



PARENT/CAREGIVER HANDBOOK



Our Mission

We support the growth of children and youth by strengthening families and building the community through child development programs, community education and advocacy.

1135 Nelson Street, Nanaimo, BC V9S 2K4
Phone: (250) 753-0251 Fax: (250) 753-5614

www.NanaimoCDC.com

OUR VISION:

An inclusive community in which all children and families have the supports they need to grow, participate, and thrive.

OUR VALUES:

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

- Services are informed by research, evaluation and evidence based practice
- Innovation and creativity are encouraged and supported
- Continuous learning and sharing of knowledge is supported for the staff team and the community
- We continuously assess and improve our services

FAMILY-CENTERED APPROACH

- We are responsive to the unique needs of families
- We acknowledge the expertise within families and collaborate with families to build on strengths

INCLUSION

- Everyone has the right to be respected, appreciated, and included
- Cultural safety is practiced by recognizing our beliefs, practices and histories, structural and interpersonal power imbalances, and how these impact Indigenous people and visible minorities
- We recognize the importance of connections to community and culture and encourage and facilitate those connections
- We advocate for equity in access to services, opportunities and resources

INTEGRITY

- Ongoing performance quality assessment is built into our operations
- We hold ourselves accountable for our performance
- We are transparent about what we are doing and why we are doing it

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

We would like to gratefully recognize and acknowledge that we live, learn, and work, on the unceded territories of the Snuneymuxw, Snaw-naw-as, and Stzuminus people. We also acknowledge the ancestral and continued connection to this land of the Métis Nation.



Hours of Operation

*Monday to Friday
8:30 AM to 4:30 PM
Some services can
be arranged for an
evening/weekend.*

*We are closed on
statutory holidays
and open by special
appointment
between Christmas
and New Year's.*

Snow Closures

*Listen to your local
radio station for more
information or check
our Facebook page
or website.*

**We are CARF
accredited****Professional
Development Days**

*Occasionally we
will be closed to
attend courses that
help us update our
skills and
knowledge. We
will let you know
when we are
closed and a sign
will be posted on
our door and our
phone greeting will
be changed.*

Our History

The Nanaimo Child Development Centre has been providing services to children and families since 1967. At that time there were 12 children receiving services with a staff of three.

We are proud of our history, our growth and willingness to meet the needs of the community. We recognize there are many unique needs for children and families within our community.

The Staff and Board of Directors are committed to continually improving our programs in order to meet those changing needs.

Board of Directors

We are operated by the Nanaimo Child Development Centre Society (NCDCCS), a non-profit charitable society.

The NCDCCS Board of Directors is a volunteer group of parents, professionals and people from the community.

They make decisions about program planning, policy and how the money is spent at the Nanaimo Child Development Centre.

Board members are available for your questions or comments. A list of Board members is available from the staff at the front desk at the Centre, posted on the Parents Bulletin Board and on our website www.nanaimocdc.com.

Accreditation - CARF

Accreditation is a formal process that confirms an agency has met international service standards developed by consumers, stakeholders and provincial and national organizations.

To be accredited means that we meet these standards and incorporate best practices into management and programming.

What this means to you is that you can be assured that the services you receive from us are of the highest quality.

Referrals

Anyone can make a referral to our Early Intervention Programs with parents/guardians consent. More detailed information can be found under "Our Programs" section.

We Provide Family Centered Services

This means:

- We listen to you. You know your child best and we believe that you are the most important people in your child's life.
- We give you information to help you make informed choices.
- You choose the services you want.
- We appreciate the needs of all the family members.
- Services can occur in your home, the community, here at the Centre, your childcare setting or in your child's school.
- We recognize that your family is unique and that your differences and choices must be respected.
- Services are free of charge.
- We work as a team with you and the important people (doctors, ECE, inter-agency) in your child's life.
- Parents' input and feedback are sought to ensure that services meet the needs of the child and family. One way we do this is through team meetings, which include you.
- We endeavor to have no language barriers.

Confidentiality/Privacy

We treat any and all information about you and your child as confidential. Personal information is used strictly for providing service to you and your child, and for assessing the quality of our service through our accreditation process.

Your written consent will be requested if information from your file is to be shared with anyone else, or if you or your family may be observed, videotaped or audiotaped. You may request copies of written materials provided by us to others, and you may request an appointment to review your file.

NOTE: File reviewers who have access to your file for accreditation and quality control are required to sign an oath of confidentiality.

All staff, volunteers and students at the NCDC enter into a Confidentiality Agreement when they are hired. Confidentiality breaches are grounds for discipline by the Centre as well as their professional colleges or registering bodies.

