

Victoria Kids Out and About

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# Victoria Kids

## Parent Handbook

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## **Purpose and Philosophy**

At Vic Kids we serve the families and children in our care offering a “learning through play” environment. Recent studies tell us that the first six years of a child’s life are critical for learning, so it is our goal at Victoria Kids Out and About to ensure this time is filled with a diverse variety of learning oppourtunities that appropriately challenge each child. Our center offers children the space and materials to stimulate their social, intellectual, and physical development.

Vic Kids will provide the following important aspects at our daycare for every child:

- A safe and nurturing environment
- Value and respect of diversity
- Culturally inclusive curriculum and partnership with families
- Open ended, free choice and developmentally appropriate activities
- Modeling appropriate personal and professional behaviour

Vic Kids will help each individual child develop the skills they need to explore and continue to kindergarten. Educators will incorporate various philosophies (Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf, etc.) into daily activities and programming to ensure each child can explore and learn in their preferred way.

At Vic Kids we are extremely excited to be offering a diverse program where every teacher includes their own culture and language in curriculum. The owner of Vic Kids is Metis and includes several Indigenous aspects of teaching and culture in our programs as well.

Our program goal is to provide your child with a place to learn and develop skills in all areas of development. Our educators will work with each group of children to provide a program best suited to each child’s individual needs, skills and abilities.

## **Registration & Waitlist**

### Waitlist

To be added to our waitlist please contact management at [vickidscolwood@outlook.com](mailto:vickidscolwood@outlook.com). You will be asked to provide the following Information:

- your child's name & date of birth
- you name & contact phone number
- your preferred start date
- position of interest (full time or part time, and age category)

Being added to our waitlist, or contacted about an open space, will not secure your space in the program. To secure a space for your child a non-refundable registration fee of **half the predicted monthly fee**, and **signed parent contract** is needed to hold the space. Registration will only be accepted for available spaces. Until this is provided the space will still be open to others. This fee is non-refundable and will be applied to your child's last month enrollment fee.

### Registration

Once your deposit and contract are received by Vic Kids you will be forwarded our child registration paperwork and a transition schedule will be discussed. This paperwork can be sent back virtually or printed and brought in with you on your child's first day.

## Transition Dates

Transition time into the center is critical for the children, educators, and families at Vic Kids. This time allows for us to see how your child reacts and copes with our daily programming. Having a child in a large busy center can be overwhelming, this is partly why we ask for a minimum of three partial days for 30 months to school age, and four for infant toddler program before the first full day of care. At times we as a team have decided that Vic Kids would not be the right fit for the child. In the event of this decision, we may cancel our contract of care either with or without a month's notice.

Transition dates are scheduled a week or two prior to your child's start date when numbers allow for it. Transition days scheduled prior to your child's start date are free of charge. When ratio requires, parents will be asked to postpone a child's transition until their start month. There is no refund for transition days.

3-5 program transitions (unless otherwise discussed)  
9-12 (two days), 9-3 (third day)

0-3 program transitions (unless otherwise discussed)  
9-11 (two days), 9-11:30 (third day), 9-2 (fourth day)

Transition days are always on call in the event the child isn't adapting. The first two transition days in both programs are a departure before lunch time so only a packed snack will be required. Once planned transition dates have been completed, please speak to your child's educator(s) to determine if more transition dates are necessary prior to starting full days. Vic Kids wants to ensure your child is comfortable and equipped before starting full days to guarantee their best interest is being met.

## Preparing for Your Child's First Day

On your child's first day all documentation and payments must be in order for your child to attend. This includes:

- Fully completed registration forms with immunization records or signed "delay of vaccination" form
- Signed parent contract
- A coloured photo of your child (can be any size and on photo or regular paper)
- Comfort kit (see description under *comfort kit*)

If your child does not have the necessary documents, payments, or items they will be turned away until everything is brought in and in order. This is required by [Island Health Child Care Regulations](#) (22[b],57[2], 57[3]). You will also be asked to bring the following:

- Appropriate weather wear for the day
- Small snack (nut free) and milk/formula (if applicable)
- water bottle
- diapers & wipes (if toilet training)

