

PROCEDURES MANUAL:

Your Guide to Know:

- What to Do
- Who Does What
- Where to Go for Information



NOTE OF IMPORTANCE:

This Emergency Response Plan has been developed as a recommended tool that child care facilities can use to create their own Emergency Response Plans. **Niagara Region will not be responsible for your use of this tool. If you decide to use this tool, you are agreeing that you will not have or make a claim against Niagara Region under any theory of law for any type of damage or loss.** You may already have similar policies, procedures, and forms that you use. You may choose to keep what you have, modify them or use what is presented here. You should cross check your child care program's current policies and procedures to ensure that anything that is utilized from this Emergency Response Plan is consistent with what your child care facility may already have in place. Any procedural information that you plan on implementing from this Emergency Response Plan should be brought forward to your Authority in Charge (Board of Directors, Executive Director, Operator, etc) for discussion and proper implementation into action. This will most likely include staff education and training of new procedures.

Table of Contents

<u>Title</u>	<u>Page #</u>
Evacuation Procedures	3
Sheltering	5
Snow & Ice Storms	6
Utility Disruption	7
Power Outages	8
Boil Water Advisory	9
Lightning	10
Tornadoes	11
Hurricanes	12
Floods... ..	13
Earthquakes	14
Fire	15
Hazardous Materials Accidents	16
Terrorism	16
Bomb Threats, Threatening Call or Message	17
Suspicious Article	18
Potentially Violent Situations	19
Lockdown	20
Disgruntled or Impaired Parents/Guardians or Disruptive Visitors or Unauthorized Representatives	21
Hostage Situations	22
Missing Child	22
Infectious Diseases, Outbreaks & Pandemics	24
Serious Occurrence Procedures	30
Communicating with the Media	32
References	33

EVACUATION PROCEDURES¹

You may need to evacuate staff and children from your child care facility in the event of a fire, bomb threat, flood, or any other situation in which there is immediate danger to being inside the building. Depending on circumstances, you will need to decide to evacuate to the on-site location or to the off-site location.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF UPON NOTICE OF EVACUATION

- Quickly scan the space around you looking for any potential hazards. Report any findings to the Supervisor.
- Account for all children. Conduct a head count and ensure accurate attendance records. Attendance records must be kept with staff.
- Gather all medications and any other essential needs of children (e.g. asthma inhaler) – if accessible.
- Any extra staff (Cook, Janitorial, Floater, Assistant Supervisor) not on program with the children should go to the infant room or youngest age group to assist with the evacuation,.
- For inclement weather, take appropriate supplies to protect the children if possible (e.g. blankets, etc).
- Once outside the building, take children to the designated area and conduct a head count matched to the attendance records to ensure all children are outside.
- Wait for the Supervisor to provide further direction.
- Provide activities to reduce stress to children (i.e. holding circle, songs, games).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISOR AND/OR DESIGNATE

- Coordinate all actions with emergency authorities, giving them as much information as possible.
- Notify all staff of the evacuation plan. Depending on the nature of the emergency, notify staff if they should take the children to the on-site evacuation location or to the off-site evacuation location.
- Take the Emergency Contact Information Book with all of the children's Emergency Contact Information as well as all other Emergency Phone Numbers such as Landlords, Authority in Charge, etc.
- Designate one staff member to assist each child with special needs in evacuating if staff numbers permit.
- Designate one staff member to wait outside and direct emergency vehicles such as fire trucks and ambulances to your location (if applicable).
- Notify landlords/or building Supervisor (where applicable) of circumstances as soon as you are able.
- If you are evacuating to the off-site location, contact the facility with an estimated time of arrival of children and staff.
- Transport all necessary medications, first aid supplies, emergency numbers, cell phone and walkie-talkies (where applicable).
- Do a final check - ensure all children have been removed from the centre (check all washrooms, closets/storage areas, cloak rooms, kitchen/laundry rooms and playgrounds/play structures etc.).
- Take direction from Police/Emergency Authorities once they arrive. If requested, stay at the centre with Police or other Emergency Authority.
- Notify families of the situation and evacuation location for immediate pick up of children. (Supervisor may designate a staff responsible for calling families etc. if requested to stay with emergency authorities).

Once you have safely evacuated the building to the on-site location or off-site location:

- Call parents/families or designate staff to call parents/families of children and notify them of the emergency and where children can be picked up. Make sure you are clear on what information is being given to families and that staff are relaying the same messages.
- Determine where to set up different groups of children and define areas if possible.
- Find the nearest washroom facilities and notify all staff.
- Document children being picked up and by whom.

Assisted Evacuation

One-on-one, or additional, help may be required by a child with special needs.

You may need to use alternate evacuation routes for wheelchair accessibility (i.e. cannot use elevators).

Tips on helping children with special needs:

- You should have specific knowledge of the child's needs from the registration/orientation process and in speaking with the child's parents. The staff member who is most familiar with the child should evacuate with them.
- Speak clearly and inform the child of what is happening and what you are going to do.
- Do not touch, push or pull a child or their assistive device or equipment (such as a wheelchair) without telling them you are going to do so first.
- To communicate with a deaf-blind person, draw an 'X' on their back or try tracing letters with your finger on the palm of their hand to let them know you are there to help during an emergency.
- Follow instructions posted on special needs equipment or assistive device during an emergency.
- Avoid attempts to lift, support or assist in moving someone unless you are familiar with safe techniques.

SHELTERING²

Sheltering involves keeping all windows and doors closed and covering air intake vents to provide protection from airborne hazardous materials. You would normally take shelter in the event of earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, hazardous materials accidents, terrorist attack, etc.

- Ensure all centre staff and children are in the building (outside playground areas are unoccupied).
- Ensure all doors and windows are closed and locked.
- If necessary, emergency response personnel will shut off HVAC systems to isolate the outside air from the building if the system has not already shut down.
- Turn off all exhaust fans in kitchens, bathrooms and any other spaces.
- Use tape and plastic food wrapping to cover and seal fireplaces, bathroom exhaust and grilles, range vents, dryer vents, air vents, and other openings to the outdoors. Seal any obvious gaps around external windows and doors. Then stay away from all vents, windows, doors, etc.
- Close the drapes, curtains or shades for additional protection.
- If the vapors begin to bother the staff and children, hold wet cloths or handkerchiefs over the nose and mouth.
- Remain in the building until notified by the emergency response authorities that the situation has been resolved or that an evacuation has been ordered.