In order to ensure that information is released appropriately, when parents are separated or divorced, the Centre will request proof of guardianship.

Please remember that families you meet at the Centre do not want information about them shared with others.

Duty to Report

We have a duty to report to relevant authorities such as MCFD if we believe that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected (as defined by the Ministry of Children and Family Development.) Whenever possible we will support you through this process.

Email

Staff at the CDC follow strict guidelines regarding the use of email. While parents can communicate with us regarding schedules or appointments, we cannot use email to discuss confidential client information with anyone. Email records must comply with existing legislation, regulations, policies and standards (for example the Personal Information Protection Act).

Safety

We have plans in place for emergencies, evacuation procedures and protocols with police and emergency agencies. Our staff will review these plans with you during your first visit to the Centre.

We have trained staff members who hold first aid certificates, and we will be in communication with various local emergency services in the event of an emergency.

Please tell us of any medical issues that may impact your child.

If your child's behavior becomes a safety issue, staff will follow a model of positive intervention that includes the principles of non-violent crisis intervention.

*We have an
Occupational Health
and Safety (OHS)
Committee that is
committed to providing
a safe and healthy
environment.*

Rights of the Person Served

You have all the rights and freedoms detailed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the British Columbia Human Rights Code which includes:

- The right to respect, regardless of your culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status, or language.
- The right to freedom from abuse, exploitation, retaliation, humiliation or neglect.

When you receive services from the Child Development Centre you have the right to:

- Confidentiality. No information about your family will be shared with others without your permission.
- Be informed and to agree or disagree with information provided.
- Right to ask questions and receive answers regarding your child's assessment and any aspect of your child's treatment.
- Receive information in a language that you understand. The Centre will help get you interpretation services if required.
- Information in a reasonable and timely manner to help in your decision making.
- Receive copies of all reports written by your CDC team

Tell us your wants and needs about:

- The services you receive
 - Information sharing
 - The number of services you receive at one time
 - Who is on your team
 - Information about other community services that may be of use to you and your family
-

Rights (Cont'd)

Make a complaint or share your concerns without fear of discrimination or reprisal.

Request information from your file by contacting the Centre's Privacy Officer or Administration.

Specific Situations Related to Practice

There are certain circumstances in which we are bound by legal requirements to disclose confidential information. These circumstances are outlined below.

- The service provider is under a legal duty to report to a social worker all matters of child protection, including physical abuse, emotional harm, sexual abuse, and sexual exploitation, as outlined in the Child, Family and Community Service Act.
- A child protection social worker requires information from the service provider that is necessary for them to ensure the safety and well-being of a child.
- A person threatens harm to themselves or others.
- The service provider is subpoenaed to provide the file or testify.

The service provider will attempt to inform you before acting outside of the confidentiality guidelines, except if this could cause harm to you or others.

Staff Rights & Responsibilities

- Maintain the confidentiality of other clients, staff and volunteers.
- Help us find out your child's interests, temperament, abilities and needs.
- Ask us questions regarding your child's treatment.
- Tell us about the changes you have seen in your child before visits.
- Let us know what ideas worked and what didn't work.
- Tell us who is involved with your child and who you would like information to be sent to.
- Being present at the therapy sessions if your child is seen at home.
- Provide emergency contact names and numbers.
- If you or your child are sick, please make a new appointment.
- When you need to cancel an appointment, please call us as soon as possible.
- Tell us if there is a change in address, phone number and/or custody arrangements.
- Please supervise your child while you are at the Child Development Centre.
- Let staff know if you are unhappy with your services.
- Follow the posted Emergency Procedure plan near each doorway if there is an emergency while you are in the Centre.

Our Programs

Early Intervention Program *(serving birth to 6 years)*

Early Intervention Programs serve children in their homes, at the Centre, in the community, or at their childcare/preschool setting.

Our consultants and therapists;

- Will work with you to set goals for your child and support you to meet those goals.
- Will guide you in supporting your child to learn new skills.
- May offer you individual visits, parent participation groups, or parent education opportunities.

With a high demand for service and in order to ensure we provide the best service, our programs use a Priority Framework..

Infant Development (IDP)

The Infant Development Program is a home-based program designed to assist families and encourage their child's development.

The program is for any child from birth to three years of age who:

- Is delayed in their development (i.e. sitting unsupported, walking, talking)
- May be at risk for a delay in their development
- Has an identified special need

Services available may include:

- One-on-one support for parents.
- Home visits to encourage progress and develop new activities.
- Developmental assessments and written reports.
- A toy and book-lending library.
- Coordinating with other available services.
- Education concerning disabilities and a baby's typical development.
- Help to include your child in community activities.

