



ADAPTABILITIES

CREATING SUCCESS FOR LIFE

Parent Handbook

2017-2018

Parent Handbook

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Parents are the ultimate role models for children. Every word, movement, and action has an effect. No other person or outside force has a greater influence on a child, than the parent.

- Bob Keeshan

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Welcome

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Thank you for your interest in the Alberta AdaptAbilities Association.

We are a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to providing a variety of person directed programs where individuals with special needs can grow, succeed and belong.

Our whole focus is on each individual. We are passionate about helping each participant develop abilities, achieve success and create a positive self-image through a structured environment.

For over a decade, AdaptAbilities has offered comprehensive programs that adapt to each individual's unique needs so they can grow socially, physically, mentally, and emotionally.

The key to our participants' success is that we work in small group settings and utilize a goal-directed, person directed approach. Individuals will receive purposeful support, experience meaningful days and begin to create opportunities to build a vision of a full and rich life for themselves.

We welcome you, whether you are a parent/guardian needing regular respite or wanting sporadic care to give you a chance to run errands and/or have coffee with a friend, or an individual looking to meet new friends, discover personal interests, experience volunteer and/or employment opportunities or develop pride in yourself as a citizen.

We hope that you find your time with our organization a happy and rewarding experience as we strive to create success for life for your child/young adult.

Join hundreds of Edmonton area families who have participated in a variety of our programs and support your child/young adult to grow, succeed, and belong in their own communities.

Sincerely,



Michelle Hordal, B.P.E., P.D.A.D.
Founder and Executive Director

PARENT HANDBOOK

This handbook has been created to assist parents/guardians and adult individuals accessing our services in understanding our organization, the programs and services we offer and our expectations.

A copy of this handbook is available online and contains general information and policies for all AdaptAbilities' programs and services. It is the responsibility of the registrant to know and understand the contents of this handbook.

REGISTRATION FORMS

Registration forms can be completed throughout the year as the need arises to register for a program.
Registration forms are available for download on our website at www.adaptabilities.ca/forms

INTAKE FORMS

At Intake every family will be asked to complete our Intake Forms in full. The Profile package is divided into two (2) sections: Mandatory Forms (i.e. signatures) and Profile Update Forms (i.e. Individual

information). Annually, Parents/Guardians accessing our services are asked to review & update the information package. However, the Mandatory Forms must be completed and submitted prior to confirming registration.

Overview

INTRODUCTION

AdaptAbilities provides one-of-a-kind programs and services supporting each person and their families as directed. We advocate and work together with families so that individuals with special needs are given equal opportunity to reach their full potential. Our belief is that everyone can succeed when they are heard, respected and recognized as people with skills and strengths contributing to their community.

We provide support based on the understanding that individuals who hire us are members of a larger family unit who may also require support. Our programs and services facilitate growth and independence in a caring, welcoming environment while promoting overall well-being and peace of mind for families.

CORE PURPOSE AND CORE VALUES

Core Purpose:

To empower families and people with special needs to grow, succeed and belong.

Core Values:

- Belonging
- Compassion
- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Peace of Mind
- Capacity Building

PROGRAM GOALS

1. Participants are provided a safe and caring environment.
2. Participants access quality programming and goal-directed activities.
3. Participants access the community to support the development of natural supports.
4. Families are positively impacted by AdaptAbilities' enhanced respite programs.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

We Believe:

1. Every person has the right to:
 - Citizenship,
 - Valued Social Identities,
 - Real Relationships, and
 - Personal Development.
2. Our services should be flexible and responsive to each individual and their family needs.
3. Our services should support the person's ability to make positive choices and increase their decision making skills.
4. Our services should be respectful of ethnic, cultural and geographical differences of families.
5. Our responsibility should include advocacy with and for persons with special needs and to educate and increase awareness in the community about each person's strengths and abilities.
6. The best available strategies, technologies, training and mentorship opportunities should be used to maximize the company's ability to realize its vision.
7. We should retain the quality, individuality and flexibility of these services as we expand or change our services.
8. Family participation is essential in the process of Creating Success – For Life!

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT/EVALUATION

AdaptAbilities continually assesses the quality of the services we provide. Improvement strategies are in place to ensure services meet family's needs, and comply with professional standards of practice. An ongoing, systemic evaluation plan considers family and participants in various environments, as well as program objectives and outcomes.

