.
- Design for increased solar gain – elevated decks become very hot.
- Avoid roof top mechanical equipment, vents and skylights.
- Provide unclimbable guards.
  - The height of guard should be a 915 mm (6 ft.) minimum, but 2140 mm to 2745 mm (7 ft to 9 ft.) is recommended.

- The distance of play structures, storage areas, seating etc. from fencing should be considered to prevent climbing.
- The guards should also be designed to not impede views and air circulation.
- Proximity of washrooms (must be on the same level).
- Rooftop Emergency Procedures to be incorporated into the Centre's fire plan and must be approved by the Fire Department. Emergency procedures must:
  - Include sufficient primary and secondary exits.
  - Include posted, detailed, evacuation procedures.
  - Include a communication system (phones, intercom).
  - Keep First Aid supplies available on the playground.

## Landscape Considerations

Landscaping is a vital part of an outdoor play environment and is complementary to all types of play activities. Landscape design should consider the:

- Topography.
- A variety of colours, textures, and surfaces.
- Protection from the sun, wind, and noise.

Select plants that are responsive to the changing seasons. Design proper drainage of all surfaces. Operator may seek the assistance of a third party certified playground inspector.

## Rocks and Debris

During the construction of a play area, remove all rocks and debris larger than 100mm (4 in.) to a depth of 300 mm (1 ft).

## Drainage

- Slope grade of playground away from the building.
- Provide either concrete curbs, logs, or timbers around sand areas to seal in water and impede drainage. Avoid locating sandboxes below ground level as this creates the potential for a child to fall in.
- Avoid crossing play areas with drainage swales which might cause children to fall.
- Provide a drainage system so that the playground is not greatly affected by wet weather. Drainage is important in sand play areas as well as the ground under the swings and slides as these areas tend to become the lowest points.
- Recommended Surface Slopes for Drainage are:
  - 0 to 2% slope for resilient surfacing, provided with under drainage.
  - 2% minimum slope and cross-slope for asphalt surfaces.
  - 1% minimum slope for concrete surfaces.
  - 2% minimum slope for open lawn areas.
  - maximum 5% longitudinal slope for paved areas.

## Grass Hills and Slopes

- If space permits, provide a grassy hill, natural or constructed, as part of each play area.
- Typical earth-form slopes should not exceed:
  - 3:1 for mowable grass areas.
  - 2:1 for cut of fill slopes with erosion-control matting and special non-mowable ground covers.
- To attain a sense of challenge and achievement, the following grass hill heights are recommended:
  - Toddlers: 1200mm to 1500mm (4 ft to 5 ft).
  - Preschoolers and School Age Children: 2700 mm to 3300 mm (9 ft to 13 ft).



## **Shade**

- Provide awnings for shade.
- Include small trees and deciduous trees in landscape design to provide shade from the sun.
- Ensure there is sufficient shade for metal surfaces (e.g. slide) that will otherwise become too hot for children to use if constantly exposed to the sun.
- Provide a well-shaded Social Play Area.
- The Quiet Play Area also requires a balance between some shade for lengthy play in the sandbox and some exposure to the sun that will allow the sand to dry quickly after rain.

## **Trees and Shrubs**

- Vegetation provides shade and wind breaks and cools the air. It attracts wildlife, provides loose parts (leaves, cones and twigs), provides landmarks and builds in seasonal change and beauty.
- Provide a balance of coniferous and deciduous trees. Coniferous trees allow greenness in the winter and deciduous trees provide shade in the summer. However, it is recommended that the coniferous trees be placed outside the fenced playground as their low branches and needles may be hazardous to the children.
- Avoid plants with prickly foliage, nettles, thorns, barbs etc. See Appendix III.

## **Wind Breaks**

- Incorporate shrubs, berms, and fences to act as wind breaks.

## **Pathways**

- Provide hard-paved paths for tricycles, wheelchairs, and wheeled equipment with a recommended passing width of 1500 mm (5 ft).
- Avoid using grass in high traffic areas or areas that are not large enough to sustain pathways.
- Pathways should link activity areas.
- Looped pathways are beneficial and can enclose play areas, contain sand play and wood chips.
- There should be no projections into pathways.

## **Sand**

- Impact sand and play area sand to be divided into two separate areas and must comply with the *CSA*.
- Check with local Health Department to see if a cover is required on sand boxes.