Consultants are professionals with skills and knowledge in child development. Our consultants have various education backgrounds and all have extensive experience with children aged birth to three years. They can help you enhance your child's development.

Occupational Therapy (OT)

Occupational Therapists work with families to enable a child to perform the activities they want to or need to do to fulfil their identified occupations.

Occupations for children may include taking care of personal needs, playing, attending preschool and contributing as a family member. Occupational Therapists can help with:

- **Self-care routines** including dressing, mealtimes, grooming, bathing, safety, toileting, and sleep.
- **Learning through play** including pretend, creative, independent and peer play as well as participation in child care routines.
- **Selection of equipment** to support participation in daily activities including adaptive seating, wheelchairs, bathing and toileting supports, adaptive utensils, and accessible toys.
- **Environmental adaptations** to increase inclusion, accessibility, independence and overall success at home, school and play.

“Staff were great, very informative, very conscious of what was going on. My son was very happy.”

—Parent

Our therapists hold Bachelors or Master’s degree in Occupational Therapy and are registered with the College of Occupational Therapy of British Columbia.

Speech and Language Pathology (SLP)

Speech Language Pathologists want to help children become the best communicators they can be. SLPs do this by supporting children in the following areas:

- Understanding language
- Using language
- Making and sequencing speech sounds
- Using language to connect with others socially and in play
- Using fluent and smooth speech
- Introducing alternative ways to communicate such as signs, visuals, and low-tech or high-tech devices
- Supporting feeding skills

“Friendly staff, welcoming atmosphere, fun and engaging programs for parents and children.”

—Parent

Our Speech Therapists have a Masters Degree in Speech and Language Pathology and must be registered with the College of Speech and Hearing Health Professionals of British Columbia.

Physiotherapy (PT)

Physiotherapists work with children from birth to 6 years on their mobility and physical development. Physiotherapists can help with:

- motor skill development
- balance
- coordination
- muscle strengthening and stretching
- positioning strategies to address flattening of the head
- specialized equipment (i.e. walking aids, wheelchairs, orthotics etc.)

"We will be long time supporters of the CDC. We loved it!"

—Parent

Physiotherapists assess skills such as rolling, sitting, crawling, walking, climbing, running, and jumping.

Our Physiotherapists hold Bachelor's degrees in Physiotherapy and are registered with the College of Physical Therapists of BC.

Family Development

The Family Development program provides parents and guardians with intervention, education, and support related to address:

- parenting concerns
- child development
- family relationships and communication
- temperament
- self esteem
- behavior concerns, problem solving strategies
- grief and loss

Services available may include:

- Support through intervention and advocacy
- Individual, goal focused work to meet the needs of each family
- Occasional group programs to increase knowledge, skills and understanding

"Staff were really awesome. It was wonderful to have somebody to confide in and talk to."

—Parent

Family Development Consultants have a Bachelor's degree in Child and Youth Studies or Social Work.

Service for school age children is provided through referrals from the Child and Youth Mental Health team.

Child and Youth Development Program

(Serving children from birth to 19 years)

The Child and Youth Development Program offers recreation, social and life skill opportunities for children and teens identified as having a development disability. Referrals are made by Child and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN) Social Workers who screen for program eligibility. The majority of programming is held at the Centre or in the community.

Child and Youth Workers can help with:

- Understanding Behavior
- Self esteem
- Social skills
- Life skills
- Parenting concerns
- Community integration & inclusion
- Child and family advocacy

The Child and Youth Development Program Offers:

- Goal focused individual programs.
- Group programming for children and teens to build friendships, learn life skills and increase recreation in a supported environment.
- Family events
- Collaboration with community agencies.

Family Support Workers have various diplomas and Bachelor's degrees and all have extensive experience working with children and youth who have a diverse abilities.

School Age Therapy Program (SAT)

This program is available for children from school entry to the age of 19, who meet the school district's criteria for service. More information can be obtained from the office of Learning Services at Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (SD68) or a member of the NCDC team. Referrals to SAT are made by the school based team with parental consent. Services are consultative in nature and may occur in school, home and/or community environments.

"We enjoyed the group. Happy with social networking. Really impressed with the leadership."

—Parent

The CDC staff fought for my child every step of the way. We were supported in the IEP at school. CDC staff make the difference."

—Parent

“Commended for offering phenomenal free educational opportunities to the community.”

