



CHAMPAGNE AND AISHIHIK FIRST NATIONS

Shäwkwúnlee Early Learning Handbook

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Shäwkwúnlee Early Learning

PO Box 5310

Haines Junction, YT

Y0B 1L0

(867) 634-2270

devans@cafn.ca

smacelheron@cafn.ca

Introduction

Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN) and the Shäkwúnlee Early Learning staff would like to welcome you and your child into our program. At Shäkwúnlee Early Learning we are committed to working with you and your family in alignment with CAFN values and priorities.

We are guided by the CAFN Vision Statement:

We, the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and government, shall promote a healthy, unified, and self-reliant people, while conserving and enhancing our environment and culture.

We follow CAFN Values and Dän K'e (Our way of knowing, doing and being):

- **RESPECT:** Self-respect and respect for the land, wildlife, community and family. We show respect for each other through our actions.
- **CARING:** We care about and look out for each other and *Dakéyi*. We share what we can and give back to our Nation.
- **CONNECTION:** We have pride and strength in our identity as *Shadhäla Äshèyi yè Kwädän* (CAFN people). We give each other a sense of belonging. We build up our Youth to be our next leaders and Elders. We connect with the land, each other, and our culture.
- **IDENTITY: Who we are.** We value every person's strengths, wisdom and gifts, and meet people where they are at in their journey to foster self-esteem, motivation and confidence in life. Together, we advance our rights as decision-makers. We strive for equity and fairness in all that we do.

The word Shäkwúnlee means "Sunshine" in Southern Tutchone, so translated we are the Sunshine Early Learning Center. We strive to provide programming that will promote a healthy sense of community and well-being

Shäkwúnlee Early Learning is rooted in the CAFN Education Plan and embraces Dádunena, Dádän Ghàkwänji K'e (Our Children, Our Way of Life) - recognizing that land, language, family, and Elders are essential to a strong education.

We strive to ground children in Dän K'e (Our way of knowing, doing and being) through land-based and place-based learning. We promote the holistic development of the whole child - mind, body, spirit, and heart. We support growth in identity, language, culture, and connection to the land, and foster strong relationships with family, Elders, community, and the natural world.

This parent/family handbook is a living document which will be updated over time as needed. When updates are made CAFN will provide a copy of the newest handbook to parents and

caregivers. This handbook is a resource for parents/families, and provides an overview of and expectations for regular operations and activities at Shākwúnlee Early Learning.

Welcome to Shākwúnlee Early Learning

Enrollment Process

Once a start date has been confirmed, parents or caregivers are required to participate in transition visits. The length and number of these visits may vary depending on each child's individual needs, as some children may take longer than others to adjust to a new environment.

During the transition period, parents or caregivers remain responsible for their child while onsite. This time allows teachers to begin building relationships with the child; however, all guidance and care during the visit will be provided by the parent or caregiver.

For toddlers, the transition typically begins with half-day (morning) visits. Once the child demonstrates comfort and readiness to stay at the center without a parent or caregiver present, we gradually progress to full-day attendance.

Transition visits serve as a valuable opportunity for families and educators to exchange information, foster strong relationships, and ensure that the center is a good fit for the child.

Communication

At Shākwúnlee Early Learning, we use the **Brightwheel app** as our primary method of communication with families. Once your child is enrolled, you will receive an invitation via email or text message to join the app.

Weekly updates, schedules, and important announcements are shared through printed handouts, email, or the Brightwheel app. Families are warmly encouraged to participate in special events and celebrations throughout the year.

Sending Messages:

Please use the Brightwheel app to send messages to all staff, especially for notifying us of your child's absence or other important updates. Educators prioritize time with children during the day, so responses may be brief or delayed. Updates are often entered during rest time or when another teacher is available to supervise.

We practice **open-door communication** and encourage families to speak regularly with educators. We welcome input into your child's learning journey. Any incidents or injuries will be reported the same day to parents and the program manager.

Respectful Conduct Toward Staff

Shākwúnlee Early Learning is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful environment for

everyone. Harassment, intimidation, or aggressive behavior toward staff—whether verbal, physical, or written—will not be tolerated under any circumstances. We ask all families and caregivers to communicate with staff in a respectful and constructive manner. Failure to do so may result in a review of your child’s continued enrollment in the program.

Concerns and Feedback

If you have questions or concerns, please speak directly with the **Shāwkwúnlee Early Learning Manager**. Written concerns are also welcome. If you feel your concern has not been addressed, you may contact the **CAFN Director of Education**.

Hours of Operation and Attendance

Hours of Operation:

Monday to Friday | 8:00 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Please note: In the event of staffing shortages, operational hours may be adjusted, or rooms may need to be temporarily closed. We will provide as much notice as possible.

