

# Clinical Services Information Guide



therapy and support to help kids shine  
thérapie et soutien pour aider les enfants à briller



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## Clinical Services Information Guide

### Table of Contents

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES.....	3
SERVICES AVAILABLE AT NIAGARA CHILDREN'S CENTRE.....	3
SmartStart Hub:.....	4
Family Education and Support.....	4
HOURS AND LOCATIONS OF SERVICE.....	5
WHO MAY BE PART OF MY CHILD'S ASSESSMENT OR THERAPY TEAM?.....	6
WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT MY CHILD'S FIRST APPOINTMENT?.....	7
HOW WILL MY CHILD BE INVOLVED WITH SERVICES?.....	7
FAMILY CENTRED CARE.....	9
FAMILY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.....	9
PRIVACY POLICY.....	10
CLIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	12
CODE OF CONDUCT.....	13
TELEPRACTICE SERVICES.....	15
COMPLAINTS & COMPLIMENTS.....	16
WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD OR YOURSELF HOME DUE TO ILLNESS.....	17
HOW TO CANCEL AN APPOINTMENT.....	17
ATTENDANCE AND CANCELLATIONS.....	17
CENTRE DISCHARGE.....	18
HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION.....	19
YOU and YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH AND SAFETY.....	19
Centre Closures Due to Weather.....	19
FOLLOW   SUBSCRIBE   CONNECT.....	20

## VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

**Vision:** Niagara's Children and Youth at Their Best

**Mission:** We enable children and youth with physical, developmental and communicative delays or disabilities to achieve their optimal potential within their home, school and community environments. We do this through delivering a continuum of therapeutic supports and services to children and families and by working with our partners to deliver coordinated, integrated and family-centred care.

### Values:

- Respect underlies all we do
- Children and families come first
- Excellence and innovation are cornerstones of our achievement
- Teamwork and partnerships are vital

## SERVICES AVAILABLE AT NIAGARA CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Services are available to children and youth living in the Niagara Region demonstrating potential or actual developmental, physical or communication delays/disabilities. For detailed information about our services including specific eligibility requirements and referral processes, please refer to our website:

<https://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com/>

### Programs and Services

Our **Core Assessment and Therapy Services** for children and youth are:

- Physiotherapy
- Speech-language therapy
- Occupational therapy

Children and youth involved in Core Services may be eligible for **Additional Centre Services** including:

- Aquatics
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication Clinic
- Behavioural Consultation Program
- Casting and Splinting
- Coordinated Service Planning
- Extensive Needs Service
- Gait Lab
- Home and Vehicle Modification Clinic
- Infant Hearing Program: Language Services
- Medical Clinics: Neurodevelopmental Pediatric Clinic and Psychiatry Clinic
- Recreation Therapy
- School-Based Rehabilitation Services
- School-Aged Acute Rehabilitation
- School-Aged Equipment Needs
- Seating and Mobility Clinic
- Social Work
- Special Services at Home Administration

*All families are eligible for:*

### **SmartStart Hub:**

Youth or parents/caregivers may call our SmartStart Hub Intake Coordinator(s) at any time to discuss and get connected to Centre and community services that could benefit your child/youth or family. Learn more here: <https://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com/smartstarthub>

### **Family Education and Support:**

The Centre offers a variety of opportunities for families to obtain the social, emotional, and informational support needed when caring for a child with a physical, developmental, or communicative delay or disability. Families that are waiting to receive services may also participate in these opportunities.