—Community partner

Community Playgroup

Come join our Early Years drop-in playgroup. Free fun playtime for parents/ caregivers and children 0 - 6 years old.

When: *Tuesday and Thursday mornings. 9:30 am – 12:00 pm.*

Where: *Nanaimo Child Development Centre*

Families are invited to explore and enjoy the play based learning stations in an interactive and inclusive environment.

Playgroup activities include games, songs, arts and crafts, refreshments, snacks.

Supported Child Development Program

The Supported Child Development Program helps families who have children with extra support needs (from birth to 12 years) to access inclusive, community-based child care settings. Services occur in the childcare setting.

Services available include:

- Service coordination and individual planning with families and team members to promote and optimize the child's development.
- Consultation and training for childcare providers and parents.
- Additional staffing supports when needed.
- Providing resources such as books, toys, specialized equipment and visual aids.
- Working collaboratively with other services such as therapists or specialists.

Our consultants are qualified Early Childhood Educators with Special Needs certification.

Family Resource Navigator

The Family Resource Navigator provides resources, support, advocacy and education to families and community agencies.

The program can:

- Provide you with information about community resources such as financial, social, health, and parenting.
- Help you access community resources.
- Help you to navigate systems such as health, social services, schools and other networks both locally and provincially.
- Provide educational and networking opportunities such as monthly Knowledge Sessions, Peer to Peer groups.
- Early Years playgroup.

Priority Framework

Families will be contacted for an initial consultation (IC) by a department within 3 months of their intake or initial referral. The IC includes an evaluation of a child and family's strengths and challenges. A follow-up plan including strategies and further services will be discussed as part of the IC. Further services may include consultation, group, blocks of service, equipment prescription and monitoring.

Referrals to our therapy programs often outnumber the capacity of a department to provide services. In order to best meet the needs of all children, a prioritization system is used. The following factors are considered when determining intervention: Time since the last therapy (individual or group); Family concerns, severity of need, urgency, safety; Concurrent team involvement; Age; The number and needs of the other clients referred to the therapy program at any given time; and Staffing levels

Program and Service Limitations

Families will have access to explanations of potential benefits, risks and alternatives to recommended services toward their goals. This will include an explanation of available evidence, or lack thereof, related to benefits, risks and alternatives. The Nanaimo CDC does not have the capacity to provide all alternatives which includes the following:

- Developmental monitoring when a child is currently meeting age-expectations
- Intense specialized and/or unproven therapeutic protocols
- Ongoing frequent (daily, weekly) implementation of home practice activities. Where this intensity is required the NCDC will provide modeling and coaching to caregiver(s) and monitor and adjust the program as needed

Transition to other Services

Your NCDC team can answer questions about other services that may be available for your child. If our services are not what your family needs, we can give you information about other community resources and help with referrals.

We can support families with important transitions for your child, such as the transition into Kindergarten and the transition to adult services.

Closing Services

We will close services at the request of the parent/legal guardian, when goals have been achieved, or when your child is no longer eligible for services. You may be contacted after discharge from us to ask if you were satisfied with the service you received provided you gave consent to do so.

You have the right to refuse services.

You can find detailed information on your rights and responsibilities on your yearly consent for service.

Not Satisfied with Services?

If you are not satisfied with the services your child and family are receiving at the Centre, please let us know. You can tell us in person, complete a complaint form or anonymously add your comments to our suggestions box at the front desk. Your comments will not jeopardize your future service in any way.

We appreciate your input and rely your feedback to improve our services.

Community Advocacy, Resource and Education

“One of the things that helped the most was referrals to local professionals. It has made a profound difference in our children.”

—Parent

Staff participate in many community events to promote optimum development for children with developmental needs through education to others and participation in community partnerships. For example, we are a practicum site for therapists, nursing students, child and youth care and early childhood educators; we have an extensive resource library that is available to parents and caregivers; and we work together with Sunny Hill to provide a seating clinic.

We also have a Family Resource Navigator on site to assist with resources and advocacy.

Funding

Interested in Volunteering?

There are many opportunities for volunteering at the Centre, contact Human Resources at 250-753-0251 ext. 279 for more information.

Funding for the Nanaimo Child Development Centre is provided by:

- The Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Membership fees (To become a member, ask for an application at the front desk or visit our website at www.nanaimocdc.com for more information.)
- Nanaimo Ladysmith Schools
- BC Gaming Commission
- Foundations and Service Clubs
- Individual donors
- Annual fundraising events (e.g. Silly Boat and the Little Drummer Fund)