

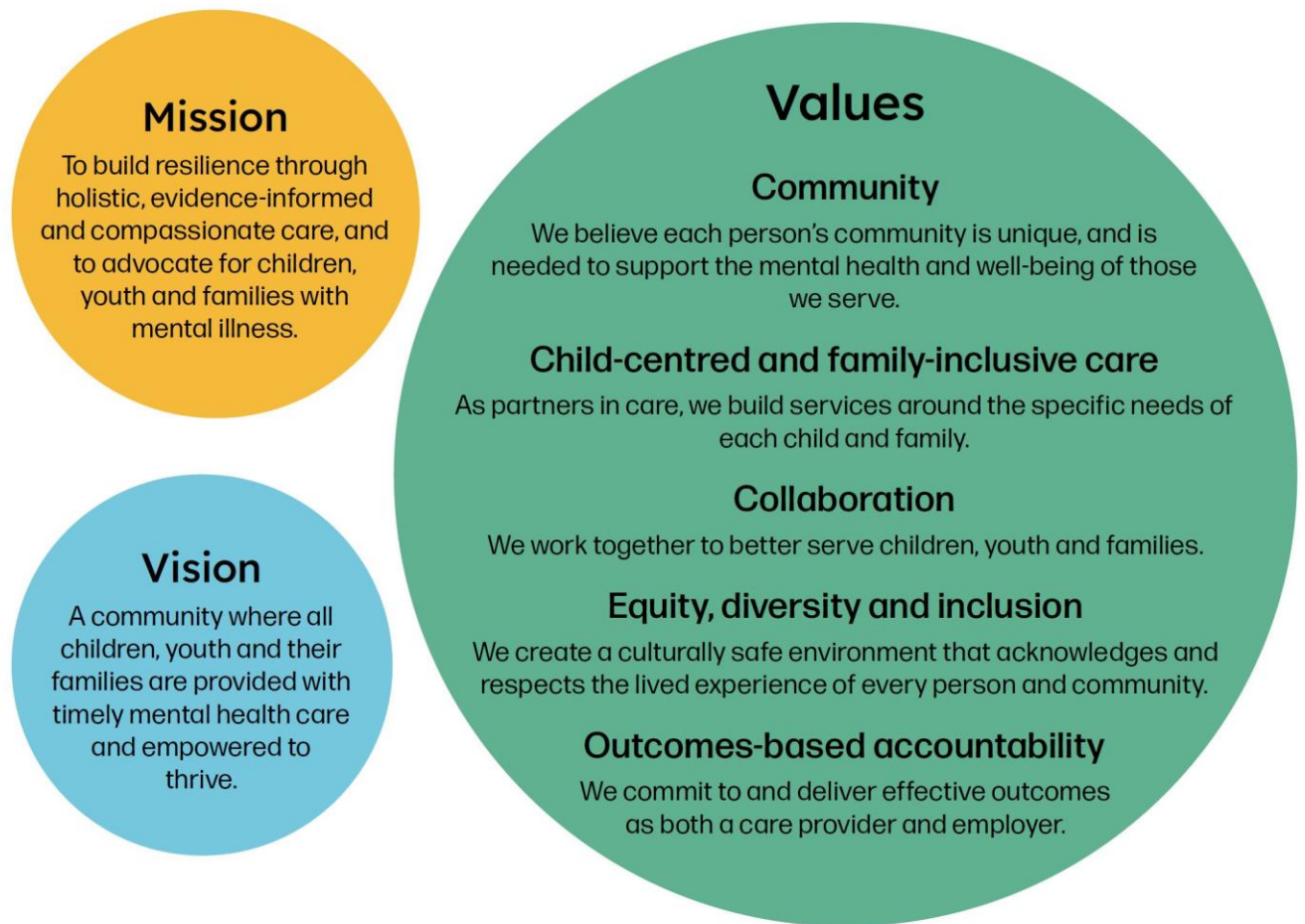


**Welcome to the  
Children's Day Program**

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## CASA Mental Health: Principles of Care



## Welcome to the Children's Day Program (CDP)

### What is CDP?

CDP is a psychiatric day program providing multidisciplinary mental health services that are integrated into your child's educational programming. Day programs are different from specialized classrooms and provide a more intense level of support for you and your child.