Person Directed Services

COMMUNITY

AdaptAbilities is committed to supporting each person who hires us to be present in, and most importantly, **be a part of** their communities.

CHOICE

We offer support services that work from the mindset that people are best supported when they are empowered to choose the direction their life will take. Services are individualized and directed by each person according to their own interests, passions and dreams.

HUMAN RIGHTS MODEL

Through our continued growth, AdaptAbilities focuses on service delivery with a human rights approach. The role of the support worker is to promote and support citizenship, valued social identities, real relationships and personal development.

1. Citizenship - People are supported to feel proud of the contributions they make and successes they experience as citizens of a community.
2. Valued Social Identities - Each person is supported to understand and nurture his/her role as an employee, sibling, family member, volunteer, neighbour, artist, student and other identities.
3. Real Relationships - Relationships are vital to each person's sense of belonging and identification with an established role. People are supported and understood as family members, friends and significant others.
4. Personal Development - Growth occurs continuously throughout life. Opportunities and experiences for personal development, such as employment and education, are supported and promoted.

Access to Services

ELIGIBILITY

We provide services to individuals, from infancy to young adulthood, who have language and/or learning delays, disorders and/or physical/developmental delays.

REFERRALS

Referrals are mainly directed from Social Workers. Many come from satisfied people and families who hire us, doctors and other professionals in community agencies.

FAMILY NEEDS

AdaptAbilities supports and recognizes the need for individualized services for our families and their children. Our programs were created due to gaps in the system. If there is an unmet need, please contact us.

FUNDING

AdaptAbilities coordinates access to services by working with the family and a community funding agency.

Families with a child should begin the process of contacting Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD). Families

and adult individuals should contact Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD).

Parents/Guardians and individuals without government funding can purchase services privately.

Intake

INTAKE PROCESS

Child

Families interested in services will meet an intake staff for an orientation, tour the facility (if interested in centre respite) and meet front line staff if possible. An intake package must be completed and brought to meeting.

A family has successfully hired AdaptAbilities when:

- Registration forms are completed
- Intake fee is paid
- Program payment received

- Contract with AdaptAbilities signed
- Funding confirmed by agency (ie. FSCD)
- Copy of funding contract on file
- Intake assessment completed
- Consent for Release of Information form (FOIP) signed

Intake staff will gather personal information to build a profile, capturing strengths, goals, medical information, etc. Data will be updated as needed and reviewed annually.

Adult

People interested in hiring AdaptAbilities will be invited to meet with the Community Connect Coordinator wherever they may be most comfortable (e.g. in the community, at a coffee shop, at home, or at one of the respite centres). During this meeting, the Coordinator will discuss with the individual and his/her family support needs, as well as what qualities they're seeking in a support worker. An intake package must be completed and brought to meeting.

A person has successfully hired AdaptAbilities when:

- Registration forms are completed
- Intake fee is paid
- Program payment received
- Contract with AdaptAbilities signed
- Funding confirmed by PDD
- Intake assessment completed
- Consent for Release of Information form (FOIPP) signed

During intake, the Coordinator will gather information that involves capturing the individual's oral history, mapping out his/her assets, and gathering general personal information. This data is updated throughout your term of service with AdaptAbilities and reviewed annually.

FUNDING CONFIRMATION

Child

Funding Contracts are between the parent and government agency (ie. FSCD). Information in the contracts is confidential and only shared with AdaptAbilities when permission from the parent/guardian is granted. AdaptAbilities can support families in submitting requests for service.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to communicate funding confirmation with AdaptAbilities. AdaptAbilities requires a copy of the funding contract to confirm funding and commence services. The contract states how the service is to be billed (respite, community aid, camp, etc), the rate, and what portion (if any) is expected to be paid by the parent/guardian.

Adult

Families contact Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) to request services and seek funding. AdaptAbilities must receive a service request from PDD to initiate services. The

family and adult individual will be required to contribute information to an Individual Service Request (ISR) and AdaptAbilities will submit to PDD. PDD will confirm funding in writing to AdaptAbilities, and services will commence.

Facilities

AdaptAbilities works hard to keep the facilities we use in the same, if not better, condition than we found them. Our conduct and the conduct of our participants is a reflection of AdaptAbilities' programs and our commitment to excellence.

Thank you for respecting the facilities, and the organizations that lease them to us.