## **Other Surfaces**

- Other choices that could be better than sand as an impact absorbing material and are less appealing to neighbourhood pets are products such as Engineered Wood Fibre or poured in place synthetic surfaces.
- Avoid using dirt mixed with clay and sand as a hard surface as it results in more clothing stains.
- Avoid using wood chips and pine bark for large areas as they tend to scatter.
- Avoid using pea gravel in toddler playgrounds.
- Crushed stone is suitable for areas subject to wind erosion.
- Asphalt is suitable for wheeled toys and wheelchairs and dries more quickly than concrete after rain. However, it can become sticky and hot during summer months.
- Synthetic turf has the potential to provide a soft surface that can be applied over small areas. Synthetic turf needs to remain level and to drain well.
- Grass is ideal for use in open spaces but not in high traffic areas as it quickly wears away.
- Perforated lattice pavers provide a hard-soft surface when grass is established in the perforations. Such a surface drains well and can be used in an open recreation area.
- Avoid chemically-treated wood products.

## **Other Considerations**

- Screened-in porches can be suitable for play areas and infant sleep areas while providing protection from insects.
- A covered exterior porch surrounding the play area that also connects the facility can provide a sheltered play space during inclement weather.
- Garbage and recycling areas should be convenient to the kitchen and away from play areas to avoid smells, wasps, etc.
- Create “micro climates” by carefully considering orientation of space, materials, and finishes.
- Consider such things as an internal courtyard which, among other attributes allows unobstructed viewing and access from a majority of rooms.
- Incorporate shade areas into the space through part of the structure or large plantings. Trees and shrubs in addition to providing shade, protect against wind, can give partial shelter and to reduce traffic noise.

## **Exterior Design and Play Elements**

### **Active Play**

The active play area of a playground should consist of both a physical play area and a social play area. This will allow children to have the opportunity to develop gross motor skills and to socialize with other children.

The equipment in the physical play area should provide challenges which promote children's overall development without creating hazards. The design of this area should allow for sequential movement from activity to activity.

### **Physical Play Area**

- Play equipment and furnishings must be provided in numbers that are adequate for the licensed capacity of the centre.
  - A range of type and design that meet the needs of the children enrolled should be included with concern for all ages and with respect to their developmental levels and the type of program offered at the centre.
- The play equipment should be sufficient in quantity to allow for rotation and include equipment for gross motor activity in the playground area.
- All playground equipment must meet the standards contained in the *CSA*.
- All play equipment must be age appropriate.
- Play equipment should be arranged so that children are able to approach, use, and exit from the equipment safely.
- All ferrous metals should be treated to prevent corrosion.
- Whenever possible, locate metal surfaces in shaded area.

### **Social Play Area**

- The social play area should be inviting and comfortable. Consider a landscaped enclosure to produce such an effect.
- Design for a well-shaded garden table with chairs and benches placed in a central location adjacent to, or bordering the physical play area, for discussions with other children and with the teacher.
- Consider including a non-climbable playhouse and other structures to encourage imaginative play.
- An outdoor storage cupboard or box is ideal for storing loose materials in the social play area.
- Ensure that sight lines are unobstructed to ensure full supervision.

### **Quiet Play**

Children can enjoy a quiet time out of doors for reflection, to discover the wonders of nature, or to read a book. Areas set aside away from the more active play areas can be peaceful and encourage individual and/or small group learning.

The main elements for a quiet play area are sandplay, blockplay, seats, grass, and shade.

- To accommodate block play, provide a soft surface conveniently near the building.
- Avoid hard surfaces for block play as blocks are easily damaged when dropped and are noisy on hard surfaces.

### **Nature Play**

The main elements for a nature play area are a variety of plant life and trees which allow observation of the seasons, different natural textures (e.g. smoothed boulders), and possibly a vegetable garden which allows the children a sense of achievement through cultivation and observation of the vegetation.

### **Plant Life**

Select plants for fragrance, crafts, and culinary potential. Make sure all plants selected are non-poisonous. Refer to Poisonous Plants and Vegetation (Appendix III).

### **Trees**

Provide a balance of deciduous and coniferous trees to allow shade in the summer season and greenness in the winter season. However, it is recommended that the coniferous trees be placed outside the fenced playground as their low branches and needles may be hazardous to the children.

### **Garden**

Vegetables, bulbs, and hardy annuals are recommended because they grow easily and show rapid results. Garden plots, 600 mm (2 ft) wide, with paths on both sides are recommended to allow reaching from either side of the plot.