Eventually we will need the following LABELED items for them, but it's okay if you don't have everything on their first day:

### 3-5 program

- Indoor shoes (slippers, crocs, running shoes, etc.)
- 2 sets spare clothes
- Muddy buddy
- Toothbrush (toothpaste optional)
- Blanket (if napping)

### 0-3 program

- Muddy buddy/weather wear
- 2 sets spare clothes
- bedding (blanket/sac, crib sheet, comfort item/soother)
- diapers, wipes & diaper cream

## **Drop-off and Pick-up**

Not attending? not a problem! Please call or email the centre if you are not bringing your child in for the day. A call to the center before 9:30 am helps us to plan our day accordingly.

Vic Kids utilizes drop-off and pick-up schedules (timeslots) to help maintain ratios and get staff home on time. Because of the nature of staffing and shifts these slots will be anywhere between 8-10 hours. Preferred time slots can be requested on your child's registration paperwork. Vic Kids will let you know your timeslot upon enrollment and will do our best to accommodate your needs.

### Drop-off

When dropping your child off please sign your child in on the sign-in sheet. Make sure you touch base with an educator before leaving the center to ensure that we know your child is in the center. Please let us know about your child's morning and any unusual occurrences if any to report.

It is important for young children to have security, predictability, and a routine; we must ask that children be dropped off prior to 9:30am, otherwise they will not be able to join us for the day. Special circumstances, such as an appointment or emergency, are of course an exception. Appointments should be discussed with your child's educators at least 24 hours prior and drop off time must be approved. Vic Kids reserves the right to deny late drop off (due to appointment or emergency) if the staff feel it will negatively impact your child or other children in programming.

### Pick-up

At pick up time please sign your child out on the sign in sheet and make contact with an educator so that we are certain your child is safe. If you are late for, you're assigned pick up time, there is a \$20 late fee to be paid to the affected staff member.

If you have not been in contact with the center to let us know you will be late the staff or management will attempt to contact you, if this is unsuccessful one of the emergency contacts you have provided will be contacted. If after 30 minutes past closing there is still no contact or pick up arrangements, we will call Emergency Services of the Ministry of Children and Families.

Each child's safety is important to us. Anyone who is not on the authorized pick-up list will not be given access to your child. Your child will remain with their educator and all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure each child's safety, as that is our main concern. Please ensure anyone picking up your child (yourself included) has photo ID as staff may require this to verify identification to best ensure your child's safety.

It is also our responsibility to ensure that we are releasing each child into a safe environment. If the caregiver feels that the person picking up a child is under the influence of alcohol or narcotics of any kind you will be encouraged to arrange an alternate pick-up person or means of getting home. If the educator believes that the child is in need of protection, they will call the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

If there are any restraining orders or other legal documents with regards to your child and another adult, we ask for copies of these documents so we can assist you in keeping your child safe. Without legal documents we cannot deny a parent access to their child. A photo of the person may also be asked to be put on our file.

## **Program & Schedules**

Educators in each program create monthly activity calendars that are posted and sent to families. We create an emergent curriculum at Vic Kids, which means our plans are based off the children's current needs and interests.

Art, music, yoga, circle time, field trips, outdoor play, and swim lessons (3-5 only) are just a few things that fill up our weeks. At Vic Kids we aim to be off centre grounds once a week and out of the classroom as much as weather permits, we love spending time outside!

Please inquire with your child's educator directly about the weekly and daily schedules for their program. All programs are child led and schedules are flexible and regularly adjusted to reflect this.

### Active Play

Vic Kids strives to model a healthy active lifestyle. Our educators ensure that all children receive a minimum of sixty minutes each day of outdoor active play, weather permitting. In the event of poor weather conditions, indoor activities will be substituted to follow Child Care Licensing Regulations.

Our 30 months to school age program also includes 30 minutes of programmed "active play" in our schedule each morning, as required. Educators plan group activities each day that consist of moderate to vigorous high bursts of energy that will increase your child's heart rate and make them "huff and puff".