*Family-to-Family Support programs* allow parents and caregivers to connect with others with shared life experiences, and discuss topics of mutual interest, share successes and challenges, and seek and provide support and practical information:

- Family Mentor Program
- Online Parent/Primary Caregiver Support Group:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/601165460234491>
- Parent Talk Support Group (virtual and in-person)
- Family Social Networking Events

To learn more: <https://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com/family-supports>

*Family Education* workshops and webinars run regularly on a variety of topics related to raising a child with a delay or disability. The following workshops run every month with many more available in our paper or online Event Calendar/Guide: <https://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com/calendar>

- Money Matters: an overview of funding options available
- Community Resources: an overview of health, developmental, and social resources in Niagara
- Paperwork Party: an informal gathering to assist you with completing paperwork/funding applications
- Self-Care for Caregivers: a focus on caring for you, so you can better care for your child with a delay or disability

For families looking for even more information, we recommend the following website:  
<https://www.partnersforplanning.ca/>

This website contains information/webinars, resources and tools for families that aim to empower people with disabilities and their families to plan for, create a full life and secure futures (e.g., Early-Years Toolkit, Planning Tip Sheets, Introduction to Registered Disabilities Savings Plan).

### **Open Registration Events and Activities for Children, Youth, and Families**

We offer free, inclusive opportunities for your child/youth, and family to participate in group-based recreational activities and community outings. For more information, see our paper or online Event Calendar/Guide: <https://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com/calendar>

## HOURS AND LOCATIONS OF SERVICE

### Locations:

Niagara Children's Centre (headquarters)

- [567 Glenridge Ave, St. Catharines, ON, L2T 4C2](#)

Niagara Centre YMCA

- [310 Woodlawn Rd, Welland, ON, L3C 7N4](#)

Niagara West YMCA

- [325 Main St E, Grimsby, ON, L3M 1R1](#)

Boys and Girls Club of Niagara - Fort Erie

- [1555 Garrison Rd, Fort Erie, ON L2A 2S6](#)

While not all services are available at all sites, we will do our best to accommodate you if you have transportation challenges. Please let the person scheduling your appointment know if transportation is difficult for you.

School-Based Rehabilitation Services are primarily provided in your child's school. Some Centre programs operate within community settings such as EarlyON Centres.

The Centre hours of service are from 8am -9pm Monday to Thursday and 8am-5pm on Fridays. The types of appointments available during these hours vary based on the location, individual programs and the age range of children served by the program.

## WHO MAY BE PART OF MY CHILD'S ASSESSMENT OR THERAPY TEAM?

### Parents/Caregivers:

Parents/caregivers are key members of the team. It is important for parents/caregivers to participate in all appointments by providing information about your child's needs, progress and medical updates, asking questions, and trying to copy the strategies modelled by the clinician(s) to ensure that you can follow through on recommendations at home.

Depending on your child's needs one or all of the following professionals may be involved with your child. At times, one professional may take on the role of service coordinator for your child or take the lead in carrying out activities designed to achieve goals that were set by another professional on the team. Children involved with multiple services may receive a "Team-based" approach to service delivery based on individual needs.

### Physiotherapist:

- Provides assessment and interventions for movement delays or challenges including gross motor function, gait, range of motion, quality of movement, muscle tone/strength and posture

### Occupational Therapist:

- Assesses and provides interventions to maximize a child's level of independence and functioning in everyday activities such as feeding, dressing, toileting, play, and fine motor tasks
- Provides education and strategies to address individual differences in sensory processing and emotional regulation as it relates to daily functioning
- May make recommendations and/or provide prescriptions related to seating and equipment needs.

### Speech-Language Pathologist:

- Provides assessment and interventions for a variety of communication challenges including:
  - Speech sound production (how children say sound and put sounds together into words), voice (how voices sound)
  - Fluency/stuttering (how well speech flows)
  - Language (how well children understand what they hear and how they use words to tell others what they are thinking)
  - Social communication (how children follow social rules like turn taking and staying on topic), and foundational literacy skills
  - Auditory skills intervention for children with permanent hearing loss enrolled in the Infant Hearing Program
- For School-Based Rehabilitation Services, Speech-Language Pathologists assess and provide interventions for speech sound production, voice, and fluency/stuttering only. Language and social communication concerns are the responsibility of School Boards for school-aged children.