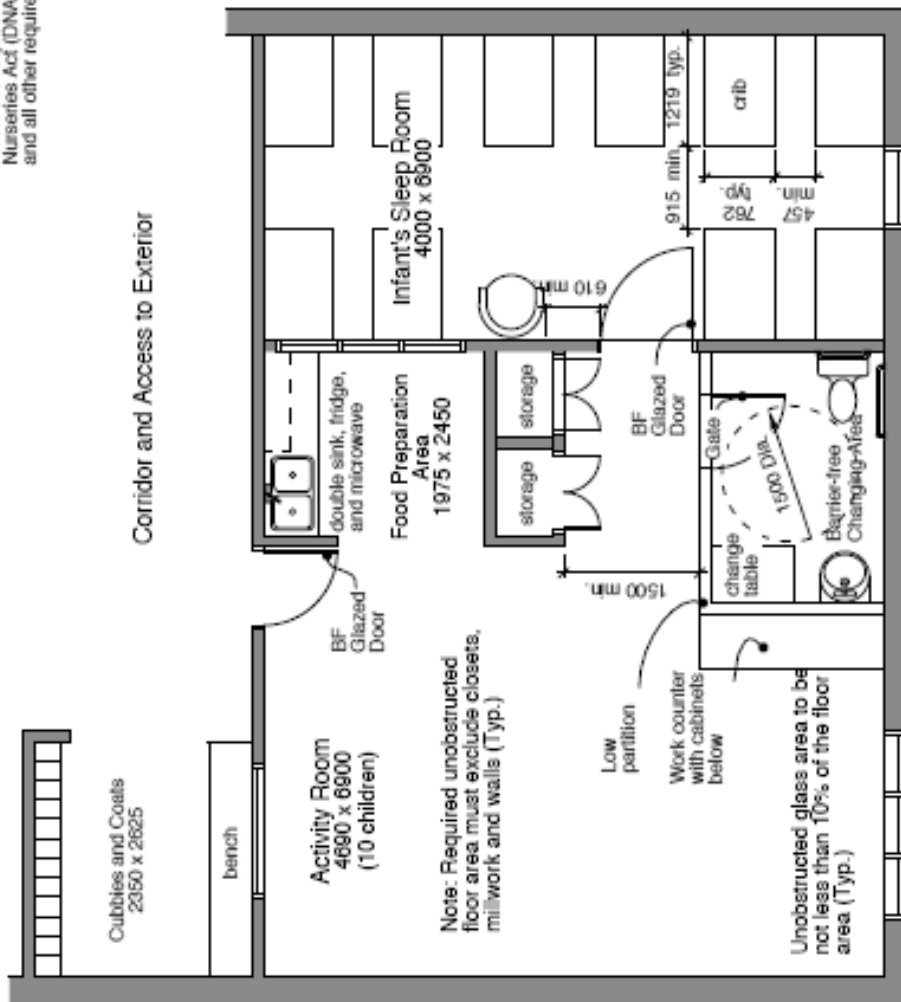
### **Natural Textures**

- Providing naturally-rounded boulders of different sizes creates a varied landscape, as well as perches and climbing elements.
- Dead trees and logs create varied spaces and provide climbing experiences.
- Ensure trees/logs are well secured in the ground and pruned of weak branches for safety reasons.
- Ensure installation of these materials and choice in surrounding ground surface material meets *CSA* Standards.

# APPENDIX I – SAMPLE CONCEPT PLANS

This design is provided to assist in the preliminary planning of the facility and is intended only as a general example. Refer to the functional plan for actual requirements. The operator's consultant is responsible to ensure that the design meets the requirements of the Ontario Building Code (OBC), Day Nurseries Act (DNA) and the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) and all other requirements of authorities having jurisdiction.

