



nona  CHILD
DEVELOPMENT
CENTRE

Family Handbook



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Welcome to the nona CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE!

Just so you know...

- NONA's hours are from 8:30am to 4:30pm Monday thru Friday. We are closed for lunch 12:00-1:00pm. *Our front office is closed on Fridays.*
- Our staff has voicemail so you can leave a message at anytime for them if you need to.
- We can meet with you and your child in your home, at the Centre or in a community. We want to make visits work for you.
- We always welcome suggestions! Please ask for help if you have any questions or concerns. Also described in this handbook is a way to voice a complaint.
- We have been around for over 40 years!
- We are an accredited non-profit organization.
- We serve over 700 children and their families in the North Okanagan each year.

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Our Mission Statement

To strengthen and enhance opportunities for children with special needs to participate in their community.

Our Values

We believe that...

- Every child has the potential for growth.
- Your family are the most important people in your child's life.
- Teamwork best meets your family's needs.
- All families should have access to services as soon as possible.
- All persons have the right to full community inclusion.

- We get over 500 referrals each year.
- A good portion of our services are funded by the BC's Ministry of Children and Family Development.



A Word about Quality Improvement at NONA

At NONA, we want to improve our services and value your input.

We sometimes email or ask families to complete an online survey to about our services. We want to know how we are meeting family needs and also what gaps we should try to address.

We publish a performance report every year that looks at the goals we set for the previous year and if we achieved them.

If you would like a copy, please ask at the Front Office.

You may also get asked for your feedback after your child is discharged from a program at NONA. This is a great opportunity for us to learn what you liked about the services, and what you may have for improvement.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions on how we can improve or do things differently to better suit your child and family.

Our Code of Ethics

Our Code of Ethics are a set of rules that outline the responsibilities of NONA staff. These include:

Respect for the rights and dignity of all persons

- Accepting of all persons, respecting culture, nationality, ethnicity, colour, race, belief system, gender, sexual orientation, health status and socio-economic status.

Integrity

- Accurate and honest
- Straight-forward and open
- Fair

Responsible relationships of trust with the families we serve

- Trustworthy
- Sensitive
- Responsible

Professional competence

- Knowledgeable
- Skilled
- Experienced

If you would like a complete copy of our Code of Ethics, please ask staff or phone 250-549-1281 to request a copy.

Programs and Services

Here is a brief description about the programs that we currently offer. More detailed information about the program(s) to which your child was referred has been included in this package.

Infant Development Program provides home-based services to families of infants, birth to 3 years old, who are at risk for developmental delay or who have a diagnosed disability.

Supported Child Development Program provides services to children with developmental concerns, aged birth to 12, who require extra support in a community child care setting, chosen by their family. Settings include group daycares, preschools, family daycares, in-home care and out-of-school-care.

Therapy Programs:

Speech and Language Therapy provides assessment, treatment and consultation for communication, feeding and hearing delays in children, five years and under. This program shares a waitlist with the Health Unit and a copy of each referral is forwarded to the Health Unit for recordkeeping purposes.

Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy provides services to children who have difficulty with such skills as moving, using their hands, eating, dressing and toileting. We help children to improve their strength, balance, coordination and endurance. We also provide strategies to support parents of children who have trouble settling themselves, are overly active and have difficulty with focusing their attention.

Behaviour Consulting Program is available to families whose children are on NONA caseloads. This program works with the entire team to identify and understand the function of particular behaviours and to help implement alternative positive strategies.

Family Support Program provides families with special needs children (ages 0-7) with information, support, advocacy, one to one consultation, and networking opportunities within the home environment or at our Centre.

Key Worker Program and Parent Support Program assists families in understanding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and other neurodevelopmental disorders by providing education, support and information specific to the needs of the child and family.

Autism Services Program provides children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with goal-oriented programs according to the child's age and funding level. Services are available to children who are eligible for provincial Autism Funding.

How Services Work

Steps for getting involved with us after we get your child's referral:

1. A staff person will phone you and explain the services that are available to your child.
2. Decide whether you want to be involved or not.
3. Sign the applicable consent forms.
4. Set up a time with NONA staff to discuss your concerns about your child.
5. Talk with staff about the level of involvement that will suit your child and your family.
6. Talk with NONA staff about priorities that are most important for your child-together we will develop a plan.