PREPARING FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF DISASTERS ^{3, 4}

In the Niagara region, many different types of natural disasters can occur such as hazardous materials, flooding, lightning, hurricanes, tornadoes, winter storms, as well as technical failures such as utility disruptions, fires, exposure to hazardous materials and also human threats including bomb threats, terrorism, potentially violent situations, etc. You will need to take specific precautions and actions which may lead to sheltering, evacuating or other types of emergency activities in order to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and staff in your child care facility.



Environment Canada is the official source for weather information and public forecasts. They are responsible for issuing severe weather watches and warnings in Canada. http://weatheroffice.gc.ca/canada_e.html

SNOW AND ICE STORMS

During a snow or ice storm where you may need to close your facility, follow these steps:

- Discuss current and predicted weather situation with the Authority in Charge (Owner, Operator, Board of Director) for procedures and approval for closing or limited usage of your child care facility.
- Monitor winter storm warnings.
- Check status of battery-powered radios, flashlights, back-up lighting, power and heat.
- Consider discussing with the Authority in Charge the possibility of closing the night before however, if not possible, make sure to notify all parents/guardians immediately after a decision has been made to close the facility.
- If you know a storm is approaching, request and confirm emergency contact information from parents when they drop off their children in the morning. In case they cannot be reached, alternate designates should be contacted to pick up children.
- Remember:
 - If you are sending children home early due to weather conditions, call parents/guardians to make arrangements to have their children picked up as soon as possible.
 - If you have a website, upload information about the closure, including emergency contact information.
 - Leave pertinent information on your answering machine/voicemail so that when parents call they receive up-to-date information about your facility.

Arrange for snow and ice removal as well as possible debris removal such as fallen trees and utility lines.

UTILITY DISRUPTION (water, heat, gas, electricity, telephones, computers)⁵

If the utilities in the facility are disrupted, make every effort to keep the facility open. The decision to close or remain open rests with the Authority in Charge.

If the facility must close, staff should begin calling parents/guardians and ask them to pick up their child. Parents of infant children should be called first.

The Facility may close or delay opening based on the Authority in Charge's approval. Take into consideration these factors:

- The temperature is 17°C (64°F) or below, 27°C (85°F) degrees or higher for one hour, with no expectation of heat/air conditioning restoration within the next one to two hours, and/or the room conditions prevent adequate ventilation and breathing.
- The natural light in the Centre is diminished to the point that children and staff are at risk.
- The main phone line will be inoperable for more than one hour, and no auxiliary cellular phones are available.
- The nutritional needs of the children cannot be met (i.e. infant bottles cannot be warmed up, serving or preparing food cannot be done without hot water to wash hands first).
- Live wires will require the immediate closing of the Centre and the transfer of the children.
- Loss of water that disrupts appropriate diapering, hand washing, food preparation and toileting with clean running water for more than two hours.

In the event utilities are disrupted, the Supervisor and/or Designate will call the appropriate authorities to find out how long the projected disruption will be, and notify the Authority in Charge. If there is a disruption to water supply, a Serious Occurrence Report must be filed with the Ministry of Child and Youth Services. In the event of water or electricity disruption the local public health inspector should be contacted to assist with health risk assessment.

POWER OUTAGES

In the event of a power outage:

- Do not call 911. Report it to your local electrical utility.
- Check other buildings and houses around your facility to see if others are without power. If there are power lines down in your neighborhood, call 911 and call your utility company. Do not go near downed power lines.
- Check the fuse box to see if there is a blown fuse or a tripped circuit breaker.
- If you determine that a fuse or circuit breaker needs to be replaced, turn off all large appliances or unplug them before replacing a fuse or a breaker to avoid damage to the electrical system.
- Due to the extreme risk of fire, do not use candles during a power outage.
- Leave one light on so that you know when the power has been turned back on.
- Toilets must be functional in order to continue operation for a period of time. Factors, including the time of day of disruption and use of toilets by other tenants in the building, will determine how long the facility can remain open if toilets are not working.
- Remember that meat, dairy and frozen products can be hazardous if they are not stored properly. Use of perishables and foods from the refrigerator first, then use foods from the freezer, then non-perishables.
- For child care providers with infants that are formula fed, call parents/caregivers and notify them of the power outage. Ask them to be on alert to pick up their children if the power outage lasts beyond feeding time for the infants. If so, call parents/caregivers and arrange for pick up. All other children can eat food which does not need to be cooked such as sandwiches, crackers, granola bars, etc.
- You may need supplies from your emergency kit such as flashlight.

BOIL WATER ADVISORY⁶

Disruption to the water supply or Boil Water or Drinking Water Advisory is a Serious Occurrence and the Serious Occurrence requirements are to be followed and reported to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

Possible microbiological contamination would warrant a **BWA (Boil Water Advisory)** because boiling can destroy microorganisms.

Possible chemical contamination would warrant a **DWA (Drinking Water Advisory)** and typically boiling does not correct the problem. When a DWA is issued, recommendations on using the water are provided or it is simply advised not to use the water in question and to obtain an alternate known safe source of water. If you have any questions about the DWA, call your Public Health Inspector.

