

SHK DAY

IGNITING THE SPIRIT WITHIN

Thunder Bay Aboriginal Head Start and Childcare
Parent & Caregiver Handbook
2025 - 2026

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Boozhoo, Wachay, Sago, Aanii

We are delighted to welcome you and your child(ren) to Shkoday, Thunder Bay Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) and Child Care Program. We will refer to both programs as “The Centre”. The purpose of The Parent & Caregiver Handbook is to highlight some of our policies and procedures.

Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoon (Shkoday) was registered as a non-profit provincial corporation in January 1997. Shkoday has registered charitable status, is governed by a volunteer board of directors, and receives funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Shkoday is licensed by the Ministry of Education for 62 children per day.

The Child Care Program can accommodate up to 16 subsidized spaces for Aboriginal children aged 2.5 to 5 years through Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board (TBDSAAB).
https://thunderbay.onehsn.com/ux_2_0

The AHS Toddler Program has space for up to 10 children. Our Preschool Program offers two classes (or cohorts) of 16 children, and our Kindergarten Program can accommodate up to two cohorts of 20 children.

All our programs are taught by Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) with first aid/CPR certifications. The RECEs provide culturally appropriate learning experiences to help prepare young Aboriginal children for their school years. The Centre is designed to meet children’s spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical needs.

AHS is an early childhood development program for off-reserve First Nation, Inuit, and Métis children ages 18months - 6 years and their families. AHS’s primary goal is to deliver locally controlled and designed early intervention strategies. We aspire to provide

Aboriginal children with a positive sense of themselves, a desire for learning and opportunities to develop fully as successful young people. Nationally, AHS is mandated to provide programming in six core areas: 1) culture and language, 2) education, 3) health promotion, 4) nutrition, 5) social support and 6) parental and family involvement.

Parents and caregivers are recognized and supported in their role as the child's first and most influential teacher. The Center also recognizes the wisdom of our Elders and Knowledge Keepers. Parental and caregiver involvement and the provision of parental and caregiver support in all aspects of the AHS Program are encouraged and promoted.

The Centre values any questions and advice you may have as we believe open lines of communication make a trusting and productive working relationship. We hope our Parent & Caregiver Handbook will serve as a valuable resource for future reference.

Meegwetch!

VISION STATEMENT

Children are honoured as gifts from Creator. We are here to help guide their young spirits. Our responsibility is to see and nurture a strong Anishinabek identity in children, youth, families, community members, and partners.

MISSION STATEMENT

Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoan is an Indigenous-led organization that revitalizes traditional knowledge and culture to nurture Indigenous children and communities to embrace Mino Bimaadiziwin.

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of The Centre is to provide an environment where each child has an equal opportunity to grow emotionally, physically, intellectually, cognitively, spiritually, and socially. Through play experiences and the guidance of our staff, parents and caregivers, every child will be exposed to learning experiences that stimulate:

- a) Curiosity, initiative, independence
- b) Self-esteem, decision making capabilities
- c) Interaction with and respect for others
- d) Physical activity that develops gross motor skills
- e) Fine motor development
- f) Communication skills
- g) Awareness of Aboriginal culture

THE CENTRE GOALS

- 1) To promote the health, education, nutrition, holistic development and well-being of Aboriginal children eighteen months to six years of age within the City of Thunder Bay;
- 2) To provide a community-based program that is built on the identified needs and concerns of Aboriginal children;
- 3) To empower and encourage Aboriginal parents and caregivers to be their child's primary teacher and to provide traditional and cultural parenting of Aboriginal children;
- 4) To support the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical growth of each Aboriginal child in a cultural and academic learning environment and;
- 5) To achieve Aboriginal parental and caregiver involvement in all aspects of the Centre.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND OBJECTIVES

1) EDUCATION COMPONENT OBJECTIVES:

- a) To provide Aboriginal children with a learning environment and culturally appropriate experiences which help them develop socially, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development toward the overall goal of individual and social well-being;
- b) To integrate the educational aspects of the Aboriginal Head Start components in the daily program of activities;
- c) To involve Aboriginal parents/caregivers in education activities of the program to enhance their role as the principal influence on the Aboriginal child's education and development;
- d) To assist parents/caregivers to increase their knowledge, understanding, skills, and experience in child growth and development and;
- e) To identify and reinforce experiences which occur in the home that Aboriginal parents/caregivers can utilize as educational activities for their children

2) HEALTH COMPONENT OBJECTIVES

- a) To provide information and referrals to comprehensive health service programs which include medical, dental, mental health, and nutrition services to Aboriginal children and their parents/caregivers;
- b) To assist the child's physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and spiritual development toward the overall goal of individual and social well-being;
- c) To promote preventive health services and early intervention and;
- d) To provide the child's family with the necessary skills, awareness, and link to an ongoing health care system to ensuring that the child continues to receive comprehensive health care.

3) NUTRITION COMPONENT OBJECTIVES:

- a) To provide an environment for nutritional services which will support and promote healthy eating habits, thereby ensuring sound physical, social, and emotional growth and development;
- b) To assist Aboriginal children and parents/caregivers to understand the relationship of nutrition to health, factors which influence food practices, a variety of ways to provide for nutritional needs, and to apply this knowledge in the development of sound food habits;
- c) To demonstrate the interrelationships of nutrition to other activities of The Centre, and its contributions to the overall child development goals and;
- d) To involve all staff, parents/caregivers, and other community agencies as appropriate in meeting the child's nutritional needs.

4) SOCIAL SUPPORT COMPONENT OBJECTIVES:

- a) To establish and maintain an outreach and recruitment process which ensures enrollment of eligible Aboriginal children and their parents/caregivers;
- b) To provide enrollment of eligible children regardless of Aboriginal status, sex, or special need;
- c) To achieve Aboriginal parent/caregiver participation in The Centre and related activities;
- d) To assist the Aboriginal family in its own efforts to improve the condition and quality of family life and;
- e) To promote parental/caregiver awareness of community services and resources and how to facilitate their use.