Most children stay in CDP for approximately one school semester. During this time, children receive academic and clinical support within a therapeutic environment. We host 12 students at a time. These students are split across two classrooms, with a maximum of six students in each.

## What are the program goals?

CDP aims to address children's mental health needs, promote their personal growth and enhance their coping strategies.

CDP's program goals are:

- To enhance your child's well-being and ability to cope with stressors at home, school and in community environments.
- To strengthen your family's ability to support your child's development, self-regulation and learning.
- To support transition and reintegration into a community school.

We have carefully selected group-based therapeutic programs guided by research to provide an interactive way to support healthy development of positive skills.

## Who is the program for?

Children referred to CDP have experienced difficulty managing or regulating their emotions and behaviour. Typically, they have struggled at home, school and in community environments. They have received previous supports from both the mental health and education systems, and now require additional treatment, as well as a comprehensive approach to care.



## How do families come to CDP?

Families are referred to CDP by a physician (typically their pediatrician or psychiatrist). School principals can also refer students to CDP, as long as a physician has committed to assume psychiatric care for the child upon discharge.

## Clinical Programs

While each child requires a unique treatment plan, CDP offers a core basket of programming to all students, families and schools. These include:

### **SNAP Group**

The Stop Now and Plan (SNAP®) program focuses on teaching children struggling with behaviour issues, and their parents, effective emotional regulation, self-control and problem-solving skills. SNAP's primary goal is to help children to stop and think before they act, and keep them in the classroom and out of trouble.

### **Functional Behavioural Analysis**

Every child in CDP will work with a mental health therapist and a behavioural analyst. In collaboration with a multi-disciplinary team, these professionals will create a function-based behavioural plan to help your child reach their goals and to teach them adaptive ways of responding to a variety of stressors. Behavioural plans are monitored and changed based on data collected regularly throughout the day. In short, we use a data-driven approach to treatment.

### **Organizational Skills Training**

This program helps children to develop the organizational, time management and planning skills needed to meet demands at school, home and in the community. We deliver this program within regular classroom activities.

### **Therapeutic Recreation**

CDP offers an enhanced level of physical activity for students throughout the day. This includes a Movement Group in the morning and physical education in the afternoon. Not only is physical movement critical for successful learning, it also helps children learn social skills in a real-world setting.



### **Goals Group**

At the beginning of each week, we assist students in setting goals for the week. These goals are academic, social or behavioural in nature. Guided by a mental health therapist and a behaviour specialist, a key worker will prompt and reinforce goals throughout the week and then review them at the end of the week with your child. We also spend time discussing the weekend, in order to foster school and community skills.

### **Occupational Therapy Groups**

The Occupational Therapy groups provide an opportunity for us to assess children's motor proficiency (the ability to perform specific movements and tasks) through activities. Craft activities target the use of the fine motor skills critical for academic success. Gross motor movement groups assess body coordination, balance and strength to promote physical literacy and success in physical recreational activities. CDP also provides the opportunity for children to practice using assistive technology for written communication, such as speech to text/text to speech and keyboarding instruction.

### **Snack Group**

Students participate in a "snack group" facilitated by the occupational therapy team. The group is held every second Thursday in the afternoon. Students receive a nutritious snack, and practice food exposure in a fun and safe environment. It's a great opportunity to interact with new foods, exploring different food tastes, smells and textures in a pressure-free environment. We also practice social skills in the context of eating together, and learn age-appropriate utensil skills. Prior to the group beginning, we will identify all student allergies to ensure these ingredients are not included in any snacks.

## **Speech-Language Pathology Groups**

CDP runs a Language Game Group for six weeks at the start of the program. This group allows for rapport-building, and for staff to informally assess language ability and intervene if needed. The content is delivered through fun and cooperative games and activities. Treatment groups may also be offered as needed during the program.

## **Nursing Group**

The CDP nurse facilitates groups and discussions with your child on topics like handwashing, nutrition, hygiene and puberty. This often happens within the classroom as part of health curriculum.

## **Individual Therapy**

A therapist may provide specialized services to your child to help them develop important skills or treat certain conditions based on their unique needs. Coaching within everyday school activities and in quiet moments will be used in combination with traditional one-on-one therapy sessions.