Procedures for Boil Water Advisory:



- Post notices that state – ‘DO NOT DRINK OR USE TAP WATER’, at entrance doors and at ALL water taps.
- Ensure all staff follow the advisory.
- Ensure that water is made safe to drink by boiling at a rolling boil for at least one minute.
- Ensure staff and children do not consume untreated tap water, ice or drinks made from tap water.
- Follow Serious Occurrence Procedures.
- Notify parents (verbally or written) of the advisory and the procedures being taken by the child care facility.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer for both staff and children for hand-washing purposes. Wet hands thoroughly with the sanitizer and rub for 1 minute.
- Review the method for washing dishes. If a high temperature dishwasher is used, the temperature must be checked to verify adequate disinfection. (The temperature must reach 82°C (180°F) for 10 seconds. If dishes are being washed by hand, the water must be boiled prior to use. Then follow normal dishwashing procedures.
- Disinfect countertops⁷:
 - Clean all articles first with soap and warm water.
 - Rinse with clear water.
 - Follow with a sanitizer – see recipe below or use according to manufacturer’s recommendations.
- Store all sanitizers and other chemicals clearly labelled in a locked cupboard, out of reach of children and away from food.

A Simple Effective Sanitizer Recipe:

- 1ml bleach per 1 litre of water
- Make fresh bleach solution daily
- Allow one minute contact time
- Store ready for use in a labelled spray bottle
- Confirm the strength of the sanitizer using the appropriate test papers (i.e. chlorine, quaternary ammonium compound solution, iodine).

A Boil Water Advisory, if issued by the Medical Officer of Health, can ONLY be lifted by the Medical Officer of Health. A drinking water utility can also issue a Boil Water or Drinking Water Advisory when warranted. If you have any questions about boil water or drinking water advisories, call **Niagara Region Public Health**:

- 905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074, extension 7335 (during business hours)
- 905-984-3690 (evenings and weekends)

LIGHTNING

- Follow the 30/30 rule. To estimate how far away the lightning is, count the seconds between the flash of lightning and the thunderclap. If you count less than thirty seconds between the flash and the bang, take shelter immediately and remain there for 30 minutes after the last rumble.
- If you are outside:
 - Lead children to shelter immediately, preferably to a building.
 - If you cannot make it to a building safely, have all children crouch in the leap frog position and lower their heads. You do not want to be the tallest object in the area.
 - Have all children take shelter in a ditch or culvert but never under a tree.
 - If you are in a car or bus, stay there, close all windows and pull away from trees which could fall on you.
- If you are inside:
 - Stay indoors, have all children stay away from windows, doors, fireplaces, radiators, stoves, faucets, sinks, bathtubs, appliances, metal pipes, telephones (cell phones are fine), and other materials which conduct electricity. Close curtains and blinds.
 - Unplug radios, appliances and televisions and use battery or crank powered radio instead.

TORNADOES

Hot, humid weather combined with a cold front could be a sign that a tornado is developing and may be accompanied by lightning, high winds, and hail. Boiling green-tinged clouds overhead are an indicator of possible tornado activity nearby.

A *tornado watch* is issued when weather conditions are favourable for the development of severe thunderstorms that are capable of producing tornadoes. Remain alert for approaching storms. Observe the area around you whether inside or outside, look for the safest areas that you could take the children if need be. Listen to the radio or television for further developments.

A *tornado warning* is an alert to warn that a tornado is imminent. Take the children to the safest place possible immediately.

During a tornado:

- Direct children and staff to a shelter place, preferably an underground area of the home or centre or an interior area away from windows. Bring a cell or cordless phone to the area.
- If there is no basement available, move to an interior hallway on the lowest level of the building.
- Avoid rooms with wide-span roofs, such as cafeterias or multi-purpose rooms.
- Seek protection under equipment such as tables. If outdoors, seek shelter in a low-lying area (culvert or ditch). Have children use their arms to protect their head and neck.

HURRICANES

Monitor Hurricane Watch and Warnings and take action based on direction from your Authority in Charge (Board of Directors, Owner/Operator, etc).

- If time permits:
 1. Return children to their families.
 2. Secure outside equipment.
 3. Close and board up windows.
 4. Turn refrigerators and freezers to their coldest settings. Open only when necessary and close quickly.
 5. Store drinking water in clean containers.
 6. Fill vehicles with fuel.
 7. Check emergency kits
 8. Turn off propane tanks. Turn off utilities if told to do so by authorities.
 9. Check status of battery-powered radios and alternate light sources.

- Remain indoors until the storm has passed. Hurricanes often have a lull as the eye of the storm passes so ensure you remain indoors for an adequate amount of time.

- If power is lost, unplug appliances to avoid a possible power surge when electricity is restored.

- **If you are caught in a hurricane and do not have time to return children to their parents/caregivers follow same sheltering and/or evacuation procedures as for tornadoes.**

FLOODS

Floods in Ontario can result from snowmelt, ice jams, heavy spring rains, summer thunderstorms, tropical storms or hurricanes.⁸

- Listen for announcements of flood watches and warnings.
- Inspect areas prone to flood such as the basement to move important documents and supplies out of the way.
- Forward records to a computer outside of the area.
- Turn off utilities at main panel.
- Close main gas valve.
- Pay attention to evacuation orders from public officials.
- Do not walk or drive through flooded areas that are deeper than knee-high.
- Any unprotected food that comes in contact with flood waters should be discarded.
- **Discuss flood situation with your Authority in Charge to make decisions on whether to close the facility. If so, call parents/caregivers to pick up children as soon as possible.**

EARTHQUAKES

When an earthquake occurs and you are inside the building:

- Shut off gas and water supply.
- Staff should assist the children in seeking cover under tables or desks or against an inside wall, (away from bookcases or tall furniture that could fall) and hold onto the table/desk legs.
- Stay as far away from windows as possible.

When an earthquake occurs and you are outside:

- Gather the children and take them to an open area away from buildings, trees, playground structure, hydro poles, telephone and electrical lines, overpasses or elevated expressways or anything else that may fall on you.
- Have the children sit on the ground and cover their head and face with their hands.
- Stay there until the shaking stops.
- Proceed with caution back to the centre, unless it is not safe to do so.