Drop-off:

Morning drop-off is from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

We understand that morning transitions can be emotional for some children. We encourage parents to keep goodbyes brief, as prolonged farewells often make it harder for the child. Educators will provide comfort and reassurance, and most children settle within five minutes of separation. You are welcome to check in through Brightwheel for an update.

Attendance and Absences:

Consistent attendance supports your child in developing routines and a sense of belonging. Please notify staff by **9:00 a.m.** through the Brightwheel app if your child will be away. We also ask that you inform us in advance of any planned holidays.

Pick-up Procedures:

If someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking up your child, please provide prior written notice via the sign-in sheet. The individual must be at least **16 years old** and may be required to show photo identification.

For safety reasons, staff will **not release a child** to anyone who appears intoxicated. In such cases, we will contact an alternate caregiver listed on the child’s registration form.

Please ensure your contact information is always up to date.

Late Pick-Up Fee:

A fee of **\$10.00 for every 5 minutes** will be charged for late pick-ups after 4:45 p.m.

Closures and Yearly Calendar

We strive to support both child wellness and a healthy work environment for our educators.

Closures May Occur On Short Notice due to:

- Illness outbreaks
- Staffing shortages
- Extreme weather conditions (-40)
- Emergency situations

Statutory and Scheduled Closures:

- **All statutory holidays**
- **Easter Monday**
- **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**
- **Christmas Break** (aligned with school calendar)
- **Spring Break** (aligned with school calendar)
- **Professional Development Days** (dates announced in advance)
- **Early Learning Conferences** (twice annually)
- **Wellness days** (once a month)

Please note: **There are no fee reductions for closures. There will be a reduced rate for December (Christmas break) and March (spring break).**

Daycare Fees & Activity Costs

Currently we have **Universal Child Care Funding from the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon.**

- This funding directly helps licensed centres lower the amount families pay.
- This funding is based on children's enrollment and regular attendance
- Child must attend 75% of the time in order for the centers to access this funding
- Families only pay the difference between the government funding and the full fee. It does not cover drop in care.
- It does not cover the space when a child is away for more than 4 weeks in a row.
- To receive this funding, the centre must agree to keep complete and accurate attendance records.

Age Group	Funding per child per month
Toddler	\$700
Preschool	\$700
Kindergarten Summer program	\$700

The Yukon Early Learning Program subsidizes **\$700/month per child**

CAFN also contributes to daily operational costs, and **100%** of all **language and cultural programming**

- **January 1, 2026: Parent portion of fee increases to \$100 per child** (\$700 covered by YG's Universal Child Care program, total \$800);
- **April 1, 2026: Parent portion of fee increases to \$150 per child** (\$700 covered by YG's Universal Child Care program, total \$850);
- **July 1, 2026: Parent portion of fee increases to \$200 per child** (\$700 covered by YG's Universal Child Care program, to the target of \$900 total).

Fees will be due monthly and can be paid:

- in-person at the Shākwúnlee Early Learning Centre by cheque or cash;
- by e-transfer to accountsreceivable@cafn.ca put "Daycare" in the memo space and include invoice number or child's name
- in-person with a debit or credit card at the CAFN Finance Department

Please provide us a copy of your payment. Shawkwunlee staff will maintain an up-to-date record of all payments at the centre. If you make a payment by e-transfer or at the CAFN Finance Department, please provide a copy of your payment to Danielle or Stephanie by email, text or the Brightwheel app so we can keep your record current.

Fees are due **at the beginning of each month.**

Programs and Activities

Seasonal and Cultural Activities:

Our programming includes activities aligned with seasonal rounds, traditional harvesting, and on-the-land learning.

Monthly Calendar:

Parents will receive a calendar outlining:

- Field trips & excursions
- Wellness days
- Special events

Daily Routine (Approximate Times):

8:00–9:15 | Free Play / Learning Centers

9:15 | Morning Snack

9:45–10:15 | Circle Time

10:30–11:30 | Outdoor Play

11:30–12:00 | Lunch

12:00–2:00 | Nap Time

2:00–2:45 | Art / sensory

2:45 | Snack

3:15–4:00 | Learning Centers

4:00–4:45 | Outdoor Play & Pick-Up

Schedules may vary depending on activities and children's needs.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Please dress your child in comfortable, **washable play clothes**. Each child should have:

- Indoor shoes
- Weather-appropriate outdoor wear (e.g. sun hat & sunscreen in summer; snow pants, winter coat, hat, mitts, scarf and boots in winter)
- Spare change of clothes to remain at Shākwúnlee
- Sturdy outdoor shoes (flip-flops and sandals are discouraged)

Please label all of your child's belongings (shoes, hats, mittens etc)

Toys from home should not be brought unless requested by staff. Comfort items such as a stuffed animal or blanket are welcome for nap time.