As children transition into adulthood, services will occur less within our facilities and more within a person's own community.

PROGRAM LOCATION & HOURS

Location:	Program	Day(s)	Time
McKernan House 11226 75 Avenue	High School Transition & PD Days	Mon - Fri	2:00pm-6:00pm 9:00am-3:00pm*
	Community Connect	Mon - Fri	7:30am-6:00pm
	CC Evening	Thursday	5:30pm-9:30pm
McKernan Respite Centre 11341 - 78 th Avenue	Out of School & PD Days	Mon - Fri	2:00pm-6:00pm 9:00am-3:00pm*
	Community Connect	Mon - Fri	7:30am-6:00pm
	Centre Respite	Saturday	11:00am-4:00pm*
	Centre Respite	Sunday	11:00am-4:00pm
	Teen Night	Thursday	5:30pm-9:30pm
	Pre-Teen Night	Friday	5:30pm-9:30pm
Meadowlark Respite Centre 8721 - 163 rd Street	Out of School & PD Days	Mon - Fri	2:00pm-6:00pm 9:00am-3:00pm*
	Community Connect	Mon - Fri	7:30am-6:00pm
	Centre Respite	Saturday	11:00am-4:00pm*
	Centre Respite	Sunday	11:00am-4:00pm
	TS Teen Night	Thursday	5:30pm-9:30pm
	TS Pre-Teen Night	Friday	5:30pm-9:30pm
Locations vary depending on the age of participant	HIA Year Round	Mon-Fri	9:00am-3:00pm*
	HIA Summer	Mon-Fri	9:00am-3:00pm*
Individual's home	In Home	N/A	Hours vary depending on the interest of the individual

*Before and After care options available outside of the hours listed above. Contact our office to book.

Head Office Location & Hours

We are here for our families! Our new Head Office is located at 10130 82 (Whyte) Ave. We would be pleased to speak with you during our office hours Monday - Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm. We are closed daily from 12:00pm - 12:30pm.

Program Registration

REGISTRATION PROCESS

To complete Program Registration:
 Complete the online or fillable Registration Form.
 Provide required documentation
 Provide payment or deposit as required.

Coordinators will confirm funding, ensure all required documentation is on file and payment is received.
 We will confirm your spot in the program.

WAITLIST

AdaptAbilities attempts to accommodate all requests. Due to program popularity, some fill up quickly. We recommend families register early. If the program you wish to register in is full, your child will be placed on a waitlist.

If space becomes available, families are notified and the participant is registered in the program.

Fees are payable in full at registration.

CENTRE RESPITE

Due to popularity, program blocks will be released in the following increments to allow equal access to booking respite throughout the year:

Registration Opens:	Session
August 1	Fall: September 1 – December 31
November 1	Winter: January 1 – March 31
February 1	Spring: April 1 – June 30
May 1	Summer: July 1 – August 31

PD DAY AND EXAM DAYS

Registration opens June 1st for the next school year, pending availability. AdaptAbilities encourages families to request respite on PD days and Exam dates upon registration. Youth registered in our Out of School or High School Transition program are **NOT** automatically registered in PD days and/or exam days unless noted on registration.

HEARTS IN ACTION CAMPS

Parents/guardians can register for year round camps June 1st and throughout the year pending availability.

Registration opens February 15th for all Summer camps. Dates are communicated

through e-newsletter, e-mail, social media and flyer distribution to Edmonton Public & Catholic schools.

OUT OF SCHOOL CARE/HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION

Registration opens June 1st for the next school year, pending availability, Registrations are accepted throughout the school year.

The Out of School Care Program is designed for children over the age of 12 who no longer access a daycare. Children under the age of 12 are accepted on an

individual basis. AdaptAbilities will support an inclusive environment, and arrange for staff at your local daycare.

Parents/Guardians register for an entire school year. Participants in Out of School Care are considered registered in our Year Round Camps. Additionally, summer camp spots are held for two months after registration opens.

SOCIAL NIGHTS

Registration opens June 1st for the next school year. Three Social Night sessions occur each school year (Fall, Winter,

Spring). Participants register for an entire session (10 evenings.)

Participants can join mid-session at a pro-rated cost.

COMMUNITY CONNECT & IN HOME

Registration occurs throughout the year.

Transportation

Purpose

To encourage individuals to utilize public transportation to access community, enhancing skills and increasing independence.