### Screen Time

In our infant and toddler program, there will be no screen time offered at any time as per Licensing Regulations.

In our 30 months to school age program, screen time is limited to no more than thirty minutes a day. Vic Kids reserves the right to accumulate our allowed time as outlined in the Child Care Licensing Regulations. Accumulated time may be put towards a movie day or "screen time" activity.

## **Naps and Quiet Time**

At Vic Kids all children have the option to have naps/quiet time based on their developmental needs. If you and your child's educators feel naps may not be required for your child alternative "quiet time" or "kindergarten preparation" activities will be available to them. Vic Kids staff are not able to deny children a nap should they request to lay down. Vic Kids will also not wake up a child prior to the end of our scheduled naptime, unless for means of pickup, as this can be disruptive to the child and program.

All nap and quiet time policies are based off current Health Link BC information. If you have any questions, concerns, or requests regarding nap and quiet time please speak with your child's educator(s).

### Nappers

Most children under 12months of age require a morning nap. Educators in our infant toddler programs will do their best to nap your child based on your home routine. Sometimes Educators may adjust naps slightly to better meet the needs of the child and program.

Somewhere between 12 and 24 months of age, children will likely start resisting a morning nap. At this point your child will switch to one nap per day, no longer than 3 hours and not extending past 3pm.

As explained above, you are required to provide bedding if your child naps. This bedding will be sent home with you at the end of each week to be laundered or exchanged. If you forget to take your child's bedding home at the end of the week, please ensure you bring new bedding upon your return as we are not able to use old bedding.

#### Non-Nappers

When your child is showing signs of readiness to drop their nap, it is important they still get a restful break. Children who do not nap will engage in independent play (e.g., listening to audio books, table play, etc.) for 15-30minutes each day. This time will also be utilized for group circles or activities with a focus on kindergarten readiness.

#### **Center Closures**

There will be no reimbursement for closures of any kind.

#### Weather

If there is a fire, lack of power or heat, or extreme weather conditions (i.e., snow), the center may be forced to close if we feel it is unsafe for staff and families. If School District 62 calls for a weather closure, Vic Kids will also be closed. If during the day an emergency arises, or extreme weather that could endanger the staff and families getting home safely, we will contact you to come and collect your child within a reasonable time frame. We will of course remain with the children, making sure they are safe until parents arrive.

#### Communicable disease

Vic Kids reserves the right to close for cleaning if there is a communicable disease outbreak in the centre. There is no reimbursement for closures of any kind.

#### Ratio

Unforeseen circumstances could have an impact on both ratios and hours of operation. Please note childcare ratios (4:1, 8:1) are required during operation regardless of pandemic or communicable disease outbreak. In the event a Vic Kids employee is unable to come into work, hours of attendance or operation may be altered. Vic Kids will make our best effort to replace absent employees, so it does not affect families and their care.

#### Emergencies

In the event of an emergency evacuation, we will meet parents outside on Vic Kids property if we are unable to return inside. If it is necessary to be indoors (i.e., poor weather) or forced to leave the vicinity we will meet at Juan De Fuca Rec Centre (1767 Island Hwy). You will be contacted as soon as possible, or your emergency contact person if we are unable to get a hold of you.

#### Scheduled Closures

The center will be closed the week of Christmas Eve to New Years, with a 4pm closure on the last day prior to this break. Vic Kids will also be closed for all statutory holidays along with Easter Monday. Additionally, we close on the last weekday of August to prepare for new children joining our center. Vic Kids will also close for professional development and program preparation in the months of February, May, and November; specific dates will vary annually and reflect the Pro-D Day closures of School District 62 each year. At this time Vic Kids will be open on National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to teach the values and origin story of this day to the children in care.

## **Attendance**

There will be no reimbursement for missed attendance.

If your child has a communicable disease, it is important for them to stay home and rest so they can better. Unwell children are not able to fully participate in the program that we have planned, and it is imperative that children rest when sick in order to fully heal. If your child becomes sick while at the center, you will be contacted immediately and expected to promptly pick up your child. If you are unable to pick up your child yourself, you are expected to arrange for an alternate pickup (already listed on your child's file) to come and get your child.