5) PARENTAL/CAREGIVER INVOLVEMENT COMPONENT OBJECTIVES:

- a) To provide a planned program of experiences and activities which support and enhance the parental/caregiver role as the principal influence in their child's education and development;
- b) To provide an opportunity for direct parental/caregiver involvement in decision making in the program planning and operations;

- c) To provide an opportunity for parental/caregiver participation in the classroom and other program activities;
- d) To provide an opportunity for parental/caregiver participation in activities for parents/caregivers which they have helped to develop and;
- e) To provide an opportunity for parent participation in working with their own children in cooperation with The Centre staff.

6) CULTURE & LANGUAGE COMPONENT OBJECTIVES:

- a) To provide Aboriginal children with a culturally enriched learning environment and experiences which will help them to develop socially, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development toward the overall goal of individual and social well-being;
- b) To integrate the cultural and language aspects of the Aboriginal Head Start components in the daily program of activities;
- c) To involve parents/caregivers and Elders in cultural activities of the program to enhance their role as the principal influence on the Aboriginal child's growth and development;
- d) To assist Aboriginal parents/caregivers to increase knowledge, understanding, and experience in Aboriginal culture and language and;
- e) To identify and reinforce experiences which occur in the home, the seasons, and the life cycles that parents/caregivers can utilize for the growth and development of their children.

CODE OF ETHICS – OBLIGATIONS TO CHILDREN

As persons working with and for young children, we are committed to promoting developmental care and education for each child in cooperative relationships with the family and the community. Developmental care enables children to participate fully in environments carefully planned to serve individual needs and to facilitate the child's progress in the social, emotional,

physical, and cognitive areas of development. A person working with young children is obligated to:

1. Give first priority to the child's needs;
2. Accept all children without regard to race, creed, socio-economic status, special need, or appearance;
3. Maintain the confidentiality of information in the course of professional dealings with children and their families;
4. Keep professional knowledge up to date;
5. Be receptive to suggestions;
6. Support positive growth and welfare of children and families;
7. Refrain from physical punishment, verbal abuse (i.e. sarcasm and ridicule), psychological abuse (i.e. threats, encouraging fear) of children while interacting with them;
8. Know the law pertaining to child abuse;
9. Report in a responsible manner and through the appropriate channels any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations to those who will take corrective action and;
10. Advocate and contribute to the extension of public information and education about children's needs for quality services.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

STAFF/RESOURCE PERSON PROGRAM SERVICES

Executive Director

Operations and Management

Manages the operations, fiscal and capital resources of the program. Responsible to the Board of Directors.

Program Director

Management

Oversees all components of Shkoday's programs. Provides necessary support, resources, supervision, evaluations, and leadership to Shkoday Supervisors. Provides management, administration, human resource, and financial support.

RECE Supervisor

Classrooms, Educators, and Programming

Supervises classroom educators and curriculum/program planning, performs evaluations and registration intakes, and conducts home visits. Responsible to the Program Director

RECE

Mitigoon, Mikinaak, Makoons, Ma'iingan Classrooms

Provides a safe and comfortable environment with structured activities that are culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate for children.

Cook

Nutritious Snacks, Meals

Provides snacks and meals to children/caregivers of the program.

Family Support & Cultural Coordinator

Parental/Caregiver Support, Cultural Teachings, Community Garden and Community Kitchen.

Provides cultural resources, programming, and teachings in the classrooms. Provides on and off-site support for parents and families by offering discussions, or workshops on topics such as parenting, child development, health, pregnancy.

Transportation Drivers

Provides Transportation for program

Supervises and assumes safety for the transportation of passengers. Completes daily attendance sheets, maintains documentation in a logbook, and maintains vehicles and all related transportation equipment.

Aboriginal Elders & Resource Persons

Aboriginal Culture, Field Trips, Special Events

Integrates Aboriginal culture and traditional teachings in the program i.e. language, ceremonies, stories, drumming, dancing, healing, tipi teachings. Participates in family outings and gatherings i.e. berry and medicine picking, picnics, pow-wows, etc.

Community Partners

We invite community partners and services such as Resource Consultants, Speech Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Thunder Bay District Health Unit to enhance children and staff learning.

ENROLLMENT AND LICENSING CAPACITY

Thunder Bay Aboriginal Head Start has a maximum enrollment of 62 children per day as issued by the Ministry of Education under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. Enrollment is for 10 Toddlers, 2 classes of 16 Preschoolers, and 20 Kindergarten children which is a total of 4 classrooms. The Centre does not operate on a quarterly session basis as it is an ongoing program with new enrollment occurring as withdrawals occur.

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The Aboriginal Head Start program alternates days so your child would attend either on Monday & Wednesday or on Tuesday & Thursday. The Mitigoon program is half-days from 10:00am-1:00pm, Makoons and Ma'iingan are full-days from 8:30am-3:30pm.

The Childcare program (Mikinaak room) runs Monday thru Thursday from 8:30am-3:30pm.

Programming is not offered on Fridays.

Parents/caregivers can drop their child(ren) off beginning at 8:30am when childcare staff are available and pick up by 3:30pm.

The administrative office operates Monday to Thursday 8:00am - 4:30pm and Fridays 8:00am to 11:00am.

HOLIDAYS

The Thunder Bay Aboriginal Head Start and Childcare program will be closed on designated and statutory holidays.