After the shaking stops and you are inside a building:

- Look for possible hazards to determine if it is safe to move before getting up and helping others.
- Keep the children together in one area away from the most severe damage and possible area of structural weakness.
- Extinguish any small fires or call 911 if there is a larger fire.
- Help any injured or trapped people.
- Check for gas leaks, (smell of natural gas, the sound of a blowing or hissing noise), electrical system damage, (sparks, broken or frayed wires, smell of insulation burning), and sewer or water line damage. In the case of a gas leak, open the window and remove the children as quickly as possible, watching out for structural damage, and falling items.
- Avoid using the phone. This may tie up lines that emergency personnel need.
- Listen to the radio for instructions.
- Reassure and comfort children. Let them know their parents/guardians will come for them as soon as they can and that everything is okay, and that they are safe.
- Aftershocks are common. Follow above procedures in the event of aftershocks.
- Return to routine as soon as possible.
- Encourage children to talk about their fears and help them understand what happened.

FIRE

Child Care Centres should have an Official Fire Safety Plan completed by a Fire Safety Consultant which is to be readily available on site at all times for use by fire officials in the event of an emergency. In the absence of an Official Fire Safety Plan, these procedures can be followed.

Smoke color may indicate the potential danger of the situation as follows:

1. **Yellow smoke** may indicate the presence of toxic gases. Evacuation should proceed immediately, and no effort should be made to extinguish the flame.
2. **Gray smoke** with brown wisps is indicative of any electrical fire. Again the area should be evacuated immediately, and all should stay clear of the area.
3. **Gray-black** smoke is indicative of a primary fire. The first priority remains evacuation of the immediate area. Staff members may attempt to extinguish the fire only if there is no severe danger of smoke inhalation.⁹

Response to Fires:

- **If you discover a small fire** (waste paper basket size) extinguish the fire by using water, blanket, fire extinguisher, etc. Personal safety and the safety of the children come first.
- **If you discover a larger fire:**
 - Leave the fire area closing all doors behind you, in order to confine the fire.
 - If you have a fire alarm system, activate the building fire alarm system using the closest fire alarm pull station.
 - Try to ensure one staff member takes the daily attendance and contact information binder when evacuating.
 - Direct a staff member to call 911.
 - Evacuate all children using the nearest exit.
 - Take the children to the on-site evacuation location which should be far enough away from the building and out of the way of firefighters, police, etc.
 - Take attendance of the children to ensure all children are present.
- **If you hear a fire alarm:**
 - Escort the children to the nearest safe exit and proceed to the on-site evacuation location.
 - If you are confronted by smoke or fire, use an alternate exit.
 - Assign one staff member to check washrooms, closets, etc. to ensure all children have been evacuated from the building.
 - Take attendance of the children to ensure all children are present.
 - Check to see if someone has called 911.

SCHEDULE MONTHLY REGULAR FIRE DRILLS TO ENSURE STAFF AND CHILDREN ARE FAMILIARIZED WITH THE EVACUATION PROCEDURE.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ACCIDENTS

Accidents that include spilling hazardous materials can pollute the land, air, or water, and subsequently endanger the health of adults and children.

- If a hazardous materials accident occurs in your child care facility or outside and near your child care facility, call 911 and follow their safety directions.
- Depending on the type of hazardous materials accident (inside facility or outside), be prepared to isolate the immediate area, evacuate, or take shelter in place.
- Follow procedures contained in this manual for evacuating or sheltering-in-place.

TERRORISM

- Ensure all staff know where the emergency kit is located.
- Be careful about accepting unexpected packages from anyone other than authorized carriers.
- If there is an explosion in the child care facility, get everyone out as quickly as possible – unless directed otherwise by government officials or it does not appear safe to evacuate.
- If items are falling, get everyone under sturdy furniture.
- If there is danger of fire, keep everyone low to the floor and exit as quickly as possible. Follow other guidelines related to fires.
- Don't try to rescue staff or children from debris. Wait until emergency personnel arrives.

BOMB THREATS, THREATENING CALL OR MESSAGE

- Any threat should be treated as real until proven otherwise.
- Stay calm and do not argue.
- The staff member that received the call should try to tell another staff member that a bomb threat is in progress so that other staff and children can evacuate immediately and another staff member can call 911.
- The staff member who received the call should try keep the caller on the line as long as possible.



- The staff member who received the call should try to follow the questions on the bomb threat template. This will guide you to ask the right questions and help you identify clues from the conversation such as background noises, caller accent, etc. If you cannot access the bomb threat template while on the phone, try to remember the details of the conversation and document them on the form. If you have caller ID, record the telephone number.
- If you were not able to tell another staff member to call 911, as soon as you hang up with the call you should call 911 immediately. Ask police to provide appropriate procedures to take within the facility.
- In the event of an evacuation, staff should make a quick scan of the immediate space looking for any foreign object and/or anything that is completely unknown/suspicious.

File a Serious Occurrence Report or an Enhanced Serious Occurrence Report with the Ministry of Child and Youth Services as soon as possible and notify Niagara Region Children's Services.

SUSPICIOUS ARTICLE

If you find or have reason to believe there is a suspicious article, package, or letter at or near your child care facility you need to report this to the Supervisor immediately, then:

- Call 911
- Do not touch or attempt to move the article unless instructed to do so by the police. Keep the children away from the immediate area of the package/article/letter. Follow the advice of the police to determine appropriate procedures to take within the centre.
- Evacuation will depend on the advice of the police.

POTENTIALLY VIOLENT SITUATIONS¹⁰

If a potentially violent individual gains access to your facility and leaves:

- Call 911 immediately.
- If you have reason to believe that the individual has a weapon, order a selective evacuation from non-affected areas (this may be another room within the facility).
- Allow the individual to exit making sure to note the direction of their travel, what they were wearing, their car make and model, license plate, and any other distinguishing characteristics. Communicate this immediately to 911.

Note: If the individual is leaving and taking a child or staff member, it is still often better to let the individual leave rather than prompt a confrontation that would increase the risk of injury.

