



Child Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Section 1: Health and Safety	Policy: Inclement Weather and Emergency Centre Closures
Date Approved by P&P Cmte: Sept. 19, 2014 Date Approve by BofD: November 11, 2014	Policy # 1.10

PURPOSE

To ensure the health and safety of all participants at Bright Starts Co-operative Early Learning Centre Inc. during inclement weather and when it may be necessary to close Bright Starts CELC due to an unforeseen circumstance or emergency.

POLICY

The Child Care and Early Years Act requires children over 30 months of age to play outdoors for at least two hours each day while children less than 30 months of age to play/sleep outdoors for up to two hours per day (weather permitting).

The following weather situations (but not limited to) may influence outdoor time:

- rain/thunderstorm
- temperature higher than 32 degrees Celsius with or without the humidex
- temperature below -15 Celsius with or without the wind chill (-10 for infants)
- an air quality index reading(AQI) between 32-49
- an air quality index reading (AQI) greater than 50

During the summer months, peak sun times are avoided when scheduling outdoor time. Due to, but not limited to, the above inclement weather situations, children may not be able to participate in or may have limited time for outdoor play. Staff may need to use their discretion due to other ailments such as high winds and/or icy conditions.

Inclement Weather and Emergency Centre Closures

When severe inclement weather such as ice, fog, rain, sleet, snow and wind makes normal operation a significant danger to Bright Starts CELC employees, children and their families, or prevents safe travels to/from work, Bright Starts CELC may find it necessary to close the centre. The centre must adhere to the University of Waterloo's procedures for closure in case of inclement weather as Bright Starts CELC relies on the University to maintain the access road and parking areas and other services. **If the University of Waterloo does not close** due to severe weather Bright Starts CELC will still close if either the Public or Separate School Board closes.

This does not include the Public or Separate School Board's decision to close due to frigid temperatures of -35 degrees Celsius or below. Bright starts will remain open during school Board closures due to frigid

temperatures as frigid temperatures do not effect the operations of Bright Starts CELC or travel for the majority of our participants and employees. The final decision to close the centre is the responsibility of the Executive Director in consultation with the President of the Board of Directors or his/her designate.

Due to unforeseen circumstances i.e. storm damage, power outages, equipment failure, disaster in the nearby area or other temporary problems, Bright Starts CELC may be instructed to close or evacuate by other regulatory bodies such as the Ministry of Education, the Region of Waterloo, local Fire or Police Department. Should such an event occur, Parents, Guardians or Emergency Contacts will be informed by telephone should Bright Starts CELC be closed, and will be asked to pick up their child(ren) as soon as possible. If necessary, the children will be evacuated to alternate facilities where parents will need to pick them up. **Our emergency shelter is The Columbia Ice Field located on Hagey Blvd across from the School of Optometry.**

Communication

Where possible a decision to close the centre will be made by 6:30AM. The closure will be communicated through UW's Communications and Public Affairs Office and the Region's local radio stations 96.7 CHYM FM and 570 NEWS and will be listed on their website www.chymfm.com and www.570news.com. Bright Starts CELC's telephone service and website www.brightstartsearlylearning.ca will also be updated to reflect the closure with additional communication sent to families via email.

PROCEDURE

- 1.0 Executive Director will listen to 96.7 CHYM FM or 570 News for weather conditions and Region of Waterloo closures
- 2.0 If the University of Waterloo and/or the School Boards are closed then a decision to close Bright Starts CELC will be made by the Executive Director
- 3.0 The Executive Director will call Bright Starts CELC Board President for consultation.
- 4.0 Executive Director will contact UW to add the closure to the Daily Bulletin and contact 96.7 CHYM FM and 570 News to add Bright Starts CELC to the list of closures
- 5.0 A message will be left on Bright Starts CELC's voicemail notifying parents, students and volunteers of the closure
 - A notice will be placed on our website as soon as possible
 - An email notice will be sent out to families as soon as possible
- 6.0 All employees will be contacted by phone and informed of the closure