New Years Day (January)

Family Day (February)

March Break (March)

Good Friday (April)

Easter Monday (April)

Victoria Day (May)

National Indigenous Peoples Day (June)

Canada Day (July)

Civic Holiday (August)

Labour Day (September)

Thanksgiving Day (October)

Christmas Day (December)

Boxing Day (December)

Closed for Christmas School Break (December/January)

RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

1. The Centre staff will maintain up to date mailing lists of families and community service agencies existing in the City of Thunder Bay.
2. The Thunder Bay Aboriginal community and service agencies will be kept up to date on recruitment, selection, and registration procedures.
3. The Centre staff will reach out to family service agencies working with Aboriginal families for the purpose of establishing and maintaining liaison and referral relationships.
4. The Centre staff will establish and maintain outreach services for Aboriginal families in transition and living in the City of Thunder Bay by keeping lines of communication open through newsletters, mall displays, community service fairs, etc.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Aboriginal Head Start

Before your child is able to attend the Aboriginal Head Start program a pre-registration form must be completed and then processed by the RECE Supervisor. Once a spot becomes available, the RECE Supervisor will contact eligible parent/caregivers to arrange a time for a site visit.

Childcare Program

Before your child is able to attend the Childcare program, they need to be registered on the childcare registry

https://thunderbay.onehnsn.com/ux_2_0 The RECE Supervisor is informed from the registry that they have a new application(s) at Aboriginal Head Start Program (Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoan). Once a spot becomes available, the RECE Supervisor will contact eligible parent/caregivers to complete additional pre-registration forms and arrange a time for a site visit.

PROGRAM VISITS

In preparation for your child's first day at The Centre, a site visit is required. A site visit provides an opportunity for staff to meet with families to enable your child(ren) to feel secure and comfortable on his/her first day in a new setting. During the site visit, the parent/caregiver can further discuss the child's nature, review contents of the Parent/Caregiver Handbook and complete the enrollment and admission forms. A site visit also provides the beginning of a positive, co-operative relationship between staff, children, and their families. The staff of The Centre will continue to provide extra support and follow-up home visits at the request of parents/caregivers throughout the school year.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

You and/or your child are expected to attend The Centre program on a regular basis. Consistent attendance is important so that children will develop routines, will not miss opportunities, and will learn it is their responsibility to take going to school seriously.

Regular student attendance also helps the Aboriginal Head Start program retain the funding it needs to continue providing services to children and their parents/caregivers.

Parents/caregivers are welcome and encouraged to visit their child's classroom as often as they like while it is our policy that the parents/caregivers of the Mitigoon classroom are required to attend programming with their child.

Attendance records are recorded by the educators on a daily basis. Parents/caregivers will be responsible for reporting or informing staff of changes pertinent to their child's attendance and they are responsible for reporting their child's absenteeism to The Centre staff the day before or by 8:00 a.m. the day of. Please email the RECE Supervisor if you are unable to leave a message via phone. ahssupervisor@shkoday.com

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Chronic absenteeism can jeopardize a student's enrolment status. A student who is un-reportedly absent from the program for three (3) consecutive school days will be considered a voluntary withdrawal from the program. The RECE Supervisor will notify the family by phone and then in writing (email) that their child has been withdrawn. This procedure is to provide an equitable chance for families on the waiting list to have an opportunity for their child to enter the program.

MEALS AND SNACK TIMES

The Centre provides a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack. Please notify the ECE Supervisor/Staff as soon as possible of any food allergies.

For Makoons, Mikinaak and Ma'iingan Programs mealtimes will occur with their teachers;

For the Mitigoon Program mealtimes will be as follows:

1. Please help children wash their hands before their meal.
2. Please encourage children to stay on their chairs during their mealtime.
3. Serve small portions of food to prevent waste.
4. Cut up large pieces of food for them to avoid choking.
5. Encourage children to eat by themselves. Parents/caregivers can help by putting food on their spoon or fork.
6. Encourage children to try new foods by placing a small piece/serving on their plate for them to try if they choose.
7. Encourage children to use manners.
8. Encourage children once they are finished to scrape their dish in the garbage and put it in the bin where the dirty dishes are placed.
9. Encourage children to wash their faces and hands after mealtimes.

FIELD TRIPS

The Centre plans field trips for families and for children throughout the year. During the initial program visit you should have completed a consent form which allows the program to provide transportation services for The Centre's special events and field trips. Parents/caregivers of Mitigoon Program must accompany their child on all field trips while parents/caregivers of Makoons, Mikinaak and Ma'iingan class will be notified in writing if a special event or field trip requires the attendance of the parents/caregivers.

PARENTAL/CAREGIVER INVOLVEMENT & VOLUNTEERISM

The parents/caregivers along with the-educators, enhance the growth of the program through their energy, involvement, planning, attending various special events, fieldtrips, regular day-to-day activities, being a resource person, and attending our Annual General Meeting. We strongly encourage all

parent/caregivers of children in The Centre to become involved in their child's education through volunteering in the program.

All we ask is that parents/caregivers try to support us in any way that suits your skills and abilities and by responding to our requests for help at various times during the year. You may also help us by finding us volunteers. For example, you may have a friend or relative who does sewing, beading, has cultural/traditional knowledge, is a traditional dancer or drummer, a workshop presenter, a storyteller and so on.

We encourage all parents/caregivers to become active in the parenting committee. By participating you can be involved in various fundraising activities such as yard sales, craft sales, draws etc.

BECOMING A BOARD MEMBER

Occasionally there are vacancies that arise on the Board of Directors. Interested parties or parents are encouraged to submit a resume and provide a criminal records check. For more information on what is involved, please contact the Executive Director.

SMOKING POLICY

Smoking and vaping is prohibited anywhere on the property of Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoan or in personal vehicles in the parking lot. While attending the program we ask that you refrain from smoking or vaping while attending events and programs with the children. Smoking and vaping can only occur at the end of the driveway on John Street Road. The only exception would be for traditional/cultural Aboriginal ceremonies and customs. Thank you for respecting our special events by not smoking.

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

All parents/caregivers in the are encouraged to attend this program from 11:00-12:00pm. This program is to enhance the spiritual and well-being of all families and to empower individuals to increase their self confidence and acquire new knowledge and skills. Topics covered in the program range from behavioural and parenting techniques, child development, health, and safety and so on. Many times, it is the participants who decide which topics they would like to learn more about, and the Family Support & Cultural Coordinator will organize and schedule the monthly calendars according to their input.