### Social Worker:

- Provides children, youth and families with social, emotional, and information supports, brief counseling, education, and/or referrals to other services your child and family may benefit from in the community

### Other:

- Preschool Resource Consultants, Behaviour Consultant, Recreation Therapist, Communicative Disorders Assistants (CDA), Occupational/Physiotherapy Assistant (OTA/PTA), Physicians

## WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT MY CHILD'S FIRST APPOINTMENT?

### Locations:

Your child's first appointment may be at Niagara Children's Centre, a satellite site, a publically funded school, or be conducted through telepractice. When the first appointment is at a school you may not be present but you will have a discussion with the clinician(s) prior to that appointment to share information and provide your consent. At a Children's Centre site, you are welcome to invite other family members, caregivers or professionals involved with your child to attend.

### Activities:

The first appointment is an opportunity for our clinician(s) to learn about your child's strengths and needs. This will involve asking you lots of questions, observing/interacting with your child in various activities, and/or conducting formal or informal child tests. At the end of the assessment, the clinician(s) will summarize their observations, provide you with their recommendations and discuss next steps. Next steps may include discharge if your child's skills appear to be developing typically or placement into a therapy service delivery model.

### Preparation:

To make the best use of this time with the clinician(s), here are some suggestions:

- Write down any questions or concerns you have prior to the assessment
- Gather/bring any items your clinician has suggested (e.g. your child's favourite toys)
- Write down the clinician's comments or suggestions so you can share the outcome of the assessment with other family members or health professionals. You can bring a friend or family member to make notes.
- If you are not clear about a comment or suggestion, or terminology used, please do not hesitate to ask for clarification. Sometimes we use medical terms or acronyms out of habit and need to remember to explain them.
- Make sure you are clear about what the next steps will be with each of the clinician(s) involved

## HOW WILL MY CHILD BE INVOLVED WITH SERVICES?

### Service Delivery Models:

The Centre uses a Response-to-Intervention and/or Tiered Approach to therapy. This means we typically start with home programming, parent education/coaching/training, and group-based interventions. We will set a service delivery model at your initial appointment(s). We will regularly monitor your child's progress and move on to more individual and/or intensive models as needed.

When choosing a therapy model, we also consider:

- The best available evidence as to what is the most effective approach to your child's particular needs
- The goals you have for your child
- You and your child's ability to participate

## **Approach to Goal Setting/Service Planning:**

Niagara Children's Centre staff have embraced a framework for thinking about child development called the "F-Words for Child Development": Functioning, Family, Fitness, Fun, Friends, and Future!

1. **Functioning:** what people do – how things are done is not important
2. **Family:** the essential "environment" of all children and youth
3. **Fitness:** physical and mental wellbeing
4. **Fun:** activities that people enjoy
5. **Friends:** friendships established with others
6. **Future:** looking ahead and planning for the next steps/next phases of life!

The framework makes it easy (and fun) for us to partner with families and their children as we focus on a child and families' strengths and interests, rather than challenges and deficits. It keeps us all accountable in making sure that we are thinking about/trying to meet all of a child's and families' needs, rather than getting stuck in one or two areas. We believe that working on strengthening each f-word results in the best possible outcomes for children and their families.

For more information regarding this approach, workshop opportunities, and related tools, please visit: <https://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com/f-words>



## **FAMILY CENTRED CARE**

Family Centred Care is a philosophy of care that has been adopted by Niagara Children's Centre. It emphasizes the partnership of children, families and staff to work together in the best interest of children and their families to achieve overall health, quality of life and the ability to participate in home and community life. By sharing desires and goals, children and families and Niagara Children's Centre staff work towards attaining those goals with the resources each brings.

It is recognized that in order to be good team members, we all need information both now and on an on-going basis. Staff members receive intensive on-going education about the Family Centred Care model and implement the clinical requirements of the model on a daily basis. As a parent, and a team member, your understanding of the model and participation on the team is equally as important.

### **As the most important member of your child's team, we want you to know that....**

You and your child are actively included in the delivery of service from initial contact, through assessment, goal planning, treatment programming, service transitions and discharge. Your team members are dedicated and prepared to help you throughout your involvement with Niagara Children's Centre.