**Key:**  
 BF Barrier Free  
 Dia. Diameter  
 typ. typical  
 min. minimum  
 Scale: 1:50 metric  
 Room sizes are approximate



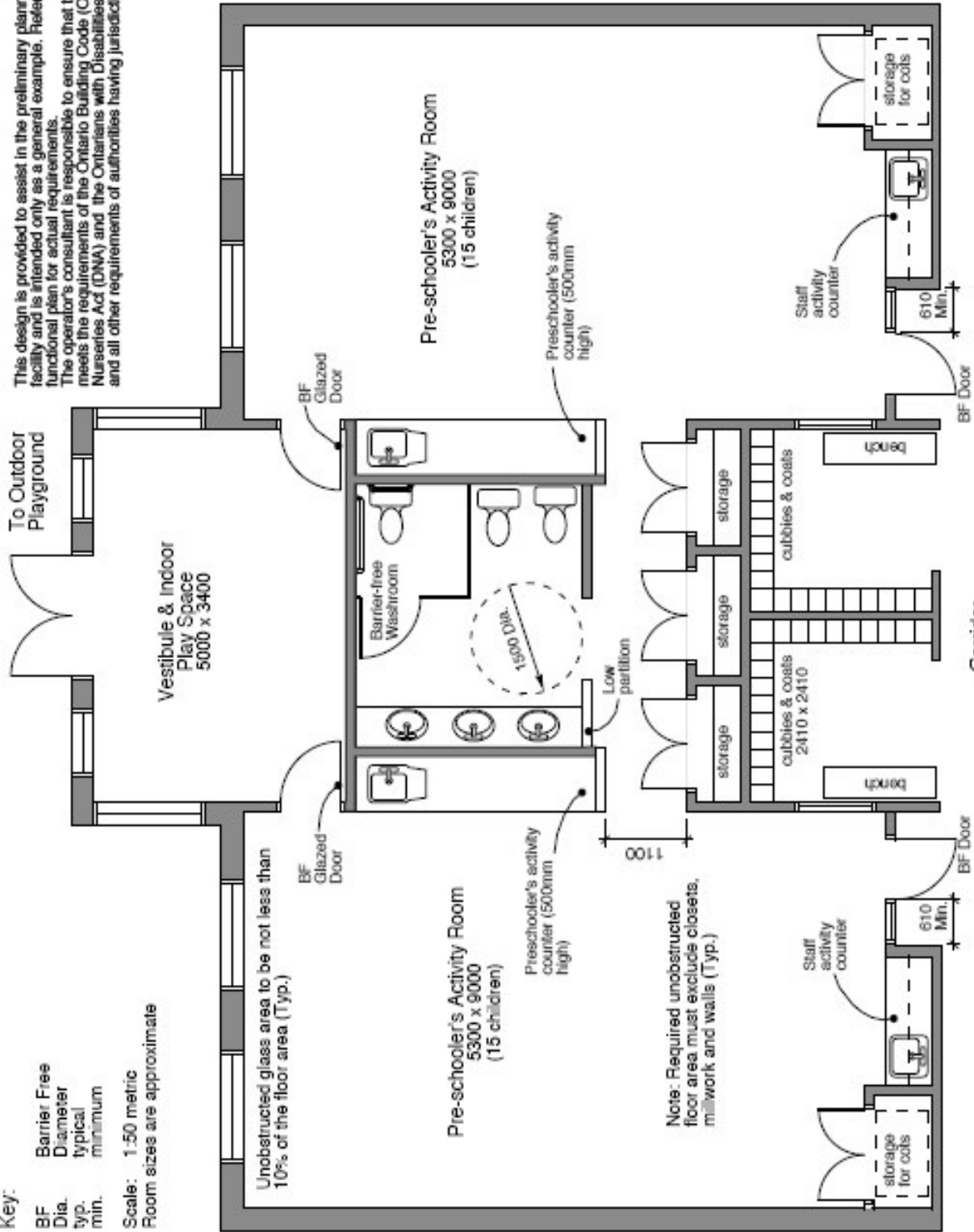
Concept Drawing  
Proposed Plan of an Infant Area

**Key:**

- BF Barrier Free
- Dia. Diameter
- typ. typical
- min. minimum

Scale: 1:50 metric  
 Room sizes are approximate

This design is provided to assist in the preliminary planning of the facility and is intended only as a general example. Refer to functional plan for actual requirements. The operator's consultant is responsible to ensure that the design meets the requirements of the Ontario Building Code (OBC), Day Nurseries Act (DNA) and the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) and all other requirements of authorities having jurisdiction.



Concept Drawing  
 Proposed Plan of a Preschooler's Area

Corridor  
 Connecting to possible school entrance, staff room, washrooms and offices



## **APPENDIX II - GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

### **Architect**

A professional consultant who designs and supervises the construction of buildings.

### **Barrier-free:**

That a building and its facilities can be approached, entered, and used by persons with physical or sensory disabilities.