COMMUNITY KITCHEN & COMMUNITY GARDEN

Community kitchens and gardens are also delivered through the Family Support Program to enhance a sense of community by bringing together parents/caregivers to plan and cook economical and healthy meals and provide an opportunity to maintain a garden plot and grow fresh, organic food. Indirectly it also provides elements of sharing, socialization opportunities, and physical activity, especially in the garden.

PROGRAM PLANNING

Staff are required to have a program calendar and corresponding weekly activities visibly posted in each classroom. Program calendars and activities are distributed to parents/caregivers a week prior to the commencement of each new month. Native language and cultural activities are incorporated into the overall program planning. It is essential that all children, parents/caregivers, and staff work together to develop program curriculum.

Mitigoon 18 months -2.5 Years

Toddlers range between 18 months up to 30 months. A parent/caregiver is required to attend along with their child. Special emphasis will be placed on promoting independence in various self-help skills such as toileting, feeding, dressing, and undressing themselves. A consistent routine is followed to allow each child the opportunity to know what happens next. This allows for easier

transition times for the children. Activities and experiences are included in the following areas: music, language arts, sensory, gross, and fine motor play, outdoor play, and special group activities. The ratio of staff to child is 5:1; a maximum of 10 children is 10:2.

Makoons 2.5-6 Years

Preschool children range between 30 months to 6 years of age. This program is more structured to allow children time to understand and follow routines and schedules. Activities and experiences are included in the following areas: special group (i.e. gardening, baking), fine motor co-ordination (i.e. stinging, cutting, and pasting), outdoor activities (i.e. climbing, bikes and wagons) and field trips. Staff will provide parents/caregivers with a daily record sheet of their child's day via email. The ratio of staff to child is 8:1; a maximum of 16 children is 16:2.

Ma'iingan 3.8-6 Years

The Kindergarten program is for children 44 months up to 7 years. This program focuses on the independence of the child and allows them to make their own choices which also encourages spontaneity and requires flexibility. Because it is a full day program alternating with days at mainstream school, the children will follow a routine which is similar to the one they receive at school. This will give the children consistency in programs and easier transition times. Activities will be balanced between educator directed and child-oriented, empowering the children to feel as though they are a part in the planning of the program, enhancing their self-esteem. The ratio of staff to child for this age group is 10:1; maximum of 20 children is 20:2.

REST AND RELAXATION

Rest time will be provided to children attending our full day program commencing after lunch not exceeding two hours.

Young children respond best to programs that alternate active play with quiet activities. It is sometimes necessary to give a child or an entire group some extra rest for brief periods if they become over stimulated. The purpose of having children rest is to offset both mental and physical fatigue. It is of maximum benefit to the child's physical health and emotional growth when they are truly relaxed.

HEALTH IMMUNIZATION

The Centre requires an immunization form to be completed and returned to the RECE Supervisor prior to child's start date. Thunder Bay District Health Unit will receive notification of all children enrolled in our program.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

The Centre will use guidelines from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit's Day Care Manual, to determine if a child should not attend program. Certain symptoms in children suggest the presence of a communicable disease. Children who have the following symptoms should be excluded from the childcare setting until:

1. A physician has certified the symptoms are not associated with an infectious agent or they are no longer a threat to the health of other children in the program, or;
2. The symptoms have subsided.

Please keep child home if he/she is ill. We require you to inform us if your child is at home with a communicable disease or a contagious condition. For your child's well being and the protection of others your child should be kept at home if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

Fever

Auxiliary temperature 38.5 C or higher, especially if accompanied by other symptoms such as vomiting, sore throat, diarrhea, headache and stiff neck, or undiagnosed rash.

Diarrhea

Increased number of abnormally loose stools in the previous 24 hours, observe the child for other symptoms such as fever, abdominal pain, or vomiting.

Impetigo

Impetigo may affect skin anywhere on the body but commonly occurs around the nose and mouth, hands, and forearms. When impetigo is caused by group A. streptococcus, it begins as tiny blisters. These blisters eventually burst and leave small wet patches of red skin that may weep fluid. Gradually, a tan or yellowish-brown crust covers the affected area, making it look like it has been coated with honey or brown sugar.

Upset Stomach

Usually there is a taste of bile in the mouth and pains in the stomach, which can be made worse by citrus fruits, fatty foods, and chocolate.

Red Runny Eyes

One of the most common symptoms is discomfort or pain in the eye, which may feel like having sand in the eye. Many children have redness of the eye and inner eyelid as well; this redness led people to call conjunctivitis by its other common name, pinkeye. The child may also have swollen eyelids and be sensitive to bright light. Itchiness and tearing are common with allergic conjunctivitis. Discharge from the eyes may accompany other symptoms. In bacterial conjunctivitis, the discharge will be somewhat thick and colored white, yellow, or green. Sometimes the discharge will cause the eyelids to stick together when the child awakens in the morning. In viral or allergic conjunctivitis, the discharge may be thinner and may be clear.

Head Lice

The Centre will strictly adhere to a policy regarding head lice where children are found with nits or eggs either alive or dead at The Centre are to be sent home from the program to receive a medicated shampoo treatment and **nits must be combed out with**

a nit comb to ensure their full removal. After receiving the first medicated treatment, children will be allowed back to the program provided that the medicated treatment is repeated in seven (7) days to ensure that any newly hatched eggs will be eliminated. Routine Checks will be performed on all children by their respective educators upon their arrival to the program. Staff examining the children will always be professional and discreet and will not single out or remove the child(ren) from their classroom if head lice has been found. They will remain in the classroom until transportation arrangements have been arranged.