If a potentially violent individual gains access to your facility and remains:

- Immediately call 911.
- If you have any reason to believe the individual has a weapon, order a selective evacuation, if possible.
- Try to isolate the potential aggressor from as many adults and children as possible. Seek to draw the individual(s) to another room or other less populated space. If the individual has entered a classroom, seek to draw him into the least utilized portion of the room.
- If comfortable doing so, engage the potential aggressor in agreeable conversation (use calming techniques) to de-escalate the situation.
- Remain calm and polite.
- Do not try to physically restrain an individual.
- While you are engaging the potentially violent individual, other available persons should direct unaffected classrooms to move to locations around the facility that are farthest from the incident point. This selective evacuation should proceed room-by-room and as orderly and quietly as possible, being careful to use routes not visible to the incident point.
- The other staff available should also make sure no other individuals, other than emergency personnel, enter the space where you have isolated the potentially violent individual.
- Once the police arrive they will take over the situation, negotiate and direct further movements.
- If a decision is made to relocate to the evacuation location while negotiations go on, follow the appropriate evacuation procedures.

File a Serious Occurrence Report or an Enhanced Serious Occurrence Report with the Ministry of Child and Youth Services as soon as possible and notify the Niagara Region Children's Services.

LOCKDOWN

These lockdown procedures describe the steps that you should take to ensure the safety and security of staff and children during a violent incident. If the facility is affected by threats, intruders, drive by shootings, active shooters etc., staff will implement the following:

- Call 911 immediately.
- Alert the Supervisor and other staff personnel of the situation.
- Stay where you are unless notified otherwise.
- If you are in a common area i.e. hallway or open space, find a classroom or office preferably with computer access or phone access.
- If possible, extra staff such as cooks, maintenance staff, and volunteers should try to make their way to the infant room or help staff who have the youngest children in their classrooms.
- Alerted staff members should take all children out of the hallways and into the nearest playroom.
- Close the doors and have the children lay on the floor, or crouch under equipment such as tables and be as quiet as possible.
- Lock and/or barricade the door with heavy furniture where possible. Cover the door window.
- Turn off lights or maintain minimal lighting.
- Close any blinds on windows.
- Don't let anyone in. This includes parents.
- Do not respond to anyone at the door or outside. Only respond to police officials.
- If the fire alarm is sounded, wait for further instruction before evacuating. Do not evacuate based upon the fire alarm alone.
- Review the attendance and establish who is missing, and who is with you but not on your class list.
- Do not go in the hallway until authorities have given the "all clear" signal.
- After the "all clear," contact parents/guardians to inform them of the situation that occurred; otherwise parent/guardians will be informed upon arrival at the Centre (either verbally or through written notification).
- Follow the Serious Occurrence Reporting procedures.

If the majority of children are outside the building and the threat is inside the facility:

- Call 911 (if possible).
- Alert other staff personnel of the problem.
- Take all children to the furthest point away from the building which is not in the sightline of the facility OR if possible to the predetermined off-site evacuation location.
- Review attendance and establish who is missing, and who is with you but not on your class list.
- Follow direction of Niagara Regional Police when they arrive.
- Once you have been advised by the Police, begin calling parents/guardians to inform them of the situation and to have them pick up their children.
- Follow the Serious Occurrence Reporting procedures.

DISGRUNTLED or IMPAIRED PARENTS/GUARDIANS or DISRUPTIVE VISITORS or UNAUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES¹¹

If a parent, guardian, family member or visitor to the child care facility engages in disruptive or potentially dangerous behaviour, the person should be asked to leave the facility immediately.

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) should specify in writing any adult who has permission to pick-up their child(ren) from the facility. Only those adults specified in writing by the custodial parent will be able to pick up the child(ren) from care.

If you have reasonable cause to suspect that any person who has come into your facility, most likely picking a child up is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way and may endanger a child, or other children at the facility, or is disruptive and potentially dangerous:

- Alert the Supervisor and other staff members of the situation.
- Staff should close doors to their classroom and remain alert of the situation, but at the same time not allow the children to see what is happening.
- Remain polite and calm.
- If the person appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, offer to call a taxi and pay for the taxi.
- Ask if someone else can be called to pick up the child.
- If the person becomes agitated and/or confrontational, call 911.
- If the disgruntled or intoxicated parent/guardian is demanding their child be released to them, try to stall as long as possible until police arrive. However, never put yourself or the children at risk by physically trying to stop an irate or intoxicated parent from picking up their child.
- If the parent/guardian is putting others in danger you should release the child to the parent/guardian.
- If the person picking up a child is NOT authorized to pick up the child, do NOT release the child to this person.
- Get the license number and make of the car.
- An incident report should be subsequently filled out by the staff involved following any of the preceding instances
- If necessary follow the Serious Occurrence Reporting procedures.
- The Supervisor will:
 - write a full report of the incident.
 - report all information to the Police when they arrive.

Staff should NOT offer to drive the parent home.

Although it would be difficult to release a child to an impaired person, if the person has the potential to affect the well-being of the other children in the employee's care or the employee themselves, it may become necessary to release a child. At this point, it will be critical to call the police immediately with the necessary information.

When the impaired person picking up the child is not the parent or legal guardian, do NOT release the child. The parent will be notified of the situation, unless the situation warrants releasing the child to ensure the well-being and safety of the other children and/or the staff themselves.

HOSTAGE SITUATIONS

Although unlikely, you may be involved in a hostage situation with disgruntled employees, parents/guardians, authorized representatives, or anyone else. In the event of a hostage situation:

- Remain calm and polite.
- Call 911 or instruct Supervisor or other staff member to call 911.
- Follow the hostage-taker's instructions.
- Try to alert all staff members of the situation and for them to close all classroom doors so that children are unaware of the situation.
- Follow the directions of police.

MISSING CHILD¹²

When a child fails to arrive at your child care facility (by bus, cab, walking, bicycling) from an alternate location:

- 1) Talk to the cab driver or bus driver
- 2) Call the school
- 3) Call the parents and emergency contacts
- 4) Call the police
- 5) Call the Authority in Charge
- 6) If the child is missing and depending on severity of the situation, file a **Serious Occurrence Report or an Enhanced Serious Occurrence Report with the Ministry of Child and Youth Services as soon as possible and notify Niagara Region Children's Services.**

Note: If the child was not at school, notify your Supervisor and continue to try to contact parents but do not contact the police.