## **Diagnostic Review**

To support success in the home, school and community, the psychiatrist, along with the multidisciplinary team, will review your child's diagnoses throughout the duration of the program. Some children will be evaluated by our assessment psychologist using standardized evaluation measures if there are ongoing cognitive, learning or neurodevelopmental concerns flagged during the program. The final diagnostic findings are shared in the transition meetings, and in documents provided to schools and community providers.

## **Medication Review**

To support success in the home, school and community, the psychiatrist will review medication and may suggest changes, including increasing or decreasing dosage, changing the prescription or starting a new medication. If your child is taking medications while in the program, their vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, height, weight) are monitored on a regular basis, especially when they





are starting new medications. The nurse or psychiatrist will complete a review on a monthly basis.

## Programs for Your Family

### **Parent Group**

This is a mandatory parent training group that is integral to your success in CDP. In group, you will learn proven parenting strategies, which will help you learn effective ways of approaching challenging scenarios, decrease your child's challenging behaviours, nurture your child's unique talents and skills, and promote positive family relationships. You will learn how to use SNAP skills to self-regulate during tough moments and how to support your child using these skills too.

### **Individual Family-Oriented Therapy**

Families meet monthly with CDP staff to discuss and process family-specific successes and difficulties. Staff will also provide you with a toolbox of skills to help support your unique family needs. These sessions are focused on medication management, review of your child's progress and ongoing collaboration about strategies to promote emotional regulation and manage behaviour at home and school. Typically, the program psychiatrist and mental health therapist will be meeting with you together, although additional meetings may also be arranged separately depending on your child's needs.

## The Classroom

We believe that education should be therapeutic. CDP supports your child's success using the Alberta School Board curriculum and interventions. In the therapeutic classroom, strategies are used to support learning and growth and to ensure clear and consistent expectations are set for all students.

We are guided by our commitment to provide programming that recognizes your child's unique values, needs and talents. This will help your child to shine academically, socially, emotionally and behaviourally and to confidently



navigate current and future challenges. The CDP team will help your child meet their goals and create healthy, productive lifestyles. We empower your child with high – but still reachable – academic, social, emotional and behavioural expectations. We support this child-centred experience with positive, helpful feedback in a safe environment, which promotes growth and learning, and nurtures trusting relationships.

## The CDP Team

The CDP team works hard to create a flexible and predictable environment that is responsive to your child's needs, so they are able to successfully participate in activities. Believe it or not, this impacts success! Everyone on the CDP team has an important and unique role that promotes program success.

**Caregivers (You!):** You know your child best, so the CDP team needs you! You will work closely with the CDP team in family training, as well as individual family therapy to set realistic, challenging goals for your child and family. We cannot help your child without your active involvement.

**Your child:** Works with the CDP team to enhance the skills they need for change. Like everyone, your child has unique strengths and needs, and will work with the CDP team to set goals and work toward them. We expect hard work, not perfection!

**Teacher:** Helps students with academic engagement, achievement and success by using effective instructional strategies. The therapeutic classroom is a community of learners, each with unique learning preferences, interests, strengths, needs and potential.

**Therapy support assistant (TSA):** Under the leadership and supervision of the mental health therapist and behavioural specialist, a TSA will deliver therapeutic strategies to promote academic and behavioural success in the classroom and support group interventions. The TSA will spend the entire school day with your child in order to provide immediate coaching and feedback on the use of skills your child is learning. Coaching and guidance is

individualized for each child and is provided under the direction of the mental health therapist and behaviour specialist.

**Behavioural specialist:** Works closely with the mental health therapist to provide leadership, mentorship and guidance to the TSAs. The behavioural specialist is responsible for creating, implementing and monitoring function-based behavioural plans.

**Therapy support navigator (TSN):** Liaises with your child's sending and receiving schools to help your child transition back to the community school be as positive as possible. The TSN is the main school liaison for the program. They also support the team with educational and clinical goals and interventions.

**Mental health therapist (MHT):** Works with your child and family, through assessment and intervention, to set treatment goals and to develop skills that promote growth. The MHT has specialized training in working with children and families with mental health difficulties. Under the guidance of the program manager and psychiatrist, the MHT provides clinical support to the entire team and delivers evidence-based treatments to children and their families.