Earaches

The most common symptoms of an acute ear infection are ear pain and fever. If child is too young to tell what hurts, he/she may cry or pull at his/her ear. Child may also be irritable, listless, have trouble hearing, and not feel like eating or sleeping.

Swollen Glands

Gland swelling commonly refers to enlargement of the lymph glands, also known as lymph nodes which are critical for the body's immune response and are principal sites where many immune reactions are initiated. Other glands that are sometimes perceptible when swollen are glands of the tonsils, parotid, salivary, tear, and thyroid.

Heavy Cough/Respiratory Symptoms

There is difficult or rapid breathing or severe coughing. The child makes a high pitched croupy or whooping sound after he/she coughs. The child is unable to lie comfortably due to continuous coughing.

Sore Throat

Sore throats can occur especially with a fever or when swollen glands in the neck are present.

Toothache

The most common cause of toothache, or pain in the region of the jaws and face, is pulpitis - inflammation of the pulp of the tooth.

The short, sharp pains usually occur in response to hot, cold, or sweet stimuli.

Vomiting

If a child vomits twice, the parent/caregiver will be contacted. The child will be excluded for 24 hours after the last bout of vomiting at home.

Skin Problems

Skin rashes which are undiagnosed or contagious where there are infected sores with crusty, yellow, or green drainage which cannot be covered by clothing or bandages.

Appearance and/or Behaviour

Child looks and acts differently. Usually pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, difficult to awaken.

If a child displays any of the above symptoms the ECE Supervisor/staff will contact the parent/caregiver to notify the child will be dropped off as soon as possible. If they are unable to be reached the alternate contact will be notified. We will notify parents/caregivers if a contagious disease among the children has been reported to us.

ADMINISTERING MEDICATION

PRESCRIPTION ONLY (inclusive of controlled/narcotic drugs) medication will be administered to a child by the Cook upon completion of a medical authorization form with signed consent by the parent/caregiver. The medication must be in its original container with the child's name and directions for use clearly marked on the container and outlined on the medical authorization form including if the medication is to be given "as needed." Administration of any subsequent medication will require completion of another medical authorization form. Procedure will be followed as set forth by the Child Care and Early Years Act.

The following procedure is to be used:

1. Medication will be placed in a locked container in the kitchen above the sink on the top shelf. Puffers and Epi-pens may be kept in the child's classroom, or on child or backpack for immediate access.
2. If medication requires refrigeration, it will be placed in a locked container in the refrigerator.
3. The Cook will be responsible for the security of the medication. All medications will be administered by the Cook as per the directions on the medical authorization form.
4. Effective 2005, a doctor's note is required for administering any NON-PRESCRIPTION medication such as Tylenol, Triaminic etc.

ALLERGIES

Please inform the RECE Supervisor of any allergies your child(ren) may have as it may be necessary for parents, the cook, and the RECE Supervisor to work out a specialized menu for the child.

ANAPHYLACTIC POLICY

Effective May 1, 2007, a mandated anaphylactic policy will be in effect. The policy is intended to support the needs of the child with allergy severities, and to provide anaphylactic awareness information, and training to staff, parents/caregivers, student placements, and visitors to the site. All those who have reviewed the policy, and who have been procedurally trained will sign/date the Anaphylactic Policy Review Statement Form.

Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction which can be potentially fatal; resulting in circulatory collapse or shock caused by food, insect stings, medicine, latex, exercise, etc.

The following procedure is to be used:

1. For each and every child enrolled in the program with an anaphylactic allergy, an in-house strategy will be implemented to reduce the child's exposure to the causative agent(s). This will be discussed with the family upon enrolment during the initial Home Visit. An individual written emergency plan specific to each and every child will be developed inclusive of signs and symptoms, emergency procedures, and the child's photograph.
2. Ideally, each parent/caregiver (or the child's physician) will attend a staff meeting to give a presentation regarding the child's particular situation, and to provide any procedural and/or intervention training. In the event that their attendance can not be arranged, the RECE Supervisor will provide the necessary presentation and training to all staff which will be documented in the staff meeting minutes. All this should be done before the child attends the program.
3. The written emergency plan will be posted in a visible place in the main office, all the classrooms as well as in the kitchen. A copy of the emergency plan will also be retained in the child's file.
4. After the initial presentation, any updates and/or procedural changes to the written plan will result in re-informing and/or retraining all the staff. Annual reviews will also be conducted by the RECE Supervisor to incorporate any further updates and/or changes to the written plan and will notify all staff accordingly.
5. The RECE Supervisor will ensure that training occurs before the child attends the program, and that the training will include:
 - what anaphylaxis is
 - how to recognize the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis
 - where all the written plans are located
 - how to administer the Epi-pen and its location
 - how to successfully execute the emergency plan

MANDATED REPORTING

Child abuse and neglect are against the law. Any child attending the Thunder Bay Aboriginal Head Start Program will be protected from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Thunder Bay Aboriginal Head Start Staff are mandated to report any such cases to the proper authorities.

INCIDENT REPORTING AND SERIOUS OCCURRENCE

All incidents, minor or serious are to be recorded on an Incident Report Form. An Incident Report form is filled out recording all details by staff member(s) who witnessed the incident. An ambulance will be called for any incident that occurs depending on the seriousness of the situation. Staff will ensure that a First Aid Kit and children's emergency numbers and any medications are taken along on field trips away from site. All accidents are recorded on an incident report form and shall be kept in the individual child's file.

In the case of a more serious injury or illness (hard blows to head, cuts that need stitches, sudden high fever, question of broken bones, etc.) the parent/caregiver and Toddler child will be provided transportation to the nearest hospital. For Preschool and Kindergarten children, the child will be transported home to the care of the parent/caregiver. In the case of a serious illness or accident that threatens life or the immediate well-being of a child, an ambulance shall be called.