### **Canadian Construction Documents Committee**

A committee representing contractors in Canada who issue standard tendering forms and other construction documents such as information on bonds and insurance.

### **Construction**

The activity involved in constructing buildings.

### **Contemplated Change Notice (CCN)**

A notice providing information from the contractor, usually to the architect, of a potential change to contract documents that may have a financial impact on the project.

### **Consultant**

An individual hired to provide expert or professional advice.

### **Contingency**

An allowance to cover unforeseen costs resulting from changes to the contract documents. The Ministry will approve a construction contingency of up to 5% of the construction cost.

### **Contract Documents**

The final working drawings and specifications that provide all the necessary information to tender a complete construction project.

### **CSA Standards (Canadian Standards Association Standards)**

The Canadian Standards Association is a not-for-profit, membership-based association. They develop standards related to issues such as public safety and health.

### **Design Drawings**

A graphic representation in a drawing or sketch prepared by a professional architect or engineer that details plans for renovation or construction of a building.

### **Director's Approval**

An employee of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services with delegation of authority under the *Day Nurseries Act*.



**Feasibility**

Analysis or research into the practicality of a proposed plan or method, based on factors like market conditions, other similar or supporting services, available technology and financial resources.

**Full day**

A licensed child care facility operating for 6 hours or more per day.

**Functional Plan**

Defines the program requirements and is a detailed record of what should happen in a new facility on a daily basis. It is the basis on which design decisions will be made.

**Glazed Windows**

Transparent glass that meets CSA standards for insulation and noise.

**Half day**

A licensed child care facility operating for less than 6 hours per day.

**Handicapped**

A child who has a physical or mental impairment that is likely to continue for a prolonged period of time, and who as a result, is limited in activities pertaining to normal living as verified by objective psychological or medical findings; and includes a child with a developmental disability.

**Lien**

A charge or encumbrance on property for the satisfaction of a debt usually registered by a contractor or subcontractor for default of payment for contractual work completed.

**Operator**

An individual, or corporation that has a licence to operate a day nursery in Ontario.

**Program**

A child care program operated by a licensed day nursery.

**Site**

The property for which infrastructure funding is being provided.

**Specifications**

A detailed, exact statement prescribing materials, dimensions, and quality of work for something to be renovated or built.

**Working Drawings**

Made to scale plans and drawings of the whole or part of a structure. Documents that define the project in detail and are suitable for public tendering. They form the basis for a construction contract with a contractor.

## APPENDIX III - POISONOUS PLANTS AND VEGETATION

### Herbaceous Plants/Annuals/Perennials

|                      |                  |  |
|----------------------|------------------|--|
| Anemone              | Autumn Crocus    | Bleeding Heart                                   |
| Bluebell             | Buttercup        | Black cherry                                     |
| Black locust         | Castor bean      | Cornflower                                       |
| Delphinium           | Daffodil (bulb)  | Foxglove   |
| Golden chain tree    | Horse chestnut   | Hyacinth   |
| Kentucky coffee tree | Iris             | Jonquil  |
| Jack-in-the-Pulpit   | Jimson Weed      | Larkspur   |
| Lily-of-the-Valley   | Lobelia          | May Apple  |
| Moonseed             | Nightshade       | Nutmeg   |
| Oak                  | Poison Hemlock   | Poison Ivy                                       |
| Red mulberry         | Rhubarb (leaves) | Sumac  |
| Star of Bethlehem    | Sweet Pea        | Wild & cultivated cherries<br>(leaves and stems) |

### Ornamental Plants, Shrubs & Trees:

|                       |                     |                      |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Azalea                | Box/Boxwood         | Buckeye              |
| Buckthorn             | Burning bush        | Clematis             |
| Daphne                | Elderberry          | English Ivy          |
| Holly                 | Hydrangea           | Jessamine (Jasmine)  |
| Jetbead/Jetberry bush | Lantana (red) sage  | Laurel/cherry laurel |
| Leucothoe             | Mountain laurel     | Oleander             |
| Periwinkle            | Pieris              | Privet               |
| Rhododendron          | Silver buffaloberry | Snowberry/waxberry   |
| Spindle tree          | Strawberry bush     | Virginia Creeper     |
| Wisteria              | Yew                 | Poinsetta            |