Meals and Nutrition

Shāwkwúnlee provides nutritious snacks and lunches. The Brightwheel app allows you to see what your child eats throughout the day.

If your child has **dietary restrictions**, we may ask you to provide meals. Please inform staff of all **allergies, dietary needs, or cultural preferences**.

Guidance and Behaviour Support

Our educators guide children through the development of **self-regulation** and **socially appropriate behaviour**. We use the **A.C.T. model**:

- **Acknowledge** feelings
- **Communicate** boundaries
- **Target** acceptable alternatives

Example:

"I know you're frustrated that Johnny has the toy car. It's not okay to hurt our friends. You may play with the motorcycle or the plane until he's finished."

Supportive Practices Include:

- Modelling respectful behaviour
- Teaching problem-solving and self-regulation
- Redirecting activities when needed
- Creating a **Calming Corner** for self-regulation (not a punishment)

If a child becomes unable to regulate their emotions or behaviour (e.g., excessive crying, hitting), parents may be called for early pick-up.

If additional support is required, families will be referred to the **Child Development Center** or other resources.

Health and Illness Policy

To protect the health of all children and staff, **please keep your child home if they are sick**. Children must be **symptom-free for 24 hours** before returning.

Symptoms requiring exclusion:

- Fever over 38°C
- Persistent cough or breathing difficulty
- Excess drainage of mucus

- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Unexplained rash
- Infectious conditions (e.g., pink eye, flu, RSV)
- Lice/Nits

Shäkwúnlee has a no nit policy for Lice. Please ask for an information handout if your child has lice.

If your child becomes ill while at Shäkwúnlee, you will be contacted for immediate pick-up. Your child will rest in a quiet area under staff supervision until you arrive. **If you are unable to make it to the center within 15-30 minutes we will call your emergency contact.**

Please notify staff if your child is diagnosed with a communicable illness so that we may inform other families.

Please note that personal medical clearance, even from parents employed in the healthcare field, will not be accepted in place of the center's illness policy. A doctor's note does not override Shäkwúnlee Early Learning's established health and safety protocols, which are in place to protect all children, families, and staff.

Why is this Illness Policy Important?

Adhering to an illness policy that meets or exceeds the Yukon Early Learning and Child Care guidelines is essential to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all children and staff. By following these procedures, we help prevent the spread of illness and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, which allows us to continue operating effectively. CAFN is committed to balancing the individual health and care needs of each child with the well-being of the entire learning community.

Medication Policy

Staff may administer medication **only with written parental consent**. Medication must:

- Be in its **original container**
- Be clearly **labeled with the child's name**
- Include clear **administration instructions**

Staff will follow the **5 Rights of Medication Administration**:

1. Right Medication

2. Right Dosage
3. Right Child
4. Right Time
5. Right Route of administration

All medications are stored securely and recorded in a log.

If your child has an epi – pen please see us for a consent to administer form.

If your child has asthma and requires use of an inhaler please see us for an ongoing medication form.

Nap and Rest Time

Rest time begins at **12:00 p.m.** each day. Children sleep on cots or mats with their own blankets. Naps are encouraged but not mandatory—children who do not nap will engage in quiet activities on their rest mat.

Comfort items such as a blanket or stuffed animal are welcome. We do have daycare blankets and will assign one for your child to use if you do not wish to bring one from home.

Toileting and Potty Training

Families must provide diapers, pull-ups, wipes, and spare clothing. Children learning to use the toilet must wear **pull-ups** until they are accident-free at the center for one full week.

Diapering and toileting are done respectfully, with staff engaging children and encouraging independence.

Safety and Confidentiality

The safety of every child is our highest priority. In the event of illness or injury, we will contact parents and follow up with an incident report.

All personal and family information is kept **strictly confidential** however it is necessary that members of the team working with your child are aware of certain situations. All staff sign a confidentiality agreement upon hire.

Child Protection and Reporting

All staff are **legally required** to report any **suspected abuse or neglect** to the Department of Health and Social Services. Reports are also shared with Yukon Early Learning and Child Care, as required.

Parent Access and Additional Information

The following documents are always available:

- This Handbook
- Yukon Early Learning Guidelines: [Yukon ELC Guidelines](#)
- Program Activity Plans
- Fire Drill Records
- Licensing and Inspection Reports

Online:

CAFN: <https://cafn.ca>

Yukon Early Learning and Child Care: <https://yukon.ca>