All serious occurrences are to be reported at the Ministry of Community and Social Services within 24 hours of the occurrence. In addition, Enhanced Serious Occurrence Reporting procedures will be followed when emergency services (i.e. police, fire and/or ambulance) are used in response to a significant incident involving a client of the Ministry of Community and Social Services or the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and/or if the incident is likely to result in significant public or media attention. In these circumstances, the Service Provider's Designated Authority will

ensure that the Ministries' early alert system is notified within 1 hour of becoming aware of the incident.

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

FIRE DRILLS

A plan of evacuation in case of a fire will be posted in each room. In the event of a fire, staff will do the following procedure, clear rooms in an orderly manner according to the plan, closing the doors behind them. Once evacuated, a head count of the children will be taken to ensure that everyone is out.

Fire drills will be held monthly for your child's safety. It is essential that everyone in the building leave the premises during the fire drill. Please leave the building immediately by the closet exit.

Note: Staff and children and parents/caregivers have a designated route plan in which they follow.

In the event that we have been instructed to evacuate the property, we will first assemble at the pre-determined location, attendance will be taken and verified by the ECE Supervisor, we will leave the property via the driveway and proceed to Petersen's Lumber. If the vans cannot be accessed due to danger, a bus will be dispatched to transport the children, staff, parents/caregivers to their predetermined emergency contact sites. Parents/caregivers will be notified of the situation at this time by the Executive Director and the ECE Supervisor.

CLOSURES

In the event of dangerous weather, flooding, power outage, and/or other conditions deemed serious by the Executive Director, the closure of the Aboriginal Head Start program will be announced over the 94 FM Radio station, FaceBook page and our website.

Parents/caregivers will be contacted as soon as possible to inform of the situation. If parents/caregivers cannot be contacted, emergency contacts will be contacted, and children will be transported to their residence.

TRANSPORATION SERVICES

- a) Proper child seats and booster seats are used at all times in accordance with the weight and height requirements of The Highway Traffic Act.
- b) Drivers are not permitted to leave the vehicles while there are passengers in them. In the event of an emergency, the van must be shut off, and the keys must be removed from the van by the driver.
- c) Drivers ensure there is a parent/caregiver at drop-off site who comes out to retrieve the child off the van. Drivers may not leave to drop-off site until this has occurred.
- d) When there is not a parent/caregiver at the drop-off site, drivers phone TBAHS who will try to contact and/or locate the whereabouts of the parent/caregiver. Drivers keep the child on the van and proceed with the scheduled drop-offs until arrangements have been made by TBAHS, and the drivers notified of the arrangements. This could mean doubling back to drop the child off if for example the parent/caregiver was late or drop-off early.
- e) If by the end of the route the parent/caregiver has still not been reached, only then is the child to be brought back to Head Start. If there still has not been contact made with the parent/caregiver by 5:00 then Dilico Child and Family Services will be contacted. It then becomes the responsibility of Dilico and/or the parent/caregiver to retrieve the child from Head Start once the child has been brought to the site.
- f) Parents/caregivers must accompany their child to the van at pick-up times and help the child board the van, find a seat starting from the back of the bus unless pre-arranged seating has been made, and help their child secure their seatbelt. Parents/Caregivers are also responsible for coming to the van at drop-off time to help the child off the van.
- g) Drivers must adhere to 1:5 ratio of adults: children while transporting clients.

- h) Vehicles are equipped with cellular phones for emergency and for contact purposes between TBAHS and drivers. Parents/Caregivers are to call TBAHS for notifications and TBAHS will notify the drivers.
- i) Drivers ensure eating, drinking, and playing with toys are not permitted on TBAHS vehicles. Drivers and monitors will keep checking on children who fall on vans to ensure they are still conscious.
- j) Teachers are aware of the arrival of the vans and wait at the stairs to supervise the entry of the children. Drivers must help the children off the van and ensure that all children are vacated before closing doors. Drivers must also assist the teachers with the entry of the children in the building.
- k) Drivers will provide transportation services to enrolled parents/caregivers, and children. Pick-ups and drop-offs will only be made to be designated residence at the time of enrolment. Changes will not be permitted unless approved by the ECE Supervisor and/or Executive Director.
- l) The driver will wait for two (2) minutes at each parent/caregiver residence and then will have to leave to maintain the route schedule. The driver will not return under any circumstances.

RELEASE AND SECURITY OF CHILDREN

Children are to be released only to the parents /caregivers who have registered them. This includes release of children from the Head Start premises and off the vans.

- a) It is the responsibility of parents/caregivers to notify the ECE Supervisor if an alternate person is to pick up the child(ren) or if an alternate person will be at the designated drop-off.
- b) The child(ren) will be released to those individuals listed on the registration form as having access to the child. Parents/Caregivers are responsible for informing the ECE Supervisor of alternating arrangement in the access of their child(ren).

- c) If an unknown or unauthorized person comes to pick up the child(ren), the parent/caregiver or emergency person is to be contacted for verification. If the person is UNAUTHORIZED, THE CHILD(REN) WILL NOT BE RELEASED.
- d) If the parent/caregiver and the emergency person cannot be contacted, THE CHILD(REN) WILL NOT BE RELEASED.
- e) If the parent/caregiver arranges a taxi to pick up the child(ren), the name of the taxi to be used must be identified.
- f) The Child(ren) are not to be released to anyone under the age of twelve (12) years. If in doubt, identification will be requested.
- g) If the parent/caregiver is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs or is displaying irrational behaviour which could jeopardize the safety of the child(ren), the ECE Supervisor or the employee in charge will use their discretion to either release the child(ren) or contact the proper authorities like the police and/or Dilico Child and Family Services. This includes the child(ren) being dropped off at their designated drop-offs by the transportation drivers.
- h) Adhere strictly to the sign-in and sign-out procedures of visitors to the site.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Each group is regulated to have a certain amount of outdoor play. It is the parents/caregiver's responsibility to provide their child with the appropriate outdoor clothing. During the winter months, children in the toddler program will not go outside if the wind chill and temperature exceed -15 degrees Celsius. The Preschool and Kindergarten will not go outside if the temperature and chill exceed -20 degrees Celsius. According to the Child Care and Early Years Act, each child under 30 months of age that is in attendance for 6 hours or more a day, is outdoors for sleep or play, or both, for a period of up to 2 hours per day, weather permitting. Each child over 18 months and up, including 5 years of age, play outdoors for at least two (2) hours each day, weather permitting.