If you need to pick up your child, they may not be able to attend the program the following day. We keep a strict sick policy in order to avoid the spread of germs for both children and the educators in the center. We are not equipped to properly care for unwell children and sick educators leave the center with inadequate ratios.

Exclusions to attendance include, but are not limited to:

- Vomiting or diarrhea
- temperature of 99 F/ 37.2 C or higher (under the arm) or 100.4F/ 38C or higher (forehead)
- Untreated Infections (eye, ear, nose)
- Exhaustion due to lack of sleep or illness
- An undetermined rash
- unable to practice proper hygiene methods
- unable to participate in program (due to illness or otherwise)

If a child has vomited, had diarrhea, or had a fever the child must stay home from the center for 48 hours from last symptom (medication free).

If an antibiotic has been prescribed, your child can return 24 hours after first dose is administered unless advised otherwise by a doctor. Please see our Medication Administration Policy for more information on administration of medication at daycare.

For unidentified rash or illness that is not treated with antibiotics, a doctor's note stating your child is no longer contagious and is eligible to return to care is required.

If your child is unable to fully participate in the program, they are not well enough to be at the center. If your child needs medication (Tylenol, cold/flu relief, etc.) to fully complete their day in the center, they are not well enough to be at the center.

Educators will call if they feel your child is not functioning at a well enough standard to meet the physical, social, or intellectual requirements of daycare due to an illness, or other unknown means of exhaustion or discomfort.

## **Teething**

To avoid masking other potential symptoms of illness we ask you do not administer Tylenol or similar medications to your child for teething relief before coming to daycare unless you have already confirmed they are not experiencing symptoms of illness (see above). If your child is responsive to them teething

specific medications (Camilia teething relief, Ora-gel, etc.) are preferred when attending daycare as they will not mask other symptoms of illness.

For the purpose of clarification staff follow Health Link BC guidelines when identifying signs/symptoms of teething.

Symptoms Include:

- Swelling, tenderness, or discomfort in the gums at the site of the erupting tooth
- Increased saliva which can cause drooling
- Drooling may cause rash on the child's face or chest
- Gum rubbing
- Ear rubbing
- Sucking or biting
- Red or flushed cheeks
- Softer stools due to decrease in solid food intake or increase in liquid foods
- Decreased appetite or refusal of solid foods
- Irritability and difficulty sleeping
- Fever of up to 100.4F (38C)

Symptoms NOT associated with teething:

- Diarrhea
- Fever higher than 100.4F (38C)
- Rash other than on face or chest
- Vomiting
- refusal of liquids
- Cough and congestion

### Immunizations

Immunizations are a parent's own personal choice, and we support that. We do ask that you let the center know whether you have chosen to immunize your child as required by Child Care Licensing Regulations (2[a]).

If you have immunized your child, we are required to keep a record of their immunizations. These can be acquired through your doctor.

If you have decided to hold off to refuse or delay vaccines for your child, we ask that you fill out a form stating this so we can add it to your child's file. Failure to produce one of these vaccination documents upon the first day of enrollment will result in your child being sent home as this is a direct violation of Licensing.

If you have made the choice not to vaccinate or delay vaccination for your child, you may be asked to keep your child home in the event of a vaccine preventable disease outbreak in the community or center. You will only be asked to keep your child home if it is in their best interest or the best interest of the group.

### Clothing and Items from Home

The center is a messy fun place for exploration; therefore, extras are always needed. As explained under the registration section, we require two complete weather appropriate spare outfits (pants, shirt, socks, underwear) be kept at daycare. In addition, we require the following seasonal items as required. Please ensure any items coming into daycare are labeled.

*Spring/summer:*

- Water play clothes
- Close toed sandals
- Hat
- Sunscreen
- Box of disposable gloves

*Fall/Winter:*

- Toque
- Muddy Buddies
- Gloves/Mittens
- Snow pants
- Snow/rain jacket (as appropriate)
- Winter/rain boots (as appropriate)

Daycare is a busy place making it difficult to keep an eye on every clothing item your child brings in. While educators do their best to ensure all items return to their owners, we ask you not to send your child in anything you're not willing to lose. Vic Kids is not held responsible for lost or damaged items.