**Program manager and unit supervisor:** Provides training, supervision and clinical oversight and direction for the entire program.

**Psychiatrist:** Provides support to your child and family through assessment, diagnosis and treatment, including medication management. The psychiatrist is a medical doctor with specialized training in working with children and families with mental health difficulties.

**Occupational therapist (OT):** Completes assessments as needed, and creates plans to promote the development of motor skills. The OT helps your child to engage in daily living activities such as self-care, academic and recreational activities.



**Speech-language pathologist (SLP):**

Completes formal and informal assessments as needed, and helps your child to grow their speech, language and communication skills.

**Educational psychologist:** Helps the team understand your child's cognitive skills and academic achievement through specialized assessments, educational recommendations and consultation.

**Nurse:** Along with the psychiatrist, the nurse helps to monitor medication effectiveness, side effects or other arising health concerns. The nurse is also onsite for assessments and minor treatments should your child injure themselves while in program. In addition, the nurse can provide informal health education.

**Practicum students:** Support the team while enhancing their skills in their field of study. An assigned supervisor supports the practicum student throughout their time at CDP. CDP has been a field site of choice for students and residents from the fields of occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, psychology, child and youth care, and psychiatry.

## Assessment Process

In CDP, assessment is a collaborative and ongoing process. Assessment allows us to gain a holistic understanding of your child's learning and developmental strengths and challenges. Good assessment considers child development principles, observations of patterns of behaviour, formal questionnaires and tests, and your child's story.

Caregivers are critical to the assessment process, along with other systems of care, like your child's school. Good assessment helps us play to your child's strengths and be aware of their weaknesses.

We use questionnaires about your child and family to help us measure CDP's effectiveness, as well as to inform your child's treatment. We will discuss these questionnaires further during the program, and will cover privacy and information use considerations.

## Treatment Approach

The Children's Day Program team, students and families work together to achieve goals that support academic, emotional, social and behavioural growth. We practice the skills we learn during class time, individual therapy and group therapy. As a family, you are critical to your child's academic and therapeutic success. You will participate in parenting groups and family therapy to improve family relationships. CDP also creates connections between your family, community and sending school so we can set up the necessary resources to boost success over time.

### The Goldilocks Principle

Research tells us that support from other adults and our friends is important. But, just like Goldilocks, too much or too little support does not help us grow. The CDP team will work hard to give your child and family the "just-right" amount of support so you feel strong, independent and supported on your journey with CDP (and after you have left us, too)!

## Physical Intervention and Locked Time Out

The goal of physical intervention is **safety**. We only use restraint or a locked time out when your child is in imminent danger of hurting themselves or another person. In the event that a trained member of the CDP team safely uses a restraint or locked time out to protect a child or others, they must follow Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) regulations.

If your child is restrained or placed in locked time out, we will inform you. We formally review every restraint and locked time out – both at the program level and by CASA’s Patient Safety Committee.

### Learning From Our Mistakes

Mistakes happen, and that’s okay. In fact, we like when they happen because they are a perfect opportunity for your child to practice the skills they are working so hard to master. After a dysregulating event occurs and when your child feels ready, a member of the CDP team will use the “Learning Log” to help your child process the event and talk about strategies that might help them be successful next time. This is not punishment – the goal of the Learning Log is to help students and staff to learn from their mistakes.

## A Typical Day in CDP

CDP	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>8:45–8:50 a.m.</b>	CDP Team Huddle	CDP Team Huddle	CDP Team Huddle	CDP Team Huddle	CDP Team Huddle
<b>9:00–9:20 a.m.</b>	LA	LA	LA	LA <b>Parent Group 9–10:30 a.m.</b>	LA
<b>9:20–10:10 a.m. (Includes Snack)</b>	LA	OT/SLP Group	LA	OT/SLP Group	LA
<b>10:10–11 a.m.</b>	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
<b>11–11:45 a.m.</b>	Gym	Gym	Gym	Gym	Gym
<b>11:45 a.m.–12:10 p.m.</b>	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
<b>12:10–12:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>12:30–12:50 p.m.</b>	<b>Recess</b>	<b>Recess</b>	<b>Recess</b>	<b>Recess</b>	<b>Recess</b>
<b>12:50–1 p.m.</b>	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading
<b>1–1:45 p.m.</b>	Social Emotional Learning Group	Science/Social	Social Emotional Learning Group	Science/Social	Social Emotional Learning Group
<b>1:45–2:10 p.m.</b>	Movement Group	Movement Group	Movement Group	<b>Early Dismissal 2 p.m.</b>	Movement Group
<b>2:10–3 p.m.</b>	Social/Science	Social	Social/Science	<b>CDP Team Meeting 2:15–3:30 p.m.</b>	Social/Science
<b>3 p.m.</b>	Home Transition	Home Transition	Home Transition		Home Transition
<b>3–4:15 p.m.</b>	CDP Team Debrief	CDP Team Debrief	CDP Team Debrief		CDP Team Debrief