SUNSCREEN

Each parent/caregiver will have completed a consent form upon completing the home visit. The centre will provide the sunscreen. If your child has an allergy to the sunscreen we provide, you then can purchase your own bottle, label it with your child's name, and keep it in their program.

CLOTHING

Your child should be wearing clothing that is comfortable and suitable for the weather and the season. Clothes should also be able to get dirty, as the children are involved in active and sometimes, messy play, all throughout the day. An extra set of clothes is to be in your child's locker at all times, in the case of an accident or illness. In a case the child does not have any extra clothing we will provide clothing from the centre, which is to be returned clean the next scheduled day. A pair of comfortable indoor shoes is recommended for active play experiences and fire drills which will require us to go outdoors. Please label the clothing, items such as underwear with your child's name as well as shoes. It is recommended that parents provide a zippered bag to keep their child's clothing in. Extra clothes will be stored in your child's locker with their name on it.

Suggestion of other Items to bring from home:

- Appropriate clothing for all weather conditions.
- In Spring and Fall, rubber boots are a must; splash suit or pants would be ideal.
- In Summer, hat and sunscreen are a must.
- In Winter, snow suits and boots with extra socks, mitts and hat, neck tubes, no scarves are allowed!

LOST AND FOUND

In the event clothing does become lost, a lost and found area is readily available to parents/caregivers.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

We try to avoid having too many rules and regulations around the Aboriginal Head Start program. However, some general guidance principles help us to avoid conflicts. These are easily understood by the children if all the teachers and parents/caregivers present them with a united front:

- All playthings belong to the entire group of children.
- Things may not be taken from children who are using them. Taking turns is a way of giving every child the use of everything.
- Children must not play in ways that are dangerous disturbing to others.
- Please encourage children to pick up whatever toys they get out.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT BY STAFF

Behaviour management techniques used by TBAHS staff are:

- Being consistent in a positive manner
- Being appropriate to the developmental level of the child
- Implementing as soon as the inappropriate behaviour is exhibited by the child
- Helping the child learn appropriate behaviour
- Allowing the child to gain confidence in resolving conflicts independently and responsibly
- Encouraging the child to respect the rights of others

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES FOR THE CHILDREN

- 1) For the sake and safety of all children, they are not allowed to run inside the building, running may result in injuries from falling or bumping into other children, walls, and furniture.

- 2) Yelling and very loud play is not permitted inside because it raises the level of excitement.
- 3) People, adults, and children are not permitted to abuse one another this includes physical acts such as hitting, biting, pushing, taking things from one another. It also includes verbal attacks such as teasing and ridiculing.
- 4) Children must be encouraged to speak politely to adults and to one another. Children must be encouraged to use their manners. ex. "May I have more food please?" rather than "I want more."
- 5) When setting limits, we must be kind yet firm. If a child ignores you, you must be ready to repeat what you said and expect the child to listen and do as he/she is told. Do you allow the child to walk away from your instructions you are teaching her/him that you are not to be taken seriously. Always tell the child why you expect a particular behavior, giving reasons helps a child understand and makes cooperation easier.
- 6) Children need to keep toys at the designated area.
- 7) Children are encouraged to tidy up the toys once they are done playing with before playing with other.
- 8) Children need to wear their aprons/smocks at the water table and when doing paint activities/art.
- 9) Encourage children to keep toys out of their mouths to prevent the spread of germs or choking. Toys in the mouth need to be immediately disinfected or put in the sink and notify staff.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDELINES FOR SPEECH

- 1) Always bend down to child's level; an adult who is standing may be overpowering to a small child. Establish eye contact and use a suitable tone of voice and appropriate language that the child can understand.
- 2) State suggestions or directions positively rather than negatively, for example, set realistic limits, be consistent, and do not give in to child. Follow through with stand disciplinary reprimands.
- 3) State rules to children as clearly as possible. Tell children what they should do instead of dwelling on what they should not do.

4) Focus on behaviour you dislike and not the child. Instead of saying “I don’t like you when you hit,” say “It hurts “so and so” (name of child) when you hit them, hitting hurts.”

5) Discuss with the child why he/she is being disciplined, for example, if Joey bites Sam, remove Joey; sit him down and establish eye contact. Tell Joey, “That hurts Sam when you bite him, no biting, biting hurts.” Allow the child to gain self-control by leaving him for no more than a minute or two. When allowing Joey to get up, explain to him again why you sat him down.

6) Discipline should be appropriate to the developmental level of child and implemented as soon as possible after the troublesome behaviour. Offer encouragement and praise for desired behaviour. Try to ignore negative behaviour as much as possible and reinforce and/or re-direct positive behaviour.

7) If you must remove the child or withhold an object or activity, do it as a last resort. Allow the child to return to the restricted activity when the child feels he/she can behave in an acceptable manner. Encourage the child to verbalize the incident and recognize that involvement in the incident was his/her decision. Offer guidance but allow the child to resolve the incident on his/her own. In extreme situations, use time-out (if child having a tantrum and is kicking and screaming) to allow time for the child to calm down and not hurt other children.

Challenging Behaviours:

We make every effort to serve all the children and to work collaboratively with parents/guardians, staff, and various community support systems to meet the individual needs of each child. We assist children and parents/guardians to make any behaviour changes that are felt by staff, administration and/or outside agencies to be necessary for the health, needs and safety of the child and the other children in the centre. Continual attempts will be made to find appropriate solutions to resolve any problems. Support and guidance through this process will be provided by the RECE Supervisor and Resource Consultant to ensure that parents are actively involved. If a child is experiencing problems that may pose a direct threat to the safety of the other children or staff, the parent/guardian may be required to withdraw the child from the

program and make other childcare arrangements. The following procedure will be followed when a child's behaviour is an issue.

