

Little Lambs Home Daycare

Sexual abuse/Harassment Policy and Procedure

It is the policy of Little Lambs Home Daycare that all employees, ECE Home Visitors and Home Child Care Providers, volunteers/students, administrative staff, children in our care, parents/guardians and any other person who should have affiliation with the agency be safe and free from harm or harassment at all times. Little Lambs is committed to ensuring that our program follows all human rights policies and procedures to ensure a fair and inclusive environment free from abuse. This policy and its procedures apply to all child care premises, agency office, and offsite activities.

The policies and procedures relating to the Sexual Abuse/Harassment Policy and Procedure must be reviewed with home child care providers, volunteers and students, persons who are ordinarily residents of the premises or regularly at the premises, home child care visitors and employees of Little Lambs Home Daycare. These policies are implemented and monitored for compliance and contraventions.

What is sexual harassment?

Definition (as stated In the Ontario *Human Rights Code*), sexual harassment is “engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought to be known to be unwelcome.” In some cases, one incident could be serious enough to be sexual harassment.

Definition (as stated in the *Toronto District School Board Guidelines*): “sexual harassment” means any conduct, comment, gesture, or contact of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected to cause offence or humiliation.

Further: Little Lambs has a zero tolerance policy for sexual abuse, harassment, molestation, corporal punishment or neglect.

Sexual Harassment (child-child)

- Sexual harassment includes the display or distributing of offensive material such as pictures, cartoons and graffiti in the Home child care premises.

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- Any sexual advances or coercion used by one child to pressure another child into inappropriate behaviour.
- Unwanted and unnecessary physical contact.
- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, or other gestures of a sexual nature.
- Some examples include:
 - Unwanted, unwelcome physical contact like touching, grabbing or patting.
 - Rude jokes or suggestive remarks of a sexual nature.
 - Demeaning nicknames like “chick”, “sexy”, “stud” or “babe”.
 - Cat calls, rating or embarrassing whistles.
 - Insulting remarks about sexual orientation.
 - Sexually insulting remarks about race, culture, ability or class.
- Sexual harassment is not:
 - Conduct which both parties find acceptable such as an occasional compliment.
 - A hug between friends.
 - Sincere and personal compliments.

Procedures

Should an incident of alleged harassment occur, the following steps will be taken:

- The child should be encouraged to make known their disapproval or unease to the other child (alleged harasser) with support from the RECE Home Visitor. This incident will be recorded in a documentation book. Depending on the severity of the incident, and the level of the emotional upset experienced by the child, the parents of both children may be informed about the incident by the RECE Home Visitor. The Director will be notified of the occurrence.
- Should the first incident be of a severe nature or in the case of a second incident, the RECE Home Visitor will confer with the children involved as well as the administrative staff. If the alleged harassment is confirmed, a consultation between the RECE Home visitor and the child’s parents will occur. The purpose of this meeting will be to convey the severity of the situation and to ask the parents to discuss the seriousness of the incident with their child.
- After consulting with the Director, a written warning may be given to the parents that day care services will be terminated should any further harassment their child occur toward the other child or any other children in the program. This incident will be recorded in the documentation book.

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- Should a written warning be given and another incident occurs, the Director will give the parents notice of the immediate termination of daycare services.

Sexual Harassment (Parent and Employee)

Sexual harassment means any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature:

- That might reasonably be expected to cause offence or humiliation.
- That might reasonably be perceived by an individual as placing a condition of a sexual nature on that person to adversely affect or interfere with achievement, employment or promotion.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted, uninvited remarks, gestures, sounds or actions of a sexual nature that make you feel unsafe, degraded or uncomfortable. It creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

- Some examples are:
 - Unwanted, welcome physical contact such as touching, grabbing or patting.
 - Rude jokes or suggestive remarks of a sexual nature.
 - Demeaning nicknames like “chick”, “sexy”, “stud” or “babe”.
 - Cat calls, rating or embarrassment whistles.
 - Sexually insulting remarks about race, culture, ability or class.
 - Stalking.
- It is not:
 - A hug between friends.
 - Mutual flirtation.
 - Sincere and personal compliments.

Should the alleged harasser be a daycare parent and the sexual harassment be directed toward an employee, child care provider, student or volunteer of the daycare or a person who ordinarily resides at the child care premises, the RECE Home Visitor (if the complainant is the RECE Home Visitor, the Director) will examine the facts of the complaint by speaking with the complainant and the alleged harasser directly.

At the discretion of the RECE Home Visitor in consultation with the Director, should it be deemed appropriate in relation to the severity of the situation:

- A written warning may be issued to the alleged harasser immediately following the first incident, stating that daycare services will be terminated should any further alleged harassment continue; or

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- Should it be determined that it is in the interests of the safety and welfare of the staff and children, the alleged harasser may receive immediate written termination of daycare services.

Adult harassment of a child (zero tolerance)

(includes sexual abuse, harassment, molestation, corporal punishment or neglect)

Little Lambs Home Daycare screens all employees, home child care providers, volunteers, and students in the following ways:

1. Thorough application process
 - a. References (min 2)
 - b. Criminal reference check including vulnerable sector screening
 - c. Personal interviews
 - d. Home inspection- for child care provider
 - e. Criminal reference check including vulnerable sector screening for all persons who are ordinarily at the child care premises or ordinarily residents of the child care premises. (over the age of 18)

Should an incident of alleged harassment occur, the following steps will be taken:

- The child will be encouraged to make known their disapproval or unease with support from the RECE Home Visitor. This incident will be recorded in a documentation book. The parents/guardians of the children will be informed about the incident by the RECE Home Visitor and the Director of Little Lambs Home Daycare will be notified. This policy is to be followed anytime a child let's known their disapproval or unease to a situation involving touch or comments.
- Should the first incident be of a severe nature or in the case of a second incident, the RECE Home Visitor will confer with the parents/guardians as well as the Director and will follow all legal reporting procedures.
- If the harasser is the child care provider or any person who is ordinarily a resident or ordinarily at the child care premises than the home will be shut down until a thorough investigation has been completed. Children's safety is our biggest priority.
- If the harasser is an employee, volunteer or student of Little Lambs Home Daycare their position will be suspended until a thorough investigation has been completed.
- With respect for the seriousness of an allegation of abuse/harassment Little Lambs will act in a manner that demonstrates our highest regard for compassion, respect and confidentiality.

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- Little Lambs Home Daycare will not admit guilt or legal liability or make public statements without legal counsel. The incident will be reported to the insurance company.
- Should the incident be confirmed any contractual relationship between the perpetrator and the agency will be immediately terminated.
- Little Lambs Home Daycare will work with the family of the child to ensure that proper emotional, psychological and physical rehabilitation resources are utilised to help the child.