



Nena-tthe Tr'inke-in Aboriginal Head Start

Parent Handbook

Introduction

Nena tthe Tr'inke-in (First Children)

Opened in 1997 with partnership with the Public Health Agency of Canada and has been committed to providing a program that will meet the needs of the whole child. This includes the physical, emotional, intellectual, social needs and parental involvement. Our goal is to work in partnership with parents in teaching children, nurturing their development and supporting families.

Our mission statement

The purpose of the Nena tthe Tr'inke-in Aboriginal Head Start is to enhance the early childhood education of aboriginal children by providing them with age appropriate, culturally relevant learning activities to support their holistic growth and development. We will also enhance each child's self-esteem by encouraging them to be proud of their culture and language. This in turn will build their confidence and make them proud enough to choose a healthy lifestyle and enjoy a life time of learning.

Our Philosophy

We believe that children learn through play, best through hands-on learning. We believe our children must develop their self-esteem, confidence and build their identity in order to be successful in life. We believe that the curriculum and instruction be based on individual and family needs that it reflects and compliments each child's development age. We believe that the families should be given an opportunity to help identify the positive contributions of their Aboriginal heritage and to ensure that their own culture is identified as being equal to other native and world cultures.

Nena tthe Tr'inke-in

Provides culturally based programming to the child and promotes a healthy sense of community. It is based on the principles of the Aboriginal Head Start Mandate. Integrated into the curriculum include Culture and Language, Health and Nutrition, Parental Involvement and Social Support.

Our overall Objective is to provide aboriginal families with a culturally based, parent driven learning program that:

- Increases awareness of their culture,
- Fosters pride in their Aboriginal roots and heritage,
- Offers a renewed awareness of traditional values and cultural skills,
- Fosters a lifelong love of learning,
- Develops school readiness skills,
- Stimulates skills, knowledge, values and attitudes in the areas of health, nutrition, education, language and culture,
- Enhances the quality of family life and,
- Encourages parents and extended family participation.

Hours of Operation

Monday to Thursday

3 year old class: 10:00am to 11:55pm

4 year old class: 1:00pm to 3:30pm

Fees

There are **no fees**. Just your time and participation is appreciated.

Staff

Aboriginal Head Start Coordinator/Teacher: Kyrie Nagano

Bachelor Degree in Child & Youth Care, specializing in Child Protection

Assistant Aboriginal Head Start Teacher: Caroline Rever

Certificate in Early Childhood Development

Programs

Head Start:

Aboriginal Head Start is a federally funded program through the Public Health Agency of Canada with partnership with Tr'ondek Hwech'in Government. The Aboriginal Head Start Program is integrated into our early childhood curriculum. The program offers services to families of the children who attend the centre. These services include a family support worker, a teacher coordinator and Native Language Teacher.

Health and Nutrition:

Aboriginal Head Start provides a morning snack and lunch for the 3 year old class and an afternoon snack for the 4 year old class. All meals reflect the Canada Food Guide with having 2 food groups for snack and 4 food groups for lunch. After each meal, the children are provided with a toothbrush and toothpaste. Washing hands is mandatory.

Field Trips:

Please watch for postings from your classroom teacher for field trip outings to; R22, Rock Creek, Police Station, Sledding, ice fishing and other venues in Dawson City.

Cultural Teachings:

Our centre provides cultural teachings to the children: berry picking, harvesting traditional medicines and animals, drumming, dancing, Language, elder involvement and our centre participates in community events hosted by the Tr'ondek Hwech'in Government.

Total Physical Response:

Each class is provided with a Native Language Teacher for a duration of the class. TPR teaches children a second language through physical movement.

Graduation:

Every year the 4 year old class celebrates the end of the term with community members, Elders and family by having a graduation ceremony. During the school year **parents/guardians are responsible for making their child's traditional regalia.**

Curriculum

Our curriculum is culturally based, as well as being very flexible to meet the interests of the children.

Incorporated into our day are:

- Fine motor development
- Gross motor development
- Social and emotional development
- Cognitive skills/thinking skills
- Language skills
- Cultural/traditional teachings

Fine motor development:

Children are “hands on” learners and explore their environment by using their hands, guided by their vision. The hands are an important tool for learning. Fine motor skills can be developed using a variety of materials, sand, water, paint, pegboards, beading, sponges and much more. Hand skills include coloring, cutting, printing, and general eye/finger/hand manipulation skills.

Gross motor development:

The development of fine motor and gross motor skills is a critical part of the development of the preschool child. Young children need both indoor and outdoor space that allows them to experience a variety of developmentally appropriate physical activities.

Social and Emotional development:

In quality early childhood programming, one of the primary goals is to foster social and emotional development in young children. By learning how to appropriately express and manage feelings, children learn how to get along with others.

Language and Cognitive development:

Language and literacy skills develop through talking, listening, playing, reading, writing and learning the skills that adults use to communicate. Language and literacy are supported and encouraged

through play, music, rhythm and rhyme. Language is linked to cognitive development. Cognitive development is the growth of thinking skills.

Parent Responsibilities

Punctuality:

It is important to ensure that your child arrives at the appropriate time (contact coordinator regarding appropriate time). Late arrivals are disruptive to the class. Arrive at the centre at the same time daily to ensure an easy transition, routine and familiarity for your child.

Appropriately dressing your child:

Your child needs appropriate clothing for the weather and season. In the spring and fall, provide rubber boots, a warm jacket and splash pants. In the winter, provide a hat, mitts, and boots and snow pants. While you arrange to provide your child with these clothing, AHS will provide extra clothing.

Labeling clothing items:

Labeling your child's clothing can ensure their clothing do not get lost, misplaced or make their way home with another child.

How to find out what is happening in your child's classroom:

You are encouraged to participate in your child's learning. You may ask a teacher or a staff member on the development of your child at any time. You may also ask the teacher for the weekly and monthly planning for themes in your child's class. Share talents such as sewing, beading, cooking with the children and become involved with the centre. Come in for a visit at any time.

Parent Advisory Committee (PAC):

This committee is established for parent involvement in changes and planning for our program. We meet once a month to discuss upcoming field trips and curriculum development.