When a child has gone out of the sight of staff (or parent, or volunteer) for longer than 10 seconds, except where staff know exactly where the child is (e.g. washroom or change room):

- 1) Inform the Supervisor and alert other staff immediately.
- 2) Conduct a search of all areas of the facility, including closets, cabinets, etc. and the immediate surrounding area.
- 3) Call the parent or emergency contact.
- 4) Call the police.
- 5) Continue searching.
- 6) If the child is missing and depending on severity of the situation, **file a Serious Occurrence Report or an Enhanced Serious Occurrence Report with the Ministry of Child and Youth Services as soon as possible and notify Niagara Region Children's Services.**

INFECTIOUS DISEASES, OUTBREAKS & PANDEMICS¹³



Direction from Niagara Region Public Health will supersede any other plans or actions in regards to Outbreaks and Pandemics.



If Niagara Region Public Health declares an infectious disease outbreak, file a Serious Occurrence Report with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Contact Niagara Region Children's Services to notify them of the outbreak.

(The following information is taken directly from: **Health and Safety Manual for Child Care Providers/Public Health Department**).

INFECTIOUS DISEASES – STEPS TO IDENTIFY ILLNESS

Definition: Infectious diseases are diseases that are transmitted from person-to-person. Some examples of potential outbreaks include: salmonella, e-coli, influenza (the flu), etc.

No matter how careful you are, there will be some infectious diseases in any child care setting. The following steps may assist in the identification of illness.

- a. Daily observation of the child should to be carried out by the operator or his/her delegate before the child associates with other children in the facility.
- b. Assess each child for the following symptoms of illness:
 - Fever > 38° C (100° F), flushing, pallor, listlessness
 - Acute cold, nasal discharge or coughing
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - Red or discharging eyes or ears
 - Yellowish skin or eyes
 - Unusual spots or rashes
 - Unusual behaviour (irritability, fussiness, restlessness)
- c. Be prepared to deal with illness when it occurs. If a child appears ill:
 - Isolate the ill child from other children until medical assessment can be arranged.
 - Notify parents promptly and request that they take the ill child home.
 - Ask the parents to keep the child at home until recovery is complete and the child is no longer infectious (refer to the List of Common Communicable Diseases in Schools and Day Nurseries in the Health and Safety Manual for Child Care Providers/Public Health Department for exclusion guidelines)
 - Report immediately all communicable diseases to the Medical Officer of Health or the Infectious Disease Program at the Niagara Region at **905-688-8248** or **1-888-505-6074 Ext. 7330**. During

non-business hours call 905-688-8248 and follow the directions to speak with the manager on call for Niagara Region Public Health.

- Notify other parents in the same classroom when exposure to a communicable disease has occurred.
- Observe exposed children, who have not had the disease, for symptoms during the incubation period.
- Be aware of any children in the childcare centre with cancer, including leukemia or other immune deficiency illnesses, as these children may need special attention.



Make notation of illness in the child's file and the Child Care Outbreak Line Listing.

Have available the following information when you call Niagara Region Public Health:

- Name of the child and parent
- Date of birth
- Address
- Telephone number
- Physician's name and telephone number
- Name of hospital (if child is admitted)
- Immunization information

IDENTIFYING A POTENTIAL OUTBREAK

When several children and/or staff become ill on the same day, notify the Infectious Disease Program at Niagara Region Public Health Department **immediately** by telephone. Any delay can have an impact on outbreak management, and appropriate specimen collection. Niagara Region Public Health Department staff will assist your staff in bringing an outbreak under control. **Ongoing surveillance** of children and staff by a designated staff member is an effective strategy in identifying an outbreak or a potential outbreak. Early recognition is essential for effective outbreak management.

Child Care staff should initiate the recording of illness in the daily journal. This is useful for determining if, how and to what extent the illness is spreading within the facility. Designated staff should continue to maintain and update the Child Care Outbreak Line Listing on a daily basis. Child care staff should provide updates to the Niagara Region Public Health, Infectious Disease program on a daily basis by fax **905-682-6470**.

Child Care staff should consider any of the following as a potential outbreak:

- Significantly more cases of the same or similar illness among children and child care providers than normally expected.
- 2 or more children in the same group suffering from vomiting &/or diarrhea within a short time period.
- A diagnosed reportable disease in a child or childcare provider.

If Children Become Ill During the Day¹⁴:

- The parent or guardian must be notified to arrange for pick up of the child.
- The child must be separated from the other children and supervised at all times.

- A designated sick room or area should be established.
- Try to make the child feel as comfortable as possible until they can be picked up (e.g. providing a comfortable place to lie down).
- Staff supervising the child will wear gloves and a mask.
- Make sure to tell parents/guardians that masks will be used as a precaution in order to prevent panic.
- If the child's parent/guardians cannot be reached, call their emergency contacts.
- Document the child's illness on the Child Care Outbreak Listing in the template provided.



In the event of an outbreak, and the child care facility cannot meet the Adult:Child ratios, the Supervisor **MUST** notify the Authority in Charge immediately. The Authority in Charge will make the final decision as to closure of the centre.

The well-being of the staff and children, as well as the understanding that families need to work, will be taken into consideration. However, if you are a licensed child care centre or facility you are obligated to follow legislation and the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act.

In the event of an Outbreak the following will be implemented:

- Staff will increase disinfecting of cots, toys and equipment.
- Increased disinfecting of light switches, doorknobs, phones, keyboards and washrooms.
- Waterless soap (i.e. Purell) should be available at the parent entrance, and parents will be encouraged to use prior to entering the classrooms (receive permission from landlord to install Purell containers where applicable).

Staff and children will be directed to increase their hand washing practices. (Liquid soap will need to be in contact with skin for 30-60 seconds versus the regular 10-20 seconds during an outbreak).

PANDEMIC

What to Do During a Pandemic¹⁵:

- Check Niagara Region website for updates: www.niagararegion.ca
- Send Niagara Region Public Health a daily updated Outbreak Line Listing Form of staff and children off sick. You can also complete it online: http://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/professionals/School-Absenteeism-Surveillance-Program-Report-Form.aspx
- Post notices for families as to how many children are off sick and their symptoms each day
- Postpone field trips to minimize contact with other individuals
- Student placements may need to be cancelled/postponed
- Communicate with other child care centres. There may be a possibility to amalgamate services in order to combine space and staff resources. However, you will need approval from the Ministry of Child and Youth



Services and Niagara Region Children's Services before this can be done as there will be many considerations such as staff:child ratios.