CHECK ALL PLANTS FOR TOXICITY OF ANY PART OR FORM OF THE PLANT

### Regional References

Ontario Regional Poison Information Centre  
The Hospital for Sick Children  
555 University Ave.  
Toronto, ON M5G 1X8  
1-800-268-9017 toll-free  
(416) 598-5900 local

Ontario Regional Poison Information Centre  
Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario  
401 Smyth Road  
Ottawa, ON K1H 8L1  
1-800-267-1373 toll-free Ontario  
(613) 737-2320 general inquiries

# APPENDIX IV – MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY, FAMILY AND CHILDREN’S SERVICES “PLAYGROUND SAFETY: REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL LICENSED CHILDCARE OPERATORS”

Ministry of Community, Family and Children’s Services

## PLAYGROUND SAFETY

### REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL LICENSED CHILD CARE OPERATORS:

- I. TO MEET THE CURRENT CSA STANDARD FOR CHILDREN’S PLAYSPACES AND EQUIPMENT - CAN/CSA Z614; AND
- II. TO MEET THE MINISTRY’S PLAYGROUND SAFETY POLICY

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Effective: September 30,1999

Revised: August 2003

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#### **BACKGROUND:**

Most significant injuries to young children occur on outdoor playgrounds. In recent years, research and investigations into playground-related injuries resulted in the Canadian Institute of Child Health forming a task force to develop guidelines for playground safety.

In June 1990, *A Guideline for Children’s Playspaces And Equipment* was approved as a National Standard of Canada. Europe and the United States have set similar standards for playground safety.

The only Standard in Canada for playgrounds is the CAN/CSA Z614 Standard (the Standard) for Children’s Playspaces and Equipment. This Standard was first published in 1990 and was revised in 1991, 1998 and 2003. *Appendix C* in this guideline is a comparison summary chart indicating the changes from 1998. The Standard applies to any public outdoor play area, including child care centres. The Standard does not apply to home-made equipment or play equipment intended for backyard use, or soft contained play with controlled public access.

Public Playground Equipment is defined as “a play structure/equipment with at least one designated play surface, anchored to the ground or not intended to be moved, meant for use in play areas of schools, parks, child care centres, institutions, multiple-family dwellings, private resorts, recreation developments, restaurants and other areas of public use.”

The Standard recognizes two distinct user age groups: 18 months to 5 years; and 5 to 12 years

## **THE NEW REQUIREMENTS OF THE CSA STANDARD FOR CHILDREN'S PLAYSPACES AND EQUIPMENT:**

### **I. NEW OR NEWLY RENOVATED:**

The new CSA Standard equipment configuration requirements apply to any new playground or newly renovated playground. Damaged or worn components are to be repaired or replaced to meet the Standard.

### **II. SURFACING: (NEW AND EXISTING PLAYGROUNDS)**

The CSA Standard requires that all surfaces, including existing surfaces, must provide and be maintained to provide acceptable shock-absorbing performance, as set out in the Standard, regardless of the age of the site. This requirement means that regular maintenance of surfaces (raking, lifting, re-distributing) must be provided on an ongoing basis. Periodic site testing of installed protective surfacing is recommended.

### **III. ROUTINE MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTIONS: (NEW AND EXISTING PLAYGROUNDS)**

#### **1) Daily Visual Inspection:**

The CSA Standard requires that a daily visual inspection shall be carried out by the owner, maintenance inspector, caregiver, or custodian to identify defects or emerging problems.

- Checking the entire playground area for hazardous debris or litter;
- Checking for damage caused by vandalism;
- Checking for strings and ropes of any kind and removing them.

#### **2) Detailed And Documented Monthly Inspection, With A Plan Of Action:**

The CSA Standard requires that "a comprehensive maintenance program shall be developed for each playground as a whole. Generally, all equipment shall be inspected frequently for any potential hazards." A detailed inspection shall be carried out every month and the results and actions taken entered in a permanent record that can be examined.

These inspections shall include, but are not limited to:

- Checking for any damage and wear, (i.e. broken or missing components to equipment, anything tied to or added on to the equipment, or other features caused by vandalism or wear);
- Checking for any broken or missing handrails, guardrails, stairs or ladder rungs, etc.;
- Checking for damaged fences, gates and retaining walls.