While we don't mind the occasional comfort item for nap use, we ask all other toys stay home except for Show and Share days.

## **Hygiene and Toileting**

### *30 Months to School Age Program:*

All children wash their hands after messy activities, after transitioning inside, before and after eating and after using the toilet. As early childhood educators it is our mission to help children learn everyday hygiene habits that they will carry on with them through life. Liquid soap and single use hand towels will be provided for best care.

We also encourage parents to pack a toothbrush (child size) to stay at the daycare, so each child can brush their own teeth after lunch. This is another basic hygiene practice that is important for children to learn at an early age.

Toileting is something that the older children 3-5 will do daily in our schedule. We do ask that once children are showing signs of readiness parents actively work on potty training as we will also do so in the centre. We have no problem helping children use the toilet, or cleaning up any accidents that may occur, it is all part of learning! We will try to work with each parent's routine and ideas for their child, as that is what the child will be doing at home. Please let us know if you have concerns or thoughts about this process.

### *Infant/Toddler Program:*

Depending on age and abilities children in this program with either wash their hands at a sink with soap and water or use a clean single-use washcloth. Hand hygiene will be practiced after messy activities, before and after eating, after transitioning inside, and after toileting (if toilet training).

Children are changed on a plastic change mat that is sanitized after each use; staff will wash their hands after diapering a child. In the event we are away from the center and running water, staff will use a portable change mat (still sanitized after each use) and hand sanitizer to avoid cross contamination.

If your toddler is showing signs of readiness, we will provide opportunities for them to get comfortable around using the toilet. We have no problem helping children use the toilet, or cleaning up any accidents that may occur, it is all part of learning!

## **Food and Drink**

The children will have access to water whenever they need it as per Licensing Regulations (48[5]). Juice boxes, milk (aside from infant toddler program), sodas, high sugar foods (doughnuts, candy, chocolate bars) or any type of junk food are not allowed in our programs.

### Eating Schedule

We schedule two snack time (15-30 minutes, morning, and afternoon), and a mid-day lunch (30-60minutes) in all our programs. If your child's nap routine overlaps our scheduled mealtimes, they will still be provided the opportunity to eat, should they want to.

If you are providing meals from home, please ensure your child has enough food packed for all scheduled mealtimes.

### Meals from Home

Please provide your child a nutritious lunch and snacks that follow Canada's Food Guide. Proper nutrition is essential to ensure your child has the energy to learn and play with us throughout the day.

Individual allergies will be posted in a place that parents can easily view them. Any food bans that are in place will also be posted and must remain out of packed lunches. If your child has any food allergies, please inform us so we can ensure their best safety during mealtimes.

If you would like to bring food items for the class to enjoy (cultural celebrations, child's birthday, etc.) please let us know a few days in advance and we will do our best to accommodate. We welcome all cultures and religions and would love for the children to celebrate and experience diversity.

### Daycare Provided Meals

Daycare provided meals are only available in eligible programs. Please inquire if you're unsure whether your child is eligible.

At Vic Kids eligible programs are automatically enrolled in our food program, rather than sending packed meals for their child. We will be providing nut free lunch and snacks that follow Canada's food guide to ensure excellent nutrition. We ask you inform us of any food allergies your child has; however, we may not be able to accommodate all allergies. If we can not accommodate your child's allergies you will be asked to and in packed meals from home for your child.

Vic Kids will provide families with a monthly menu upon enrollment. We ask parents provide alternative food options for their children if they are concerned their child may not like the option for that day. Alternate options will not be provided by Vic Kids for your child.

## **Guidance and Discipline**

In our center we use positive guidance and reflection to help children learn appropriate behaviour and self-help skills. Educators use calm and controlled voice and body language while navigating conflict resolution.