## Discharge and Transition

### School Transition

We know switching schools may be hard on your child and family. Once a spot is available for your child, the TSN and MHT will work with your child's sending school to make the transition into and out of CDP as easy as possible:

- The TSN will act as the person your sending school can contact from intake to discharge (and for a period after discharge, if support or advice is needed).
- The TSN will inform the sending school principal and teacher about your child's placement at CDP.
- If necessary, before and after school busing will be set up (\*see Transportation).
- If necessary, the TSN and MHT will schedule a classroom observation at your original school.
- The TSN and MHT will talk to your child's teacher about your child's strengths and challenges, and strategies that worked and didn't work.
- Throughout your child's stay, the TSN and MHT will work with the school to help them integrate CDP strategies that helped your child to succeed. They will also talk to them about those that weren't helpful.
- Changes to your child's Individual Program Plan (IPP) will be shared with the sending or receiving teacher (based on transition timing).
- Your child's sending teacher will be invited to join the CDP team to discuss strengths, needs and successful intervention strategies during a transition meeting.

### Discharge and Transition

Your child will be discharged from CDP after approximately five months. We will join you in a formal discharge conference with a staff member from your receiving school. We will also share a formal transition report with you, the school and the referring physician.

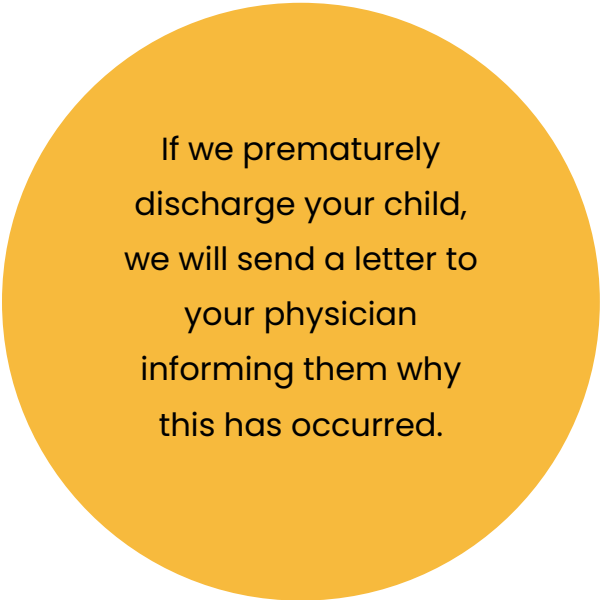


It is important to remember effective care transition does not occur only at discharge, but rather begins from admission. Effective relationships will be initiated from referral, and enhanced throughout the duration of the program. This will allow us to integrate learnings and coordinate care during the program, but more importantly, afterwards. As such, community school staff and community mental health therapists often attend CDP for additional observations, relationship building, training and consultation as-needed during your child's stay in program.

### Reasons for Early Discharge

The CDP team will work hard with your family to accommodate your needs and scheduling demands. We also recognize that you and your child's regular participation in programming is critical to make progress. If challenges with commitment to the program are persistent and unchanging, this may lead to early termination from CDP. Reasons for early termination include:

- Repeated or unexcused absences from multiple parent training group sessions
- Inability to consistently attend individual family-oriented sessions
- Lack of effort with the agreed-upon treatment plan
- Consistent lack of student attendance or habitual lateness
- Student requires a higher level of care (for example, residential treatment or hospitalization)



If we prematurely discharge your child, we will send a letter to your physician informing them why this has occurred.