- ❖ When defects are observed, the Standard states that the defects shall be immediately reported within the organization and repaired as soon as possible. Details of the defect or problem will require a plan of action in writing. Should the repair take time, all reasonable steps shall be taken to bar access to the defective equipment. Cordoning off the defective area must be done in a safe manner. Warning or danger signs alone are not acceptable. Ropes or plastic tape cannot be used. Removal of the defective equipment may, in some cases, be the only solution. If some areas of the playground

remain in use by children of the child care centre the entire playground must be supervised at all times.

**3) Seasonal Maintenance Inspection:**

The CSA Standard requires that seasonal maintenance inspections are to be done to assess the playground site and equipment in preparation for summer or winter use. The seasonal inspections are to be completed and recorded in a permanent record.

**4) Annual Comprehensive Inspection and Written Report:**

The CSA Standard requires that every year a comprehensive inspection and a written report shall be completed by the owner or a representative. The results of the inspection and a plan of action shall be entered in a permanent record that can be examined.

## ***MINISTRY POLICY FOR PLAYGROUND SAFETY:***

The Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services has adopted the current CSA Standard, CAN/CSA Z614, as an indicator of whether a playground is in a safe and clean condition and kept in a good state of repair. Operators of licensed child care centres will be required to meet the Standard.

Section 16 of Regulation 262, under the Day Nurseries Act, requires that operators of a day nursery shall ensure that the equipment and furnishings are maintained in a safe and clean condition and kept in a good state of repair. This section applies to both indoors and out.

Section 5 (1) of Regulation 262, under the Day Nurseries Act, requires that child care operators submit playground plans to the ministry for approval, prior to initial construction or proposed alterations or renovations. The plans must show the layout of the site and equipment. All new playground equipment and installations must meet the CSA standard. Compliance with the CSA Standard must be verified in writing, by an independent certified inspector, and a copy must be submitted to the ministry.

### **OPERATORS ARE REQUIRED TO:**

1. All licensed child care operators must provide and maintain a protective soft surfacing material below any play equipment, on playground sites, that meets the acceptable shock-absorbing performance, regardless of the age of the site.
2. Develop a detailed Playground Safety Log that records:
  - Repairs, removal or installation of equipment, including dates and companies;
  - Injury log – accident and/or injury reports specific to the playground shall be kept separate from other accident reports;
  - Daily inspection checklists – done in writing, prior to the children entering the playground area;
  - Monthly maintenance inspection – records any hazards or defects which need immediate attention or that requires a plan of action to resolve the problem within a specific timeframe;
  - Seasonal maintenance inspection – records preparation plans for summer or winter use;
  - Annual inspection – an inspection completed with a comprehensive written report based on the criteria set out in Appendix B1.2, B2 and B3. Annual playground safety inspections will be kept in a permanent record, available for examination at any time; and
  - A plan of action recorded, based on the results of the annual inspection, including timeframes to address each specific issue.

- ❖ Checklists can be developed to assist with the daily and monthly inspections. (Please refer to Appendix B of the CSA Standard. This checklist is intended to only address general maintenance and inspection concerns. It does not cover a complete safety evaluation of equipment, design and layout.)
  
- 3. The annual comprehensive written report is to provide operators with information to form an action plan, related to the elimination or upgrade of existing, older equipment, identifying areas of immediate concern, establishing site replacement schedules and a budget to cover costs. The annual comprehensive written report shall include the following information:
  - Inspector's name;
  - Inspection date and time;
  - Weather conditions at the time of inspection;
  - Analysis of age-appropriateness of the equipment and the overall site;
  - Protective surface type, the area, the impact shock-absorbing performance test results, depth, the compaction and hard-pan conditions, and adequate drainage;
  - Assessment of the critical fall heights based on equipment type and configuration;
  - Analysis of the entrapment areas, safety zones and no-encroachment zones and the condition of the retaining wall surrounding the zones;
  - Check in detail, all inspection categories listed in Appendix B1.2, B2 and B3 of the CSA Standard document;
  - Record immediate safety concerns and hazards to assist with action plans, by identifying equipment that should be immediately removed/replaced and conditions that must be immediately addressed;
  - Additional comments and/or recommendations regarding CSA compliance, and the potential retrofit and upgrades for further consideration.
  
- 4. Once a comprehensive inspection report is completed, child care operators are to document a plan of action, including timeframes, based on the information contained in the report.
  
- ❖ The comprehensive annual inspection report will be reviewed by a Program Advisor. If the documentation is not complete or does not meet the criteria, the child care operator will be requested to have the playground inspected by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector.