1. The initial interview will be an informal meeting between the parent(s) and educator. At this meeting, the parent/guardian(s) will be informed of the child's social behaviour(s).

2. Support may be requested from the Resource Consultant (parent/guardian consent required).

3. The Educator, RECE Supervisor, and Resource Consultant, collaborate to facilitate further evaluation of the child's needs, to determine the nature and severity of the problem, and appropriate programming is provided.

4. In most cases, the above steps will be sufficient. If not, the following course of action will be followed:

- First Written notice for a conference to take place. An action plan will be developed so that all parties are consistent with the strategies that need to be put in place. The type of supports needed will be determined at this time.

- Second Written notice may result in a suspension. This will provide more time to hold an in-depth evaluation of the child and to develop a more detailed plan to better support the child in the program. An action plan will be developed to plan for the child to return to the program.

- Third Written notice: Should the child's needs be deemed by the RECE Supervisor, and Executive Director to be beyond the expertise of the centre staff and Resource Consultant, recommendation will be made in writing for the parents to withdraw their child and to enroll the child in an alternate facility where their needs may be addressed.

5. Whenever possible, the parent/guardian will be given sufficient notice to make alternate arrangements. However, if a child's individual needs or behaviour pose a serious threat to the safety of other children and staff, the parent may be required to immediately withdraw the child from the centre at the RECE Supervisor's written request (following consultation with the Executive Director).

FIRST DAYS IN THE HEAD START PROGRAM

Do not be concerned, if during the first few weeks of the program, you notice your child seems shy, does not want to enter the groups, hits or bites other children, refuses to take turns, stands around, clings to you or cries a lot. Try to stand back and let your child move away from you.

Do not make your child feel uncomfortable if he/she wishes to remain with you. Before your child can feel secure at Aboriginal Head Start, he/she must make their own attachment to the solid, secure figure in the program.

In general, try to set a pattern on your participation days by being cheerful and calm. The grown-up who understands should not feel hurt at what children do or say. You cannot take their behavior personally but see it as part of the learning process. You are only interested in the changes that growth and development bring about.

Encourage opportunities for each child to have a chance to practice behavior that seems to be of special importance to him/her at a given time, whether it be with playthings, getting along with other children, learning to control him/herself, or learning to take care of themselves. Offer praise and role-model appropriate behaviour you expect from your child.

Children must have a chance to experiment with a variety of materials and a variety of situations. Children must be free to fulfill their own needs and those of the group (while not being destructive to group welfare). Every child needs a lot of praise, and most of all, every child needs to believe in him/herself and their value to others.

CANADA-WIDE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE SYSTEM (CWELCC)

Shkoday Abinojjiwak Obimiwedoan is part of the CWELCC agreement and is pleased to offer fee reductions for the childcare room. Base fee is \$22 per day.

Childcare refunds and fee credits will only be applied to:

- CWELCC changes
- Advanced monthly payments.

Anyone entitled to overpayment in childcare fees will be given a credit or rebate within 60 days of January 1 of the following year.

Childcare fee refunds and credits will not be processed for any:

- Unscheduled program closures, this includes inclement weather closures
- Absences from care related to miss days, sick days and or vacation.
- Withdrawal notifications from the program if made with less than 10 business days' notice prior to your next payment.

Fee Payment is due monthly:

- Paid by e-transfer: finance@shkoday.com
- Cheque made to: Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoan
- Cash.
- Invoices outstanding for 60 days will be sent to collections (any legal fees and or court fees will be the sole responsibility of parent/guardian on file) along with termination of service.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a normal part of the life of any organization where services are purchased. Parents/guardians may have views or goals which are different from the beliefs and value system of the childcare centre. It is important that both sides can voice their opinion or point of view in hopes that open communication will lead to understanding. It is important that these discussions are respectful, timely, in the spirit of collaboration and focussed on the best interests of the child. The following steps are to be followed when an issue has come up between

The matter should be addressed expediently through direct communication with the parties involved. This should be done within 5 business days, at a time that is convenient to both parties, and not in the presence of the child. Depending on the issue, the involvement of the Resource Consultant may be requested.

1. The RECE Supervisor will be informed of the meeting. A document review of the situation will take place. Interviews with all parties will take place individually or as a group.
2. If the family is dissatisfied with the outcome of the meeting, they may request a meeting with the RECE Supervisor, with or without the presence of the program staff. Depending on the issue, the RECE Supervisor may request involvement of outside agencies such as CCTB, CAS and/or Dilico. The employee will be informed. If the discussion may call into question the competency of the staff, the staff may request the involvement of the Human Resource Officer or Program Manager. The meeting will be documented.
3. If the family is not satisfied with the outcome of the second meeting, they may appeal, in writing, to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will review the documentation and respond within 15 business days. The Executive Director's decision will be final. In some situations, depending upon the issue, the Executive Director may consult the Board of Directors for their input and expertise.
4. The staff may receive further direction from the Human Resource Officer with regards to the decision if it related to their competency. An action plan may be required.
5. At all times, staff will avoid triangulation (discussing with a third party) as this will be considered gossip. A high degree of professionalism is required during times of conflict.

1 Direct communication with all parties involved within 5 business days.	RC may be requested to attend. Site Supervisor will be informed
2 Assisted Communication with all parties and the RECE Supervisor with resolution within five working days.	HR will be informed and invited to attend if necessary. Outside agencies invited as needed.
3 If still dissatisfied with the results, an appeal by either party can be made in writing to the Executive Director.	A decision will be made within 15 business days. The Executive Director's decision is final. All parties informed of the decision.