Waitlists

Unfortunately, some of our services currently have waitlists. We will work to stay connected with you while your child is waiting for services. If you have any questions about your child's wait time, please contact the program supervisor. When possible, we try to provide interim services.

Team Work

If your child is involved with more than one program at NONA, staff work together to coordinate services. Some examples of coordination include joint visits and service coordination meetings between your child's team. This is to make sure that that we are all on the same page about your child's services.

Transition Planning

Your child's services may transition to another program at NONA, to kindergarten, or move out into a community program. The important piece to remember is that ending services from one program at NONA should not be a surprise to you, and you should feel prepared. We will make every effort to help you and your child move onto the next step in his/her services. If this isn't the case, please talk to us. We want your child to succeed.

Discharge occurs when:

- Your child's goals are met
- You request it
- You and your child are no longer benefiting from the service
- Your child is too old for the service or program
- We can't contact you

What to Expect from Us (Your Rights)

1. We will listen to and respect your opinions and concerns.

- a. You and your family are the key players in your child's progress. Your priorities and choices will be respected.
- b. Your knowledge about your child will be valued.
- c. Services will consider the uniqueness of your family.
- d. Decisions will be made together.

2. Our services will be of excellent quality.

- a. Our staff is highly qualified to provide the services that your child needs.
- b. We are an accredited agency. This means that we meet internationally recognized standards.

3. We will keep information about your child and family confidential and private.

- a. We will not reveal information about you and your child without your written consent.
- b. We are required by law to share information if:
 - We observe a criminal act or abuse
 - We believe you or your child is in danger
 - A Court order or subpoena is issued

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- c. We will do our best to be as respectful and understanding as possible if confidentiality must be broken.
 - d. We may request proof of custody if you are separated or divorced. This ensures that information is shared correctly.
 - e. We collect personal information so that we can provide you with services. Examples of information that we collect are:
 - Your and your child's name, address, and phone number
 - Your child's date of birth
 - Reason for referral
 - f. We use this information to:
 - Communicate with you
 - Develop and improve our services
 - Meet program and legal requirements
 - We **do not** sell, share, trade or rent your personal information to anyone without your consent
 - g. We may share non-identifying information for the purpose of research and improvement of our services.

4. We will work with you to have a plan for services within one month of referral.

- a. Within one month of referral, you will have a sense of the services available for your child/family.
- b. You will know who your contacts at NONA are.
- c. You will have a plan that focuses on your family's priorities.

5. We will give you information.

- a. We will provide you with timely, accurate, up-to-date information.
- b. If you don't understand something, please ask. Questions are always welcome.

6. We will provide you with access to your child's records at the Centre.

- a. We will provide you with copies of your child's Centre written reports.
- b. We can only release and make copies of reports that originate from NONA.
- c. As all records at NONA are owned by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (our funding body), we follow the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

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- d. If you want to access your child's program records at the Centre:
- Write to the Executive Director and state which records you want.
 - Make sure that you describe the records as carefully and specifically as possible.
 - You will get a response to your request within 30 days.

7. We will listen to your concerns. We have a complaints process.

If you are not happy with the services your child and your family are receiving, please tell us. Your complaint will not put at risk your future service in any way. Input from families helps us to improve and address gaps in services.

Our Complaints Process:

- a. Talk to the staff person involved. Very often, situations and problems can be solved quickly at this level.
- b. If there is still a problem, talk to the staff person's supervisor. The supervisor may talk to you on the phone, or meet with you in person; talk to the staff person(s) involved; and have a team meeting to come up with a workable solution.

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- c. When the problem remains unresolved, and you are still not happy with the outcome, the Centre's Executive Director will work with you and the involved staff person(s) to resolve the issue. We will make every effort to address your concerns and work toward a solution within 10 working days. Upon resolution, you will receive a letter outlining the actions taken to address your complaint.
- d. If you are still unhappy about the outcome, you have the right to appeal to the Ministry of Children and Family Development, which provides most of our funding. Information about this appeal process is available at: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/complaints/index.htm.

What We Need from You

1. Treat staff with dignity and respect.

- We ask that you treat NONA staff in the way that you would like to be treated.

2. Work in partnership with us

- Please tell us your needs and concerns. We want to know the best way to provide services for your child and family.
- Be involved with your child's program and activities.
- Tell us if you are unable to follow through on something you agreed to do. We can then brainstorm other arrangements.