### **Your team members will help you advocate for your child and the services your family needs. As a member of the team you will be encouraged to:**

- Express your concerns, visions and specific goals for your child
- Share information and help make decisions about your child's services
- Understand your child's development and progress
- Understand the services your child and family are receiving
- Ask questions about your child's service
- Ask questions about other services and resources that are available at the Centre and in the Community
- Work together with team members in an atmosphere of mutual respect

## **FAMILY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

### **Get Involved! Help us make a difference in the lives of Centre families!**

Niagara Children's Centre is proud to offer our Family Partnership Program. Family Partners are family members of children receiving our services who are partnering with the Centre to make a difference in the lives of children and families. There are several types of Family Partner positions: Family Advisors, Support Parents, and Volunteers Family Members. To learn more please visit

<https://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com/get-involved>

## PRIVACY POLICY

### Collection of Personal Health Information

We collect personal health information about your child and family. The personal health information we collect may include: name, date of birth, address, health and developmental history, records of visits to Niagara Children's Centre and the care your child & family received during those visits. Occasionally, we collect personal health information about children & families from other sources if the law permits. We require your consent to collect information from sources outside of your healthcare team. Your personal health information will be contained within an electronic system. We limit collection of information to what is required to provide care to you and your child.

### Uses and Disclosures of Personal Health Information

We use and disclose personal health information to:

- Provide services for children & families
- Plan, administer and manage our internal operations
- Conduct risk management activities
- Conduct quality improvement activities, such as sending satisfaction surveys
- Teach
- Conduct research or compile statistics
- Fundraise to improve our healthcare services and programs
- Comply with legal and regulatory requirements
- Fulfill other purposes permitted or required by law
- Personal health information collected from external healthcare providers is only used to support the provision of care to those in service.

### Your Choices

Parents/legal guardians may limit access, make corrections to their children's personal health records or withdraw consent for some of the above uses and disclosures by contacting our Health Records staff. Please note that there are legal exceptions.

### Personal Health Information and Email:

Centre staff will not send you emails that contain your personal health information. If you would like to send an email with personal health information to your clinician(s), please be aware of some of the risks identified by the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario:

- An email can be inadvertently sent to the wrong recipient, for example, by mistyping an email address or using the autocomplete feature. Once sent, an email can also be forwarded or changed without the knowledge or permission of the original sender.
- Email is often accessed on portable devices, such as smart phones, tablets and laptops, which are vulnerable to theft and loss.
- Email may also be vulnerable to interception and hacking by unauthorized third parties.
- See also: <https://www.ipc.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Health-Fact-Sheet-Communicating-PHI-by-Email-FINAL.pdf>

### **Privacy and Social Media:**

We take great care to protect the privacy of our clients, visitors and employees, particularly in light of the widespread use of social media (e.g. Facebook; YouTube; blogs). If you wish to photograph or video your child while they are involved in services at the Centre, we ask that you first discuss this with your clinician to ensure that this does not interfere with therapy, and that the privacy of others is protected. Unless other consent has been provided, the images may only include your child and you/your family. You must also have permission from your clinician to take any images of her/him.

### **Other Important Privacy Information**

- We take steps to protect your personal health information from theft, loss and unauthorized access, copying, modification, use, disclosure and disposal.
- We conduct audits and complete investigations to monitor and manage our privacy compliance.
- We take steps to ensure that everyone who performs services for us protects your privacy and only use your personal health information for the purposes you have consented to.

### **Privacy Contacts**

For information about our privacy protection practices, or to raise a concern with our practices, contact:

**Kathy Bell, Director of Clinical Services and Privacy Officer**

**Niagara Children's Centre**

**567 Glenridge Avenue**

**St Catharines, Ontario L2T 4C2**

**Telephone: (905) 688-1890 X 200**

**Email: [privacy@niagarachildrenscentre.com](mailto:privacy@niagarachildrenscentre.com) (do not send personal information via email)**

You have the right to contact the Information and Privacy Commissioner/Ontario if you think we have violated your rights. The commissioner can be reached at:

**Information and Privacy Commissioner/ Ontario**

**2 Bloor Street East, Suite 1400**

**Toronto, Ontario M4W 1A8**

**Telephone: (416) 326-3333 or 1-800-387-0073**

**Fax: (416) 325-9195**

## CLIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Niagara Children's Centre is committed to providing children and families with a positive service experience and an environment where expectations are clearly communicated. This statement was developed to support our commitment and to ensure that all clients have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

### While involved with the Children's Centre you have the right to:

- Receive quality care and service, in a clean and safe environment
- Be involved in decision making regarding your child
- Receive information and answers to your questions about our services, your child and your child's individual service plan
- Give or refuse consent to any proposed care and to be advised of the risks and benefits of the therapy being proposed
- Be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect
- Privacy and confidentiality of your health information and record of care
- Have your language, culture, religion and sexual orientation respected
- Receive care in an environment free from abuse, exploitation, retaliation
- Have your questions and concerns, heard without fear of reprisal, and to expect the Centre staff to provide a timely response to your concerns
- Be informed of any unanticipated service reductions and contingency plans related to your child's service

### You have the responsibility to:

- Provide accurate information relating your child's developmental, medical and personal history including their legal/custody status
- Provide information on any other services (including private) your child may be involved in
- Be actively involved in developing goals and the plan of care for your child and family if appropriate
- Be actively involved in treatment sessions and carrying through with home programming if recommended
- Ask questions when you don't understand or require more information
- Accept the consequences should you refuse assessment or treatment or not follow the treatment plan
- Be courteous and respectful of other clients and staff
- Notify the Centre in advance if you are unable to attend your appointment
- Keep your child home if they are ill
- Ensure the safety and supervision of your child when on Centre premises
- Ensure the security of your personal property

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Niagara Children's Centre Code of Conduct is a shared commitment to the expected behaviours that flow from our organization's values. The Code documents the behaviours that are expected of all members of Niagara Children's Centre. The Code of Conduct supports the achievement the Centre's mission and goals.

### Respect Underlies All We Do

#### We will.....

- Conduct ourselves in an honest, professional, courteous and friendly manner, in all matters pertaining to our position and in a manner that projects and maintains the reputation of Niagara Children's Centre.
- Treat each individual with dignity
- Contribute to a workplace that is free of harassment, violence, reprisal and discrimination.
- Recognize and demonstrate respect for diversity.
- Protect confidentiality. We will keep confidential all information of a personal nature involving our clients and our colleagues as well as information designated as confidential pertaining to Centre operations. We will access only the information required to complete our work.
- Ensure that our grooming, attire and general deportment is professional at all times.
- Use and protect the Centre's buildings, grounds, equipment as we would our own.

### Families and Children Come First

#### We will.....

- Practice in a way that is consistent with family centred care principles.
- Be guided by the needs of children and families in our decision-making.
- Advocate on behalf of children and families.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Ensure that client/family involvement in Centre promotion is voluntary, informed and protects the person's dignity.

### Innovation and Excellence are the Cornerstones of our Achievement

#### We will.....

- Be open and responsive to new ideas and actively seek feedback and opportunities for improvement.
- Take personal responsibility for our professional growth and development while actively seeking opportunities to develop new competencies.
- Adhere to any established standards of work.
- Demonstrate ethical behaviour.
- Abide by the code of ethics and professional standards as outlined by our professional associations and regulatory bodies.
- Know and follow all pertinent legislation applying to our work at the Centre and will be vigilant to ensure that our practices meet regulatory requirements.
- Be guided by best practices.
- Work to ensure a healthy and safe environment for all, and comply with our individual responsibilities for health and safety.

## **Teamwork and Partnerships are Vital**

### **We will....**

- Place the broader goals of the team/partnership above our own individual aspirations.
- Work actively, cooperatively and collaboratively with others and recognize our impact on one another
- Hold ourselves accountable, take responsibility for our words and actions, and follow through on our commitments.
- Be accessible to others and share information that others require to conduct their work.
- Resolve conflicts directly and in a professional manner, following timely and appropriate channels of communication.
- Practice active listening and seek understanding of other perspectives.
- Recognize and support one another in our roles.

