



Conayt Friendship Society 2164 Quilchena Ave,  
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## PARENT HANDBOOK

### About Us

We are a free licensed Aboriginal Head Start program that is available to families with Indigenous ancestry. We follow the 6 Components of an Aboriginal Head Start.

- parental involvement
- health promotion
- culture and language
- nutrition
- education
- social services support.

### Mission Statement

The Conayt Aboriginal Head Start program will strive to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal families through the provision of positive, contemporary, and traditional teachings. The program will promote educational learning and understanding of a life-long process that will provide for the children's transition and successful integration in the mainstream school system with CULTURE as an important aspect.

The program will develop strategies to support and enhance the cultural identity of children and families leading to individuals taking pride in themselves, their families, communities, and their cultures thereby enhancing growth, development, and success.

### Philosophy

The Conayt Aboriginal Head Start philosophy defines the guiding principles that underlie the AHS Principles & Guidelines. It is the basis for determining the goals and objectives and developing or adapting implementation strategies.

- To provide each child with a safe, nurturing, stimulating, enjoyable and secure environment for him/her gain the skills and confidence necessary to be prepared to succeed in their present environment and with later responsibilities in school and life.
- To enhance social competence through the acquisition of mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional skills in a manner appropriate to each child's age and stage of development.
- To provide learning experiences, which are tailored with to each child's unique temperament, culture, preferences, and learning styles.
- To provide each child with a comprehensive learning experience, the educational aspects of holistic health and well-being must be integrated in the daily program of each child is a unique individual

- To involve parents/families/elders, given their role as primary educators in the development and educational activities for the program and at home.

### Introduction

Each child is a unique individual and should be cared for in that way. We provide your children with an environment that is safe, secure, and predictable while challenging his/her ability to grow. Learning is achieved through experience; therefore, we provide many opportunities through child and adult initiated free play. By providing developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor toys and learning materials, we help your child to grow and develop within their environment within the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start.

Daily routines of handwashing, teeth brushing, mealtime and transitioning through the various activities throughout their day here will assist children in learning self-help skills and preparing for their transition to elementary school.

We encourage parent participation in our program whenever possible and a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is formed each year. There are also many other opportunities for you as caregivers to join us throughout the year ie: field trips and celebrations. Please feel to contact us at a convenient time to chat about how you see yourself becoming involved in our program or any ideas you may have that you would like to share with us.

### Admission Policy

The Conayt Aboriginal Head Start is open to all children of Aboriginal Ancestry age 0-6 years old. The registration form must be completed in full, and all supporting documents completed and returned before your child may begin the program. Children will be placed on a waitlist when the program has reached it enrollment.

### Attendance

Please ensure you have your child at the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start for their scheduled time. You are required to walk your child into the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start and sign your child in an out each day. Please do not leave your child unattended at any time outside the classroom or have them walk into the classroom by themselves. Children will only be released to their parent/guardian or person designated by yourself on your emergency card. Any changes must be pre-arranged with a staff member.

Please ensure that you text the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start at (250) 315-7072 by 8:30 am if your child is going to be late. If we do not receive a text by 8:45 stating, you are going to be late, and your child has not arrived at Conayt Aboriginal Head Start it will be assumed that your child will not need childcare that day. If a child misses a total 3 days (does not have to be consecutive days) without parents texting the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start beforehand it will be assumed that the child, no longer requires Conayt Aboriginal Head Start. Families are welcome and encouraged to text the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start cell at anytime including overnight to inform the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start their child will be away. If possible, please share the reason for your child's absence. (Taking a family day, no school/work that day, slept in, your child is sick...) If you do not have a cell phone, please leave a voice message on the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start cell, or verbally inform your child's teacher as much as possible in advance.

Please refrain from smoking or using an e-cigarette when dropping off or picking up your child from the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start. Please ensure all doors and gates are securely closed when you enter or leave the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start or playground.