Early Childhood Educators are trained to get down to the child's level and help them to solve the problem. The following techniques will be used when using guidance with the young children in our care:

- Clarifying expectations

- Modeling appropriate behaviours and interactions
- Redirecting inappropriate behaviours
- Using respectful language and mannerisms
- Giving the child options of what they can do
- Utilizing the environment to help teach positive learning opportunities
- Providing positive reinforcement
- Supporting development of self-help skills
- Use of “I” messages and reflection of feelings/emotions.

Aggressive behaviours such as biting, hitting, or kicking are dealt with a little differently. If it is a repeated behaviour your child will be asked to take a little time away from the group, to calm their body down and maintain the safety of other children- we call this a "time-in". An educator will talk to your child about the behaviour and the consequences of the behaviour in an age-appropriate way.

At times a child will choose not to take an educator's direction which can cause interruption in program. In a situation where your child is refusing to take redirection and given three verbal warnings to follow direction, as well as provided a reasonable amount of time to participate, we may have to contact you to retrieve your child. According to Island Health Childcare Licensing rules and regulations, we cannot move your child to participate in program (*30 months to school age*). Such situations can arise in the event of transitions. To follow VIHA regulations, we must set these policies in place. If you have any questions or concerns with regards to this, please talk to the manager.

### **Supervision and Safety**

Victoria Kids Out and About works diligently to ensure a healthy and safe environment is always provided to all children in our care. Educators are trained to understand and adhere to all Island Health Licensing Regulations.

Children’s safety and supervision is very important to us at Vic Kids. Whether we are inside or outside, children will always be appropriately supervised. Staff to child ratio will always be maintained in the center. Educators ensure adequate supervision is upheld by practicing the following:

- reviewing daily sign-In and sign-out records
- conducting regular head counts, especially during transitions
- ensuring they can see, hear, and respond quickly to children and other educators in the program

Safety of equipment and play areas is also important. Educators are responsible for keeping watch out for any broken equipment or toys daily. Educators will check the play area daily and keep record of this in an “outdoor inspection log” as per Licensing Regulations (16[4]).

We ask that parents contact the manager directly if they have safety or supervision concerns.

### **Emergency Evacuation & Preparedness:**

Fire drills are practiced with the children once a month in all programs and logged for Licensing (22[2][b]). Emergency drills (earthquake) are practiced a minimum of once a year and logged as well.

A comfort kit is required for each child that is enrolled in the program. This will allow each child personal items in case of an emergency. Vic Kids will supply additional care items in the event of an emergency.

We ask that each child have at least 2 emergency contacts. These contacts will be used in case of emergency, illness or late pick up if we cannot get a hold of a child's guardian(s). These contacts will also be assumed authorized as alternate pick-ups unless otherwise stated.

### Comfort Kit

A comfort kit is required for each child that is enrolled in the program. This will allow each child personal items in case of an emergency. Vic Kids will supply additional care items in the event of an emergency.

Please have items in a large Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name:

- Three or four non-perishable food items (i.e., granola bars or fruit leathers)
- Very small stuffed toy or activity (i.e., book, deck of cards, notepad, and crayons)
- Garbage bag with holes cut for arms and head or plastic rain poncho
- Spare set of clothes in the event we are unable to access the center
- Small travel toothbrush and toothpaste
- Travel pack of tissues
- Family photo
- A note to your child

Emergency kits will be sorted every 6 months. Vic Kids will ask for item replacements as necessary.

### **Parent Communications:**

Our goal is to help your child succeed in our programming. We work as a team to ensure transitions run smoothly. The staff at Vic Kids will have continual communications throughout your child's progress in our programs to ensure you are informed throughout their time with us, especially leading up to a transition. We also discuss tactics and come up with different ways for children to learn, cope with their emotions, and grow in other areas of development.

Communication between educators and parents is to be respectful and taken seriously. We understand families work eight hours a day and are typically exhausted by days end; however, when we want to discuss any development progress with families, please listen. The Vic Kids team only has every child's best interest in mind. Being dismissive or disrespectful to the staff will not be tolerated, in the event this kind of behaviour or conduct continues, it could result in termination of our care to your child.