- Communicate with other programs that centers regularly interact with, as programs may need to be cancelled (such as schools, churches).
- Identify one staff member who will inform all families/visitors entering the child care facility they must stop for a health/influenza screening prior to entering the classroom.
- The Supervisor will ensure appropriate adult:child ratios are met daily. Inform Authority in Charge immediately if ratios cannot be met.
- The Authority in Charge will make a decision as to the cancellation of site visits, Supervisor meetings, Board meetings, In-center staff meetings etc.
- The Authority in Charge will coordinate part-time staff to work full-time hours in their center in the event of staff off due to illness.
- Niagara Region Public Health may direct child care facilities to close or reduce capacity.
- As the Service Systems Manger, Niagara Region Children's Services will make every effort to support continued operations of licensed facilities.
- Activities which use materials which cannot be readily disinfected should be temporarily suspended (e.g. water, sand, silly putty, play dough, etc)
- Stuffed animals, cloth toys or books, puppets, should also be avoided since they cannot be readily cleaned or disinfected.
- Keep occupants outside of the classroom as much as possible. Reduce/restrict joint activities or contact between classrooms including lunch and nap time.
- Use disposable plates, cups, cutlery
- Do not allow children or staff to brush their teeth using toothbrushes
- No toys/equipment from home, therefore no show and tell.
- No cooking activities with children.
- No cloth diapers or multi-use wipes.

HAND HYGIENE¹⁶

**The most important thing you can do to keep from getting sick is to
Wash your hands!**

*Hand washing and drying is the single most important measure to reduce the risks of transmitting infection from one person to another.

*Many disease causing virus and bacteria are carried on hands and can be passed from person to person through direct contact with the person's hands or through objects that the person has touched.

Recommended technique for good hand hygiene practice:

- Wet hands, preferably with warm water and apply liquid soap
- Rub hands vigorously together and rub all areas
- Wash for 20 seconds (about the same time as it takes to sing Happy Birthday)
- Rinse well and dry hands thoroughly.



The following examples are considered thorough:

- 20 seconds by paper towel (2 towels 10 seconds on each towel)
- 20 seconds by clean roller towel
- 45 seconds by air dryer
- 10 seconds by towel followed by 20 seconds by air dryer

Times when hands should be washed

- After coughing or sneezing (when the hands have been used to cover the mouth or nose)
- After using the toilet or after handling animals
- Before, during and after the preparation of food
- When hands are dirty
- More often if someone is sick
- After removal of latex or non latex gloves
- After contact with high touch areas (telephones, computers, door knobs)

Rationale and Tips for Cleaning:

Liquid soap

- Lowers the likelihood of the transfer of infection from person to person.
- Wall mounted dispensers are preferable to hand held dispensers.
- Pump action dispensers help reduce soap wastage.

Paper towels

- Lower the likelihood of the transfer of infection from person to person.

Air dryers

- Hands must be dried thoroughly to stop the spread of infection (takes approx 45 seconds).

Warm water

- Warm water is preferable to cold water.
- Providing warm water improves compliance of people washing their hands at all.
- If warm water is supplied, it must not exceed a temperature of 40°C.

Mistakes to avoid regarding hand washing

- **DON'T** use a single damp cloth to wash hands
- **DON'T** use a standing basin of water to rinse hands
- **DON'T** use a common hand towel. Always use a disposable towel in communal settings or food preparation settings
- **DON'T** use sponges or non-disposable cleaning cloths. Remember that germs thrive on moist surfaces

Hand Sanitizers/Alcohol rubs/gel/rinses

- Alcohol rubs/gels/rinses are excellent hand antiseptics, provided they contain more than **60%** alcohol. They are widely used in the health care settings, or in situations where running water is not available.
- Alcohol based hand rubs should only be used if no visible dirt is present on the hands.
- Apply enough antiseptic to make about the size of a quarter onto your hands, enough when you rub your hands to cover all areas of your hands including under your nails. Use a rubbing motion to evenly distribute the antiseptic product until your hands feel dry.

NOTE: At this time, the Ontario Health Pandemic Influenza Plan (OHPIP) states that “an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing between 60 and 90% alcohol [should be used] to routinely decontaminate hands”. The OHPIP was developed under the supervision of epidemiologists and specialists in infectious disease control and reflects their best advice.

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE PROCEDURES¹⁷

When a serious occurrence has occurred or is suspected, follow these procedures:

- The child shall be provided with immediate medical attention when warranted.
- Appropriate steps shall be taken to address any continuing risks to the child's health and/or safety.
- In cases involving death, the coroner shall be notified immediately. The Supervisor, or designate, will complete required documentation.
- The staff or any other person witnessing or having knowledge of the occurrence shall report the matter to the Authority in Charge or the person designated to conduct preliminary inquiries.
- The Authority in Charge, or designate, shall conduct a preliminary inquiry immediately. The purpose of the preliminary inquiry is to gather information regarding actual or alleged occurrences.
- All persons having knowledge of the occurrence will remain on the premises until the Manager, or designate, has interviewed them.
- A **preliminary inquiry report** shall be written and signed by the Authority in Charge, or designate, before he/she leaves the premise. The report will include the following:
 - Description of the occurrence
 - Client's allegation (if applicable)
 - Date, time, place of occurrence
 - Reporting time
 - Reason for the occurrence (if known)
 - People involved/supervision of children
 - Action taken/compliance with agency policy
 - Current status
 - Parties notified (Police, Family and Children's' Services, Coroner, parent, Ministry official, Regional Niagara Manager)
 - Further action recommended



Once a preliminary inquiry has been completed:

- The Authority in Charge, or designate, is responsible for determining whether an incident described in a preliminary inquiry is deemed to be a serious occurrence as defined by these procedures and whether, therefore, it should be reported to the Ministry of Children & Youth Services.