### Late Pick Up

Please notify the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start if you are going to be late picking up your child. If a child is not picked up at their scheduled pickup time and we have not been notified, staff will then attempt to call family and/or persons listed on the emergency card. If after 30 minutes those attempts are unsuccessful, staff will contact Child and Family Services for advice; as well a fee will be added to your file to be paid in full by end of the week.

### Alleged Impairment

It is the legal responsibility of a licensed Conayt Aboriginal Head Start to the extent that it is possible, not to release a child to any person who is unable to adequately care for the child. If the person authorized to pickup the child appears to be, in the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start staff's opinion, to not be able to safely care for the child the staff member in charge will follow the following procedures:

- Offer to call a relative or friend to pick up the person and the child
- If another authorized person is not available staff may need to Child and Family Services for advice.
- If the presumed impaired person proceeds to get into the car with or without the child staff will be responsible to notify the appropriate authorities.

### Car seats

Please ensure that your child is in the correct car seat or booster seat. You are welcome to leave your car seat at the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start if someone else is going to be picking up your child.

### Conayt Aboriginal Head Start closures

The Conayt Aboriginal Head Start closes for two weeks at Christmas, as well as one day a month for a staff meeting, program planning and PAC meeting. This could be changed depending on the needs of the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start and families. In addition, the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start will be closed certain days for professional development with advance notice to the parents. If NVIT college closed due to inclement weather, natural disaster, or loss of electricity the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start will be closed as well. Unexpected closures will be communicated via email/phone call/text, and families are also welcomed to text the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start cell if uncertain. The Conayt Aboriginal Head Start will be closed on the STAT days as well.

### Illness

The Conayt Aboriginal Head Start staff have up to date Child Safe First Aid and CPR training.

Please keep sick children home to prevent spreading illness to other children but also to keep them in a comfortable environment at home while they are not feeling well. If your child has had a fever (**37.8 degrees or higher**), vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours, unidentified rash, or any cold symptoms. Please do not bring them to school. Please follow If your child is prone to seasonal or environmental allergies, **please get a Dr. note for your child stating your child has allergies and is not contagious.**

Please be mindful of the most recent Covid guidelines and to not send your child to Conayt Aboriginal Head Start if anyone in your household is experiencing Covid symptoms.

If your child is feeling unwell enough to require Tylenol or cold medications your child needs to stay home to rest and get better, and to not spread their illness.

Should a child become ill while they are in our care, we will attempt to notify you and request that you come pick up your child at the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start. If we are unable to contact you, we will contact your alternate numbers on your emergency card.

Your child will be kept comfortable until we are able to make arrangements for pick up.

If the situation appears to be an emergency, we will call for an ambulance.

### Symptoms of Ill Health

- Eye irritation that may have a yellow discharge or redness could be the signs of "Pink Eye" which is contagious
- Earache: child should see family doctor
- Runny nose if the mucus is thick, green, or reddish brown in color
- Any fever indicates infection
- If the child has had any vomiting or diarrhea throughout the night
- Rashes should be checked by your family doctor, and then they may return to school with a doctor's approval.
- Coughing can be contagious if it is continuous
- Sore throat can spread infections
- Tooth aches: child should see the dentist
- Any Covid symptoms

### Medication

If your child has been prescribed antibiotics, he/she continues to be contagious for 48 hours after the first dose of medication and should not return to the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start until this period has lapsed.

The Conayt Aboriginal Head Start staff will only administer prescription medication. A medication form must be filled out and signed by the parent. All medication brought to the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start must be in a labelled, and in the original container. Staff, will not under no circumstance, administer non-prescription drugs i.e.: Tylenol, cough syrup, throat lozenges.

### Food and Nutrition:

#### 3-6 Age Group

The Conayt Aboriginal Head Start provides two nutritious meals snacks and a lunch; the children will be given water daily. The meal will include all four food groups, recommendations from the Canada Food Guide and whenever possible include suggestions from the Canada Aboriginal Food Guide. Your input into the menu planning is encouraged so we can be sure to include foods that your child also enjoys at home.