To limit liability of staff transporting participants in their own vehicles and to maintain the safety and security of staff and participants.

To establish a standardized approach in determining staff eligibility to transport participants in personal vehicles.

To minimize the risk of unauthorized transportation.

Policy

AdaptAbilities is committed to providing safe, reliable transportation via Edmonton Transit or an Edmonton contracted bus company and uses public transportation when accessing community.

AdaptAbilities does not provide transportation to and from centre programming.

Transportation support may be cancelled if participant behavior affects the safety of the participant, staff, and/or public.

AdaptAbilities supports individuals 16+ to utilize DATS when necessary. Participants 13+ are required to bring bus tickets and/or a pass to all programs.

Children with a yellow bus pass are encouraged to bring them on field trip days.

In extraneous circumstances, AdaptAbilities may authorize a staff member to transport a participant using their own vehicle.

Policy – Transporting Participants in Personal Vehicles

Staff must adhere to the driving authorization process. Written authorization from AdaptAbilities must be provided to parent/guardian prior to transportation commencing.

Staff transporting participants in personal vehicles without authorization are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

AdaptAbilities prohibits transportation of participants in personal vehicles if the Driving Authorization is deemed invalid.

Families requiring staff to utilize personal vehicles to transport their child will pay the annual driver's abstract fee.

AdaptAbilities requires families to authorize all trips and mileage expenses by signing a Vehicle Mileage Log. Unauthorized trips will not be billed to families.

Costs to families for mileage are incurred on a kilometer-accrued standard set by the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA). Mileage costs are billed to families on a monthly basis

Fees & Billing

INTAKE/MEMBERSHIP FEE

All new participants of AdaptAbilities are required to pay a one-time \$50 non refundable membership fee. This fee covers the intake process, information gathering, family orientation, file set-up. All parents/guardians are considered members of AdaptAbilities and are invited to the AGM as voting members.

BILLING COMMITMENTS

AdaptAbilities requires a three hour billing minimum per respite and/or program request. Hours requested and booked by parent/guardian and/or individual will be billed. If a participant is asked to leave the program due to behaviour, billing will remain the same. Cancellation policies vary by program. View table below for detailed information.

As per Alberta Labour Standards, all full time programs including Community Connect, High School transition and Out of School will be billed for statutory holidays. These will be listed on each invoice billed to funders for direct client supports.

Note: Costs not paid by the funding agency are the responsibility of parents/guardians.

TYPES OF BILLING

Third Party Billing

AdaptAbilities provides third party billing on behalf of the parents/guardians with their respective funding agency.

A copy of the contract or addendums must be submitted to AdaptAbilities when parent/guardians are in receipt of approved documents.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to know and understand their funding contract.

Contract

AdaptAbilities is contracted by PDD to deliver adult services. Direct care costs are covered by this contract.

New individuals requesting services will be added to the contract upon approval.

Parent Responsibility

AdaptAbilities accepts payment of services directly from parents/guardians.

Program	Commitment	Invoice Signed	Cancellation Requirements	No show/ < 24h notice
Out of School/ High School Transition	September- June	Monthly on the first day of service.	30 days written notice required	Bill confirmed hours.
Social Nights	Fall/Winter/ Spring (10 nights /session)	Monthly on the first day of service	30 days written notice required 14-30 days written notice: Billing cancelled, fee forfeited. Less than 14 days written notice: Bill as confirmed, fee forfeited.	Bill confirmed hours.
HIA	Weekly	4 weeks prior to the start of Hearts in Action start date.	30+ days notice: Billing cancelled, 50% of deposit forfeited, 14-30 days written notice: Billing cancelled, deposit forfeited. Less than 14 days written notice: Bill as confirmed, deposit forfeited.	Bill confirmed hours or weeks.
Centre Respite/ In-Home Services *	Monthly	Monthly on the first day of service.	More than 24 hrs. notice: Written notice required Spot Filled: 1 hour billed Spot Unfilled: 3 hour minimum billed	Bill confirmed hours for time unfilled.
Adults	September - August	N/A	30 days written notice required	N/A

*Due to the popularity of our centre respite programs and scheduling of in home staff - we request that the parent/guardian provide as much notice as possible when cancelling. AdaptAbilities releases the cancelled spot so that another family may benefit from the respite opportunity.