## **Conflict of Interest**

### **We will....**

- Acknowledge, disclose and appropriately address any real, perceived or potential conflict of interest that may interfere with ethical delivery of service to clients and/or Centre business.
- Accept gift and favours only if they are of nominal value and based on goodwill, rather than on the potential for unfair advantage.
- Ensure that equipment and supplies that are provided to us will be used directly for our work at the Centre.
- Avoid direct soliciting or personal fundraising.

## TELEPRACTICE SERVICES

Telepractice (or Virtual Services) refers to the use of technology to deliver health care when the client and clinician are in different physical locations.

### What Sessions Are Offered By Telepractice and Why?

- Your child's services may be completely in-person, completely through telepractice, or a combination dependent on your preferences, your child's needs and goals, and your own needs (e.g. transportation or scheduling challenges)

### How is telepractice different from in-person visits?

- Clinicians will follow the same standards, policies, and procedures put in place by their Regulatory College and the Centre

### Are there any risks?

- Clinicians will explain any specific risks to you based on your child's needs and the goals/objectives
- If a session becomes too challenging for you or your child, ask your clinician to stop at any time.

### How will my privacy be protected?

- Centre technology meets privacy and security standards for healthcare
- Clinicians working from their homes follow privacy requirements including using a Centre provided device, working from a dedicated private space and using headsets

### Will sessions be recorded/Can I record sessions?

- Clinicians may ask to record part of your session to help to teach you specific strategies or so he/she can review the video later to assist with assessment. The recording will be deleted immediately.
- Families may not record or take photos of sessions.

### What are the family requirements?

- A physical space to participate
- Device with a webcam: Depending on the goals/objectives of the session, some devices may be more suitable than others (for example, use of a tablet rather than a cell phone). If you need an appropriate device, talk to your clinician about the Centre's Telepractice Equipment Loan Program.
- Reliable internet access
- Commitment of parent/caregiver to participate throughout the entire session
- Follow etiquette and privacy requirements discussed at the start of group sessions

### Is technical support available?

- Clinicians can assist you getting set-up for your first session and help troubleshoot any ongoing technical issues.

### Will telepractice cost me anything?

- Depending on your internet and data capacity you may incur some additional costs but likely no more than travelling to and from appointments

### How can I prepare for my telepractice session?

- In advance: Charge and re-start your device and perform necessary updates and locate the meeting invitation in your email.
- Limit other internet usage in your home

## COMPLAINTS & COMPLIMENTS

Niagara Children’s Centre is committed to providing you quality care and service, based on a family-centered care philosophy and our Centre values.

If you have any concerns about your services or if you feel that your rights have not been met, we encourage you to first discuss your concern with your child’s clinician or the person involved. If the result is not to your satisfaction, you may direct your concern, verbally or in writing to the manager of your child’s service. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved within 10 business days, your concern may be directed to the Director of Clinical Services. If satisfactory resolution is not achieved within 10 business days, your concern may be directed to the Centre’s Chief Executive Officer.

We also welcome any compliments. If you would like to recognize an employee, team or the Centre, please notify the respective Manager.