#### Infant/Toddler

First Foods are to be introduced at home for allergy monitoring and reaction. Bottles must be ready-to-serve. Parent is to provide food if their child is not yet eating foods from the table.

### Dental Hygiene

All children participate in teeth brushing with the assistance of staff after mealtime. In addition, with your permission (completed consent form) all children will receive a check up and fluoride rinse varnish treatment administered by the Child Oral Health Initiative (COHI) staff.

### Clothing

Please provide an extra set of clothing for your child in the case of an emergency and the need to change and please label them with child's name. We ask that parents leave two outfits for children under three years old. We ask that you dress your child in play clothes as they will be participating in art activities involving paint and other materials and participating in daily outdoor play and will likely get dirty and possibly stained.

Also please ensure your child is dressed according to the weather as we will be playing outdoors daily if the weather permits. Please ensure your child has the appropriate seasonal outer wear ex: hats, t-shirts, shorts for summer, and toques, mittens, snow pants and snow boots etc. for winter. Again, please make sure you label any items that are left here with us.

#### Head Lice

Staff will carry out weekly checks for head lice. Staff will call parent of the child with lice and arrange for the child to go home. The staff will offer information on Head Lice prevention and treatment. Adhering to the treatment information is a time-oriented process and must be followed as directed. Once the treatment time frame has passed children are welcome back to the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start. The teacher will inspect the child for lice upon their return to Conayt Aboriginal Head Start to help ensure there are no more lice or eggs.

#### Diapering & Toileting

Parents are to provide diapers, wipes, and diaper cream. Parents will receive assistance with toileting training for children 2 year of age and over. However, a child must receive a parent's consistent support as a home routine.

#### Sleeping/Napping

Child will be placed on back when sleeping as a safety precaution. A child is allowed a comfort item if needed for naps and throughout day for emotional support. Playpen, cots blankets and sheets are available for use. IF nap is not successful it will continue to be quiet time on the cot with quiet activities.

#### Toys

The center provides toys for children play. Toys from home are not allowed in Conayt Aboriginal Head Start to prevent loss, being broken and prevention of sharing issues. Children may bring a special item for Show and Tell and as emotional support item. As No electronic devices will be allowed in the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start.

#### Screen Time

Screen Time will not be offered to children. Please do not send electronic devices with children.

#### Outside food

Due to severe life-threatening allergies please do not send your child to Conayt Aboriginal Head Start with food. If your child is an infant and not-yet eating the food at Conayt Aboriginal Head Start, please check with your child's teacher to find out what foods are not allowed at Conayt Aboriginal Head Start. Unless other arrangements have been made with the Lead Teacher/Coordinator.

#### Transportation

Transportation to and from the AHS Conayt Aboriginal Head Start is the responsibility of each parent. If you have transportation difficulties, please notify staff immediately. Children must be picked up by their designated pick-up time.

### Emergency Procedures

Fire Safety Plans and Emergency Preparedness Plans are in place for our Conayt Aboriginal Head Start to follow that includes Earthquake Evacuation procedures. We have full Emergency Kits, Earthquake kits, and all emergency equipment stored in our Conayt Aboriginal Head Start storage area that has been professionally prepared and provided for us. Our plan is to stay in place at the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start unless it is unsafe to do so. If we must evacuate, we will do our best to leave a note on the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start door stating where we are evacuating to. We will also text families once the children are in a safe place and if we are able to do so. Families are strongly encouraged to share an 'out-of-area' contact with a different postal code for us to cancel. Often when there is a mass disaster local phone calls will not go through, but 'out-of-area' ones will.

Fire drills will be practiced with staff and children once a month and earthquake drills will be held twice yearly.