## Transportation

If your child is coming from an Edmonton Public School, free busing to and from the Children's Day Program can be set up with through the Edmonton Public Schools Transportation Department. If your child attends an Edmonton Public School, you will fill out a form at registration and someone from busing will get back to you. Please note, this process can take up to six weeks.

If your child attends a school in **any other district**, it is the parent and sending school's responsibility to set up busing.

## Arrival and Departure

### Arrival at School

The program begins at 9 a.m. CDP staff will open the CDP doors nearest 62 Ave at 8:50 a.m. to welcome your child into the building.

Please note, CDP staff do not provide child supervision prior to 8:50 a.m. Students must remain with an adult until entering the CDP area. Additionally, please ensure your child is not left unsupervised at CASA reception at any time.

### Departure from School

Your child will be dismissed from program at the end of the day and walked to their assigned school bus or other form of transportation. The program ends at 3 p.m. daily, except on Thursdays when the programs end at 2 p.m.

Children who do not take the bus can be received at the CDP doors nearest 62 Ave. Please note that a bus driver will only drop a child off if their parent/guardian/daycare provider receives them directly. Should someone

not be available, for any reason, the bus driver will:

- Contact CDP staff to request they contact the parent/guardian.
- If CDP staff are unable to contact the receiving individual, they will attempt to contact the child's emergency contact(s).
- If CDP staff are unable to contact both the parent/guardian and emergency contact, the bus driver will return the child to the CDP program location.

If CDP staff are unable to contact parents/guardians after two hours, they may contact Child and Family Services.

## Childcare

The Children's Day Program **does not** have a before or after school childcare program. Additionally, there will typically **not** be supervision provided for children during family therapy and psychoeducational parent groups. It is your responsibility to arrange for childcare at these times.

## Communication

### Daily Home-School Communication

The CDP team uses the agenda book to communicate with you about daily progress, successes, challenges, homework and appointments. You should use the agenda to communicate with the CDP team about topics such as bedtime, homework, successful and challenging behaviours, appointments etc.



To maintain communication, you must sign and comment daily.

## Newsletters

We will send home a monthly newsletter via the home-school communication book. This newsletter is used to keep our families informed about CDP happenings.

## Attendance and Late Arrival

Please **call the CDP unit supervisor (780.400.0879)** as soon as possible if:

- your child cannot attend the program (for example, illness or appointment); or
- you cannot attend a therapy session or meeting.

Please note that multiple cancellations or tardiness may result in premature termination from the program.

## Health History

The nurse will meet with you at the beginning of the program, either in-person or over the phone. They will guide you through what's called a medication reconciliation. This includes reviewing your child's medical history starting from pregnancy up to the present, a family medical history, current medications, as well as checking your child's vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, height, weight). We will also contact your pharmacy to get your child's medication history.

Please bring the following to your meeting with the nurse:

- The name and number of your current pharmacy.
- A list of your child's medications, or the actual medication bottles.

You will also meet with the program psychiatrist and mental health therapist within the first week or two of your child attending CDP. In this meeting, you'll begin the collaborative process of planning and delivering your child's treatment.

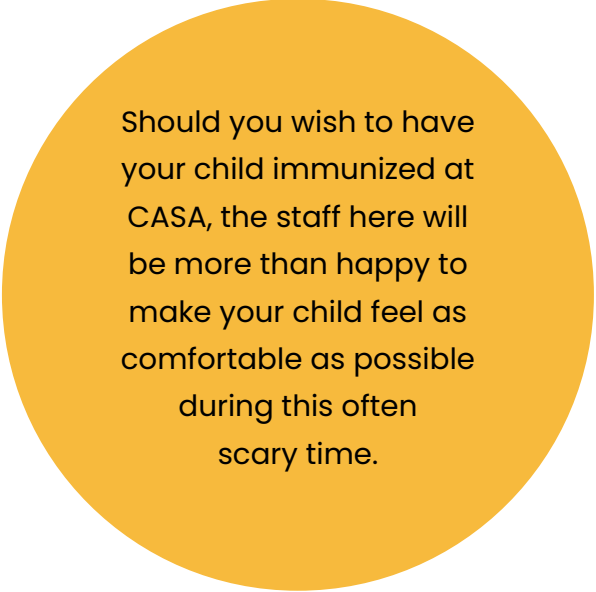
## Medication

If your child requires medication throughout the school day, a CDP nurse or psychiatrist will administer this for them.