Contacts for Complaints and Compliments		
Contact	Programs/Services	Contact
<b>Rebecca Main, Manager of Clinical Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Central Intake and SmartStart Hub</li> <li>-Social Work, Coordinated Service Planning, Family-Family Supports</li> <li>-Extensive Needs Service</li> <li>-Augmentative and Alternative Communication Clinic</li> <li>-Recreation Therapy and Aquatics</li> <li>- Behavioural Consultation</li> <li>-Medical Clinics</li> <li>-Reception &amp; Program Assistants</li> <li>-Special Services at Home</li> </ul>	(905) 688-1890 ext. 257 Rebecca.Main@Niagarachildrenscentre.com
<b>Jackie VanLankveld, Manager of Clinical Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Early Years Multi-disciplinary Services</li> <li>-Preschool Resource Consultants</li> <li>-Ontario Autism Program services</li> </ul>	(905) 688-1890 ext. 158 Jackie.VanLankveld@Niagarachildrenscentre.com
<b>Julie McNamara, Manager of Clinical Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Early Years Multi-disciplinary Services</li> <li>- School-Based Rehabilitation Occupational and Physiotherapy</li> <li>-Niagara Children’s Centre School therapy services</li> <li>-Clinics: Casting/Splinting, Gait, Home and Vehicle</li> <li>- School Age Equipment Needs &amp; Active Rehabilitation</li> </ul>	(905) 688-1890 ext. 130 Julie.McNamara@Niagarachildrenscentre.com
<b>Michelle Maxwell, Manager of Clinical Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Early Years Single Service Speech-Language Therapy</li> <li>- School-Based Rehabilitation Speech Language Pathology</li> </ul>	(905) 688-1890 ext. 259 Michelle.Maxwell@Niagarachildrenscentre.com
<b>Kathy Bell, Director of Clinical Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-All Clinical Services</li> <li>-Health Records</li> </ul>	(905) 688-1890 ext. 200 Kathy.Bell@Niagarachildrenscentre.com
<b>Oksana Fisher, Chief Executive Officer</b>	All Clinical and Corporate Services	(905) 688-1890 ext. 102 Oksana.Fisher@Niagarachildrenscentre.com



## WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD OR YOURSELF HOME DUE TO ILLNESS

Keeping yourself, your child, or anyone attending the appointment home when ill helps prevent the spread of germs/infection. Many children who receive Centre services are particularly vulnerable to becoming ill. Your child is not likely to benefit from sessions held while they are ill.

### We ask that you stay home if anyone attending the appointment has:

- vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- fever (temperature above 37.0C or 98.6F)
- ear ache or any drainage from the ear
- continuous cough or unusual night coughs
- runny nose with thick colored mucous, or accompanied by other symptoms
- head lice
- unusual rashes
- stomach aches or headaches
- sore throat
- eye irritations, particularly with yellow discharge or redness

Please refer to our website for up-to-date information about our current infection prevention and control practices.

## HOW TO CANCEL AN APPOINTMENT

- **Centre or Satellite Visits** – To cancel a team meeting or appointment, call or leave a message with at least one of the clinicians scheduled to be at the appointment (if more than one). If you are not sure of contact information, please simply call our Centre Receptionist.
- **Appointments at your child's school or child care** – Please contact your child's clinician(s) to cancel. It is not the responsibility of the school or child care to notify our staff of your child's absence.

## ATTENDANCE AND CANCELLATIONS

Attending scheduled appointments and arriving on time helps you, your child and your family benefit most from your Niagara Children's Centre services. It also helps the Centre be as efficient as possible to ensure that every available appointment is filled with another child/family who needs our support.

We understand that "life happens"! If you or your child is ill or there is an extenuating circumstance preventing you from attending your appointment, please provide us with as much notice as possible.

If you miss appointments or cancel appointments, our staff will have a conversation with you about how we can help. We may be able to offer alternatives/accommodations to your service plan including changing the frequency or location of appointments, changing to virtual or telephone appointments, offering assistance with the cost of transportation etc. We may also be able to help brainstorm solutions to the challenges you are having attending appointments and/or connect you to services within the Centre or community that can offer this help.

### *We want to support you.*

We respectfully ask that you:

- Provide us with as much notice as possible (24 hours is preferred) when cancelling appointments. This includes appointments scheduled at schools if your child will be absent from school.
- Avoid missing an appointment without letting us know in advance ("no-shows")
- Call or email us back as soon as you are able after we attempt to contact you
- Let us know how we can support you and your family if attending appointments feels difficult

Please note:

- Cancelled/missed initial assessment appointments will only be rescheduled twice before your child will be placed back on the waiting list (on the end of the list)

- A maximum of 3 cancelled (with notice) appointments will be rescheduled within your service/therapy plan.
- Only 1 “no-show” appointment will be rescheduled. Additional “no-shows” are more likely to result in a discharge from Centre services.
- If attending appointments continues to be difficult after we have provided alternatives/accommodations, your child may be discharged from services.
- All appointments cancelled by one of our clinicians or by the Centre (e.g. due to clinician illness/absence, Centre closure, etc.) will be made up.
- If we attempt to contact you and you do not respond to our attempts within 2 weeks (we will try phone, email, and contacting all caregivers on file), we will mail you a letter that states that we will discharge your child within 2 weeks of the date we mailed the letter if you do not respond.
- We encourage families to stay home when sick to prevent the spread of infection. Our staff will consider reasons for cancellation when making decisions about impacts to your child’s services.