- Give us feedback on what is working and what is not.
- Ask us when you don't understand something.
- Be patient with how long it may take your child to learn something new.
- Share beliefs and values that are important to you so that our services can be more sensitive to your family.

3. Keep in touch with us

- Keep us up to date about your child's health, your current phone number and address so that we keep in touch with you.
- Let us know about family events/changes that may influence your child's behaviour and/or stress level.
- If you do not hear from us as often as you would like, please contact us.

4. Cancellations

- Please cancel an appointment if you or your child is unwell. Our staff is in constant contact with other children and do not wish to pass any illness to them.
- Staff will cancel an appointment if ill, and will reschedule another time with you .
- If you need to reschedule an appointment, call and let us know.

Health and Safety

Health Guidelines

Please **DO NOT** bring your child to NONA if he/she is unwell.

We know that some parents don't like to cancel appointments even when their child is sick. However, your child will not benefit if he or she is not feeling well. NONA staff work with many families, some with very medically fragile children. We don't want the germs to spread.

Cancel your child's visit/appointment or keep your child home if:

- Your child has had a fever in the last 48 hours (2 days).
- Your child has vomited in the last 48 hours.
- Your child has had diarrhea in the last 48 hours.
- Your child is unusually tired or irritable—this is often the first stage of a cold or flu and is the time when your child is most contagious.
- Your child has a persistent or frequent cough and/or is coughing up phlegm or mucous.
- Your child has a very runny nose (e.g. needs to be wiped every 3-5 minutes).
- Your child is diagnosed with a known contagious illness (e.g. pink-eye). Please follow the instructions of your doctor regarding the period of time to wait before your child is no longer contagious. Let us know if your child was in contact with NONA staff or other children involved with NONA during this contagious period.

Safety

- Let a staff member know if you see something that you feel is unsafe while you and your child are at NONA.
- Hold your child's hand until safely to your vehicle when leaving the NONA building. Our parking lot can be very busy.
- When you come to NONA, familiarize yourself with emergency exits. There are building maps posted throughout the building.
- We practice drills so that we are prepared in the event of an emergency. If you and your child are at NONA during one of these drills, staff will escort you and your child safely out of the building.

If NONA staff visit you and your child in your home:

- Please don't smoke one hour before and during the home visit (WCB Regulations).
- Keep your pets restrained or in a different room during the visit.
- Keep your home free of obstacles, clear of snow and ice, and well-lit.

Emergency/Evacuation Procedures: In the event of a fire evacuation, we will gather on the west side of the NONA Clubhouse, in the parking lot of dental office building.

In the event of a larger community evacuation, we will gather at the Vernon Recreation Complex (Rec Centre) or where we are directed to by the City of Vernon Safety and Emergency Coordinator.

Our Discipline Policy

1. We believe that a child who is involved with NONA has the following rights:
 - To be treated with dignity and respect
 - To learn and develop in the least restrictive and most appropriate environment possible
2. We believe that a child's behaviour, even challenging behaviour, is a form of communication. When we work with a child, we try to be proactive to meet the child's needs. We want to teach the child a way to replace challenging behaviours.
3. Seclusion (time away) and restraint (holding) are applied at a developmentally appropriate level and used when a child or staff is in immediate danger, and only as a last resort.

Our goal is always to help children meet expectations, not to punish them for unmet expectations. We use positive behaviour support that is designed to:

- Promote attachments
- Connect discipline with nurture
- Maintain behaviours within accessible limits
- Teach self regulation

Specific approaches we may use include:

- To provide choices for the child
- To consider the child's environment
- To provide appealing activities for the child
- To set clear and simple limits
- To reinforce appropriate behaviour
- To de-escalate and redirect behaviour
- To help the child connect to the outcome of his/her behaviour

How to get hold of us:

Staff Person

phone: 250-549-1281 + extension number

- Enter the staff person's extension number, to reach them directly or to leave a message for them
- If you do not know the extension number, press '9' for our staff directory

Front Office

phone: 250-549-1281 ext. 200

fax: 250-549-3771

email: administration@nona-cdc.com

Executive Director

Helen Armstrong

phone: 250-549-1281 ext. 202

email: executive.director@nona-cdc.com

Visit our website: www.nona-cdc.com