In the event that you forget to administer medication in the morning, it may be beneficial to provide the CDP nurse with a small supply of morning medication to administer if necessary. You must deliver medication **directly** to a CDP team member. All medication must be in its **original packaging**, and the label must explicitly state the medication's **name** and **proper dosage**. We require that you divide your child's medication(s) into appropriate packages for **school** and home administration.

## Immunizations

As with any other school district, CASA day programs liaise with Public Health in order to ensure your child has the most up-to-date vaccinations in order to protect themselves and those around them. Your contact information will be shared with a community health nurse, who will contact you to further discuss your child's immunization records. With your consent, the nurse may visit CASA to immunize your child while they are in the program. They may also offer to meet you at a health centre in your community to administer these immunizations. These nurses are the most knowledgeable in this area, and will be able to answer any of your questions or concerns regarding immunizations.



Should you wish to have your child immunized at CASA, the staff here will be more than happy to make your child feel as comfortable as possible during this often scary time.

## Allergies

The CDP team is sensitive to the allergies of all students, families and staff. Please notify us if your child has any sensitivities or allergies. We will document this information on your child's Caution Indicator form, and it will be placed on the front of their file.

## Supply List

The following items are required for the school program. If, for financial reasons, you cannot get these supplies, we will do our best to accommodate your child. Please make sure that all are clearly marked with your child's name:

- ☐ Indoor running shoes
- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Gym clothes, if you feel necessary for your child

## Items from Home

We ask children to leave all electronic items such as smartphones, tablets and laptops at home. However, we do recognize some students have long bus rides, and screen time may be a strategy to keep them occupied on the bus. We will collect all electronics brought to program at the beginning of each school day and return them before students board the bus for home. Alternatively, students can keep their electronics in their backpacks, provided they do not come out during the school day.

We appreciate your diligence in providing your children with strategies to support their regulation (i.e., fidgets, wiggle stool, weighted items). We all need different strategies to regulate and be successful learners.

Unfortunately, some of these items may result in distractions or misuse of the sensory tool.

Here at CDP, we have an opportunity to observe your child's self-regulation

strategies in consideration of the environment/task. **We ask that these sensory items or fidgets are not brought into CDP from home**, so the team can complete a thorough assessment of their regulation skills and needs. After this assessment, our team will first implement evidence-based strategies to support your child.

Please also ensure your child is not bringing additional toys or other personal items (Pokémon cards, colouring books, school supplies, etc.) to school, as these items may be a distraction or may go missing. CDP does not assume liability for any electronics or other valuables that may be lost, damaged or stolen if brought into the program.

## Outside Socialization

It is program policy that children and their families do not socialize outside of planned program activities while attending CDP (e.g., play dates and birthday parties). This policy is in place to ensure children's privacy and safety, and to prevent situations that may interfere with progress during the program.



We understand that building friendships is important. We provide ample opportunities for this during the program. For example, we provide treats and celebrate birthdays here at CDP. Families often share contact information at graduation to keep in touch.



## Dress Code

At Edmonton Public Schools, students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects a welcoming, respectful, inclusive, safe and healthy learning environment. School expectations for student attire take into account a student's right to fairness, dignity and respect. Some examples of welcome attire are durags, turbans, hijabs and burkas.

CDP has a dress code to ensure your child's safety and successful participation in all program activities. We expect all students to follow the dress code:

- Children must come to the program in seasonally-appropriate clothing (e.g., mittens and toque in the winter, hat in the summer)
- Children must have a pair of non-marking indoor shoes for time in the gym
- Clothing should be respectful and not display any inappropriate language or symbols

## A Scent-Free Program

Please refrain from wearing perfume, body spray or lotion with strong scents. Some CDP staff, students and families may have scent sensitivities.

## Office Hours

The CDP office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., except on Edmonton Public Schools holidays. After hours, you are able to leave a voicemail with staff at 780-410-8458 and we will return your call as soon as possible.

## Other Questions and Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns about the program or your child/family's participation in it, please contact us.