Any families concerned with changes to their child’s service plan as a result of this policy should first speak to their child’s therapist(s) and then the manager of their child’s services if concerns still exist.

## **CENTRE DISCHARGE**

Your child will be discharged from particular services, the Centre as a whole or your child may be transitioned to services provided in their school or other agencies for any of the following reasons. If you/your child/family:

- Your child/family moves out of the Niagara Region. Where applicable and possible, our clinicians can facilitate a transfer to similar services within Ontario.
- Your child’s skills are within normal limits, your child has achieved the goals you and your clinician(s) have established, or your child no longer meets the eligibility requirements of the specific service.
- Your child reaches the age limit of particular services.
- Your child would be best serviced by another agency or by a service model that is only provided by another agency (e.g. children’s mental health services).
- You decline assessment or treatment at any time during the course of intervention.
- Your child is involved with private services that do not meet our concurrent therapy policies (e.g. private therapy approach is not compatible or conflicts with the Centre therapy approach).
- You do not respond to phone calls, emails, or letters from Centre staff. It is your responsibility to keep your contact information up to date with your clinician(s) or by calling Reception.
- Any situation as described in our Attendance and Cancellation policy (see above).

In all cases, you will be kept informed of any plans to discharge or transition your child’s services.

In many cases, children may be re-referred for particular services as their needs or circumstances change. If your child had been discharged from a particular service due to attendance or cancellation policies, they will be placed on the regular waitlist for that service if a re-referral is made and they meet eligibility criteria.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

### YOU and YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Make sure Centre staff involved in your child's services have important health information

- If you don't understand some part of your child's condition or treatment ask your clinician to explain why things are being done the way they are. If you still have concerns ask again
- Centre staff are trained in First Aid and CPR and there are First Aid Stations throughout the building.
- Familiarize yourself with the Centre Emergency procedures posted in reception and on bulletin boards
- The Centre is obligated to practice emergency procedures. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. Centre staff will assist you: Please let us know if we need to make any special accommodations

### Centre Closures Due to Weather

- Your safety and the safety of your child is important
- Closures will be posted on our website, social media (Facebook and Instagram) and on our voicemail system.
- Sessions may be available by telepractice/online if appropriate. You will be notified if this option is available
- If the Centre is open during inclement weather, please check local travel conditions. Please call to cancel your appointment if you do not feel it is safe to travel.

Please visit our website for other useful information:

<https://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com/additionalresources> for information related to:

- Financial resources
- Keeping health information organized

<https://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com/safetyandattendance> for information related to:

- Allergies and environmental irritants
- Medication safety
- Falls prevention, equipment safety, back care
- Car seat safety
- Reporting child abuse and neglect

# FOLLOW US | SUBSCRIBE | CONNECT

## Follow us

Find us on your favourite social media platform to stay up-to-date on the latest programs, events and memorable moments from the Children's Centre.

### Find us on

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Youtube](#) | [Linkedin](#)

## Subscribe

Subscribe to our Caregiver Connections newsletter to receive updates directly to your inbox! You'll discover helpful tips for parents, important news updates and free activities that are fun for the whole family.

[Click here](#) or scan below

Use your smartphone to scan the QR code:



## Connect

Discover an online community of support in our Facebook group! It's open to any parent or primary caregiver of a child with a physical, developmental, and/or communicative delay or disability (diagnosed or suspected) in Niagara.

[Click here](#) or scan below

Use your smartphone to scan the QR code:



## Find us on the web!

[www.niagarachildrenscentre.com](http://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com)