When playground inspections are conducted by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector, operators must confirm that the following criteria is met:

1. Hold a current certification by a recognized playground safety course for inspectors:
2. Be a third party inspector and declare non-conflict of interest including declaration of non-affiliation with playground equipment and protective surface manufacturers, suppliers and/or other contractors involved in the retrofit, upgrade or repair of playground equipment and protective surfaces: and
3. Have proof of current Professional Errors and Omissions insurance coverage. Only Errors and Omissions insurance provides coverage related to interpretations of the Standard, the judgement of non-compliant equipment, the documentation of the observations and recommendations, any non-intentional and non-negligent errors or omissions that may inadvertently occur.

When choosing a Certified Playground Safety Inspector, child care operators may request references to aid in the decision-making process.

- ❖ A ministry Program Advisor may request the verification of the above criteria.
5. All licensed child care centres are to develop a Playground Safety Policy that indicates child care staff roles and responsibilities regarding safety on outdoor playgrounds. (see attached Appendix A and B)



## **Appendix A**

### **PLAYGROUND SAFETY POLICY FOR LICENSED CHILD CARE OPERATORS**

Effective September 30, 1999, all licensed child care operators are required to develop a Playground Safety Policy.

- A Playground Safety Policy will contain the following:
1. A playground supervision statement that provides the child care centre staff with expectations and requirements for supervision of children on playgrounds that provides a safe outdoor play environment, promoting creative and constructive play for children. The policy must provide that staff ratios cannot be reduced on the playground.
  2. A statement that any new equipment or new renovations, repairs or replacements will be installed to meet the CSA Standard. It is understood that confirmation is to be on file, verifying that all changes meet the Standard and in writing by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector.
  3. A statement that a Playground Safety Log has been developed. This statement is to provide an explanation of each of the following: playground injury reports, daily inspections, monthly inspections, seasonal inspections, annual inspections and action plans related to the inspections.
  4. The designated person or position responsible for logging the a) daily inspections; b) monthly maintenance inspections; c) seasonal maintenance inspections and plans; d) carrying out the maintenance and repairs; e) the injury log; and f) the annual inspections.
  5. An outdoor staff schedule and outdoor program plan that are to be posted and available for staff and parents. The outdoor program plan must provide for games and activities that will enhance gross motor play, provide continuity with the indoor daily program and provide creative stimulation.
  6. All staff must review the policy prior to commencing employment and annually thereafter. A written record of the review must be signed by the staff and the person who made the review. The signed record is to be kept on file for at least two years from the time of entry.

- ❖ The Playground Safety Policy will be reviewed by ministry staff at the time of the annual licence renewal visit.

## ***Appendix B***

### **PLAYGROUND SAFETY POLICY FOR LICENSED CHILD CARE OPERATORS WHO SHARE AN OUTDOOR PLAYSPACE WITH ANOTHER ORGANIZATION**

Effective September 30, 1999, all licensed child care operators are required to develop a Playground Safety Policy.

- A Playground Safety Policy will contain the following:
  1. A playground supervision statement that provides the child care centre staff with requirements for supervision of children on playgrounds that provides a safe outdoor play environment, promoting creative and constructive play for children. The policy must provide that staff ratios cannot be reduced on the playground.
  2. A statement that identifies the designated playspace, area or equipment that the program will use on a regular basis. If the equipment or site does not meet the CSA Standard a reporting procedure is to be established to work with the other organization and to establish responsibility to gain and maintain compliance.
  3. A statement that a Playground Safety Log has been developed. This statement is to include an explanation of the playground injury reports and daily inspections. If another organization is responsible for the monthly inspections, seasonal inspections, annual inspections and action plans related to the findings of the inspections, the child care operator is to make arrangements to have copies of the inspections on file.
  4. The designated person or position and organization responsible for logging the a) daily inspections; b) monthly maintenance inspections; c) seasonal maintenance inspections and plans; d) doing the maintenance and repairs; e) the injury log; and f) the annual inspections.
  5. An outdoor staff schedule and outdoor program plan that are to be posted and available for staff and parents. The outdoor program plan must provide for games and activities that will enhance gross motor play, the daily program and provide creative stimulation.
  6. All staff must review the policy prior to commencing employment and annually thereafter. A written record of the review must be signed by the staff as well as the person who made the review and kept on file for at least two years from the time of entry.
- ❖ The Playground Safety Policy will be reviewed by ministry staff at the time of the annual licence renewal visit.