### Guidance and Discipline Procedure

The purpose of the guidance and discipline policy in the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start is to provide a safe and healthy learning environment in which each child can feel secure. Each child will be encouraged and supported to develop positive relationships with peers and staff. While there is a wide variety of theories and approaches related to guiding children's behaviour, the goal remains constant: to assist children in developing self-control, self-confidence and ultimately, self discipline and sensitivity in their interactions with others. The simple rules which will be emphasized are:

1. To stay safe.
2. To help others stay safe, and
3. To keep others and other belongings safe.

Staff will strive to always model appropriate behaviour, showing respect for children, parents, co-workers, and their environment. To this end, parents can expect that staff will:

- Demonstrate affection and caring to your child through appropriate forms of verbal and physical interaction.
- Maximize opportunities for appropriate and positive behaviour for your child through the program and activities.
- Provide clear, simple, and consistent limits regarding appropriate behaviours within the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start; such limits will be offered in a positive manner. Harsh, belittling language or physical punishment will not be used at any time.
- Give verbal and redirection as the main means of guidance and discipline.
- Recognize and label your child's feelings in situations that maybe difficult for him/her.
- Always supervise your child and will not remove your child to an unsupervised area.

As per licensing regulations:

- The child will not be subjected to shoving, hitting, shaking, spanking or any other form of bodily harm.
- The child will not be subjected to harsh, belittling, or degrading treatment, whether verbal, emotional or physical that would humiliate the child or undermine the child's self-respect.
- The child will not be confined, physically restrained, or kept without adult supervision, apart from the other children.
- The child will not be deprived of meal, snack, rest, an activity, or necessary use of a toilet.

Parents are encouraged to question staff if they are unclear about the handling of any incident within the center. Children who cannot be managed using these measures and are consistently presenting a discipline

problem for the staff will be required to withdraw from the program and will be referred to the appropriate services.

### Child Abuse or Neglect

Parents please be aware:

- We are required by law to report any suspected or disclosed abuse and failure to do so may result in prosecution under the Family and Child Services Act.
- We will not be permitted to contact the parent, unless specifically directed to do so by the Ministry of Children and Families or Police.
- Reporting procedures are designed to always protect the child. Our responsibility is to report suspicious and /or disclosures, not to determine if abuse has occurred. That is the responsibility of the Ministry of Children and Families.
- All staff are required to report, in writing, any bruises or substantial visible injuries observed on a child upon arrival at the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start. The information will be placed in the child's file. If child abuse is suspected, an incident report will be completed and submitted according to licensing regulations.

In the event of an allegation of abuse is directed towards a staff member the following steps will be taken:

- The coordinator will contact the RCMP and Child Care Facilities Licensing to report the incident or allegation. The family involved will be encouraged to also report to the authorities.

### Parents Can Expect Conayt Aboriginal Head Start Staff to:

- Ask parents to notify them of any concerns regarding their child's health ie: medication, allergies, medical concerns.
- Report and record illness or injury experienced by the child in the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start.
- Advise parents of any treatment given to their child on the day of illness or accident occurred.
- Provide adequate First Aid and First Aid supplies.

### Children With Special Needs

Each child is a gift to their community and is present in a community to help educate within that community. The child is, therefore, to be viewed as someone to learn from rather than as a person presenting a problem to be managed. For example, gifted children are also children with Special Needs.

A primary source of information regarding a child's needs comes from the child's parents/caregivers. Assessment is a formal or informal means of examining what children require so programs can plan activities, adjust activities, modify the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start, seek additional human resources, medical or expertise to meet the educational, physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental needs of the child.

Children with Special Needs often face barriers to normal development in one or more of the following areas of development: physical, social, emotional, communication skills, intellectual level and behavioral challenges.

At the Conayt Aboriginal Head Start, we may have a Special Needs Assistant available depending on the needs of the child that will work one on one with children requiring this service. It is independent on the assessment of the child, availability of funding, numbers of children in the class facing special needs and the willingness of the parent/caregiver in the assessment process.

If the special need of the child is beyond the services available, the child will be referred to alternate programs or services. If a child has a support worker, and the support worker is away the child may be asked to miss Conayt Aboriginal Head Start until the support worker returns.

To register

Please arrange a time to visit the centre to arrange a tour as well as meet the teachers and staff. Children will be added to the waitlist once a completed registration form is returned along with supporting documentation. (Immunization status or immunization exclusion form filled out, along with proof of school and/or work for parent(s))