As of August 10, 2009, the Hamilton/Niagara Regional Office (HNRO) will be changing the serious occurrence reporting requirements. Service providers will no longer be required to call in serious occurrences that occur on the weekends or on government holidays via voicemail. On weekends/government holidays, service providers will continue to submit the initial notification report to the HNRO by fax or e-mail within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident. The chart below includes the fax and e-mail contact information.

Weekends and Government Holidays	Fax	E-mail
From Friday 5:00 PM To Sunday 9:00 PM	(905) 521-7621	hnr.so@css.gov.on.ca

When a serious occurrence has taken place, the Authority in Charge, or designate, shall ensure that:

- Where applicable, the coroner, Police and/or Family and Children’s Services, and the Director of Children’s Services have been informed of the occurrence.
-  Within 24 hours, the Ministry of Community and Social Services/Ministry of Children and Youth Services Regional Office is informed by way of the Initial Notification Report.
- Within 24 hours the parent, guardian, advocate and, where applicable, the person or agency who placed the client, are informed unless the person to be notified is alleged to have abused the client.
- Part 1 of the Initial Notification Form is to be followed within seven working days, by the submission of Part 2 of the Form - Inquiry report signed by the Authority in Charge or the person who completes the report. The report shall identify any persons involved by their first name and the first initial of their last name.

Follow-up:

When the Ministry is notified of a serious occurrence, the Ministry shall determine if:

- Further action recommended by operator is appropriate or additional action is required
- No further action is required
- The Ministry will conduct a review

ENHANCED SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING

If an emergency service is involved (fire, police and/or ambulance) **AND** if the incident is likely to result in significant public or media attention:

- The centre supervisor, or designate, must notify the Authority in Charge or designate immediately.
- The Ministry and Early Alert System in Toronto must be notified within one (1) hour of the Authority in Charge becoming aware of the incident as well as the Hamilton/Niagara Regional Office.
- The Authority in Charge, or designate, will complete the Enhanced Serious Occurrence Initial Notification Report and fax it within one hour to one of the following numbers:

EARLY ALERT SYSTEM	FACSIMILE	TELEPHONE
Weekdays/Evenings/Overnight Mon – Fri 6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.	1-866-312-0672	1-866-312-0673
Weekends and Government Holidays Fri – Mon 6 p.m. – 6:30 a.m.	1-866-262-8881	1-877-444-0424

The Authority in Charge, or designate, will call the Early Alert System to let them know a fax was sent, time it was sent and who to call back, if needed. The Authority in Charge or designate will also call the Hamilton/Niagara Regional Office Program Advisor.

Hamilton/Niagara Regional Office	FACSIMILE	E-MAIL
Serious Occurrence Reporting	905-521-7621	HNR.SO@css.gov.on.ca

PROGRAM ADVISOR	Telephone:	905-521-7627
	If you receive voice mail, contact	905-521-7679

COMMUNICATING WITH THE MEDIA

If an emergency has occurred, be prepared for media interest. A reporter may show up at your child care facility, send an email, or call your facility looking for information about something that has happened. In the event you are being asked by the media to respond to an emergency situation:

- Do:
 - Understand the media’s right to the story and that you need to influence how it will be written/presented
 - Return the media’s phone calls
 - Be polite, respectful, and helpful
 - Contact your Authority in Charge/Executive Director/Communications Specialist (if you do not feel confident in dealing with the media, call Niagara Region Children’s Services **905-984-6900** for assistance in dealing with the media.)
 - Know who your audience is
 - Know what your key messages are and be clear about them
 - Prepare a written statement that gives the basic facts clearly and concisely.
 - Answer questions within the limits of confidentiality.
 - Communication should be protective of the students and families involved in the situation.
 - Negotiate interview terms:
 - Time
 - Location
- Don’t:
 - Ignore the reporter.
 - Feel the need to answer the reporter’s questions on the spot. Ask the reporter what information they would like to know and get back to them as soon as possible with the most up-to-date information.
 - Block access.
 - Blame others for the situation.
 - Talk with the media “off the record”.

References:

- ¹ Adapted from A Child's World. (2007). Emergency Planning. Policies and Procedures Manual.
- ² Adapted from A Child's World. (2007). Emergency Planning. Policies and Procedures Manual.
- ³ NACCRRRA (2006). Is Child Care Ready? A Disaster Planning Guide for Child Care Resources & Referral Agencies.
- ⁴ Halton Region. (2007). Personal Emergency Response Guide.
- ⁵ Adapted from A Child's World. (2007). Emergency Planning. Policies and Procedures Manual.
- ⁶ Niagara Region. (2006). Children's Services Policy Manual. Disruption of Water Supply.
- ⁷ Niagara Region Public Health (2003). A Health & Safety Manual for Child Care Providers.
- ⁸ Environment Canada. (2008). Flooding Events in Canada – Ontario. http://www.ec.gc.ca/Water/en/manage/floodgen/e_ont.htm
- ⁹ Division of Child Development. North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Emergency Plan Template. December, 2004. Retrieved online February 11, 2009 from: http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/pdf_forms/evacuation_childcare_providers.pdf
- ¹⁰ Adapted from A Child's World. (2007). Emergency Planning. Policies and Procedures Manual.
- ¹¹ Adapted from A Child's World. (2007). Emergency Planning. Policies and Procedures Manual.
- ¹² Adapted from A Child's World. (2007). Emergency Planning. Policies and Procedures Manual.
- ¹³ Niagara Region Public Health (2003). A Health & Safety Manual for Child Care Providers.
- ¹⁴ Region of Durham. (2008). Guidelines: Pandemic Planning for Child Care Operators in the Region of Durham.
- ¹⁵ Region of Durham. (2008). Guidelines: Pandemic Planning for Child Care Operators in the Region of Durham.
- ¹⁶ MCSS/MCYS – Hamilton Niagara Region. 2008-2009 Continuity of Operations Program.
- ¹⁷ Niagara Region. (2009). Serious Occurrence Reporting Procedures. Children's Services Policy Manual.