

A program of Andrew Fleck Children's Services



EARLYON CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE CLIENT HANDBOOK

Information About our Playgroups and Services

Here at the EarlyON and throughout Andrew Fleck Children's Services, we are committed to ensuring that Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigeneity (EDII) are reflected throughout our work. We strive to provide a space that demonstrates values free of discrimination and celebrates diversity and inclusion for all.

Andrew Fleck supports children and families through high-quality, inclusive services that meet their diverse developmental, early learning, and child care needs.



Our Programs and Services are:

- funded through the Ministry of Education of Ontario.
- FREE for families & caregivers with children 0-6 years of age.
- are available in English and French.

What is the purpose of playgroup?

Our playgroups aim to provide families, caregivers and children a place to learn and explore together. Led by a Program Facilitator (RECE), we have designed a space where you can simultaneously play with your child and learn about their development. Playgroups are also where you can learn about other family services and build those connections to help support you and your child. We are all here with the same goal: helping children grow and thrive.

Confidentiality

We want you to know that we respect your confidentiality. All data we collect (contact information and attendance at programs) is kept confidential and is for statistical purposes only.

Registration

Pre-registration is not required to attend our playgroups (unless otherwise specified). If this is your first time attending an EarlyON, we will register you within the City of Ottawa system. This process will only take a few minutes, and once completed, your key card can be used to access any EarlyON in the city.

Safety is our number one priority!

Please do not leave children unattended in the playroom or any other area, such as the washrooms or reception area. If you need to step out without your child, we encourage you to connect with another parent/caregiver to help watch your child until you return. The Program Facilitator is happy to help you make these connections.

Fire Drills and Emergency Evacuations

Should a fire drill occur or emergency evacuation be necessary, all participants are expected to follow instructions from EarlyON employees.

Vehicle and Stroller Parking

Some of our locations have on-site parking, and we would like you follow any/all parking directions. If you are arriving with a stroller, please use the designated stroller parking areas to ensure we are not blocking any passageways or doors.

Use of personal electronic devices

Please try to limit cell phone use while in the program. Although they are a great way to catch those special moments, they can also be why we miss out on them. Disconnect so you can connect!

Please note that we do not provide access to Wi-Fi.

Photos and Videos

You may want to capture learning moments through photos and videos to share with your family and friends. We'd like to ask you to be mindful and respectful of those around you who may not wish to be photographed/videotaped. Please ensure you only take pictures/videos of children in your care. Program Facilitators may ask to take photos to document learning moments happening in the program. Parents/guardians will be presented with a Photo Permission form beforehand.

Positive Behaviour Guidance

We strive to foster an environment that supports all parenting approaches and beliefs. We ask that everyone participating in our programs show respect for others and their parenting choices. If you have any concerns about a child when in our programs, we ask that you not contact the child directly but speak either to the adult accompanying the child or the program facilitator in the room.

Additional Services

Toy and Resource Library

Our main location has a Toy Library with various toys to borrow for children ages 0-6. This service is free of charge, and a separate registration process must be completed before borrowing. Families and caregivers can borrow up to five toys for two weeks. Please note that toys can only be borrowed during the Toy Library's open hours.

The Resource library is located in the reception area. We have a selection of children's books and resource books for adults available to borrow as well. These can be borrowed anytime during our Monday to Friday operating hours and require the same registration process as the Toy Library.

Workshops and Parent/Caregiver Discussions

Workshops and discussions are offered to support families and caregivers with young children. A workshop could be a hands-on experience in which a parent and child can participate together. We have hosted workshops ranging from science experiments to school preparation. Our discussions focus on various topics and are often held in the evenings. Examples of past discussions include toilet learning, self-regulation, and sleep. Pre-registration is a requirement to participate and can be done through provided links in our programming calendars. If this is a virtual event, you will receive a Zoom link via email before the event. For anyone who was scheduled to attend a workshop/discussion and can no longer, we ask that you notify us so that we can offer your space to those who may be on our waitlist.

Information and Referral

Staff are available by phone, e-mail, or in person at any of our playgroups to answer your questions or refer you to appropriate resources.

Playgroups

Playgroups are designed for parents/guardians & caregivers with children 0-6 years of age.

- Parents/guardians & caregivers are asked to **scan their key cards before entering the playgroup**. If you have **forgotten/lost your key card** or this is your **first time attending a playgroup**, please **speak to the Admin at the front desk** or connect with the Program Facilitator in the room.
- **Safety is our number one priority!** Please do not leave children unattended.
- All of our playgroups have **capacity limits**. When we have reached our capacity limit, **PLAYGROUP FULL** signs will be posted. Families will be asked to wait until a space becomes available.
- Families are welcome to bring snacks to the playgroup. There are designated snack areas provided in all of our playgroups. **We ask that snacks consumed in the program be not free due to anaphylactic allergies.**
- Due to health concerns associated with scents, **we strongly discourage using scented products in all of our programs**.
- When attending an indoor playgroup, we ask that everyone **bring indoor shoes on rainy days and during winter months**.
- **Please refrain from attending our playgroups** if you or your child(ren) are unwell. By diligently monitoring your symptoms and staying home when you are sick, you are doing your part in helping to stop the spread!
- For hygienic purposes, **diapering should be done in the washroom** where changing facilities are provided.
- **Coffee and tea** are provided for the adults; please ensure that hot beverages are out of reach of children. Please **rinse your cup and put it in the dishwasher** after use.
- We ask that **parents/guardians and caregivers** do their part in **helping to keep areas tidy and clean**. This is an excellent opportunity to **role-model these behaviours** for children!

- Playgroup will often **end with a circle time gathering**. We encourage everyone to participate, but we understand that not everyone may be ready or able to. **Adult participation** in circle time is another way to **role model** and **encourage participation**.
- If a playgroup is **cancelled**, we will send a **cancellation notice via our Facebook page** and **newsletter platform**.

Outdoor Playgroups

- Outdoor playgroups **operate in all different types of weather**. If you plan to join us, please ensure you have **dressed appropriately** to be able to participate in the playgroup. If you are **unsure if the playgroup is running on that day**, please feel free to give us a call at **613-737-6369**.
- Some locations have access to **public washrooms**, but many of our sites **do not**, so **please plan accordingly**.