RATES

Children

Year Round Programs

Level	Billing Rate
Level 1 - Ratio	\$16.97/hour
Level 1 - Individual	\$22.28/hour
Level 2 - Ratio	\$22.28/hour
Level 2 - Individual	\$32.00/hour
Additional children (sibling 3+)	\$5.00/hr. per child

Summer

Level	Billing Rate
Level 1 - Ratio	\$600/week
Level 2 - Ratio	\$760/week
Level 2 - Individual	\$32/hour
Work Related Care	\$16.97, \$22.28, \$32.00/hour
TS Camp	\$600/week
With Aide	\$300/week

*Camp hours are 9am-3pm, hourly rates apply to before and after care.

Billing rates above are allocated to cover staffing costs. Program fees are additional to billing rates – refer to chart on page 16. Higher rates may be billed based on level of support required.

Adults

Adult rates are determined in consultation with the funding agency and are dependant on each individual's needs.

Sibling Care

We welcome siblings into our programs. All sibling care must be booked at the same time as funded individual. Information about the sibling is required prior to participating in program.

VERIFICATION OF HOURS

Program attendance is recorded on the Sign In/Out sheet and is used as a safety precaution and verification of hours attended.

Early drop-offs and late pick-ups will be billed in 15 minute increments.

AdaptAbilities allows a five minute grace period.

Parent/guardian or staff must sign a child/youth in and out of program. Adults accessing the centre may sign themselves in and out.

COST SHARE

Child

Cost Share fees are determined by the funder. Funders require cost share amounts to be paid prior to invoice submission.

AdaptAbilities believes financial situations should not deter a child from attending our programs. Contact our office for more information on our bursary program.

Category	Amount
Weekly Camp Fee Cost Share	\$160 - \$285/week
Work Related (6-12 years)	\$525/month
Work Related (3-5 Years)	\$770/month

BURSARY FUND

Families and individuals are required to complete an application to be submitted to the Bursary Committee. This committee reviews applications and makes decisions within 2 weeks of submission.

Bursary recipients are required to submit a thank you message and release a photo to be shared with contributors of the bursary fund.

PROGRAM FEES

Program	Cost	Covers
Community Connect (Centre)	\$150/month	\$100 covers facility costs (rent, maintenance, utilities, supplies) \$50 covers planned monthly activities (cooking, music therapy, etc.)
Community Connect (In Home)	\$50/month	Optional - If families want to register their adult child in Community Connect monthly activities (cooking, music therapy, etc.)
Out of School Care & High School Transition	\$100/month	Covers facility costs (rent, maintenance, utilities, supplies) Includes all activities planned on Professional Development days and Year Round camps
Centre Respite (12 & under)	\$5/day	Covers facility costs (rent, maintenance, utilities, supplies) Participants remain in centre & access community parks <i>If interest warrants, field trips will be planned for ages 12 & under for an additional \$5/day</i>
Centre Respite (13 & over)	\$10/day	Covers facility costs (rent, maintenance, utilities, supplies) Planned weekly field trips
Professional Development Days Exam Days Year Round Camps	\$10/day	Covers facility costs (rent, maintenance, utilities, supplies) Field trips
Social Nights	\$150/session 10 evenings	Covers all planned activities for 10 evenings <i>Sponsorship opportunities are being presented to supporters to further enhance social night activities</i>
HIA Summer	\$100 Registration Fee +\$50/week work related care	

PROGRAM PAYMENTS

Monthly Recurring

Monthly recurring program fees are due on the first business day of the month. (ie. Out of School Care, Community Connect)

Session Payments

Session program fees are due upon program confirmation. (ie. Social Nights)

HIA parental cost shares for all registered weeks are due 30 days prior to program start.

Direct Service Costs

Direct Service costs are billed to families & funding agencies on the last business day of the month.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Parents have options when remitting payment for services:

- Online via AdaptAbilities Website (credit, PayPal)
- In Person at Head Office (cash, debit, cheque, credit)
- Monthly Pre-Authorized Withdrawal (credit, debit, post-dated cheque) withdrawn first business day of the month.

We reserve the right to refuse service until payments have been reconciled.

A late fee of \$5.00 will be applied to outstanding invoices over 30 days.

RETURNED INVOICES

Funding agencies may return partially or unpaid invoices to AdaptAbilities. Reasons may include addendum not signed, invoice not signed, hours exhausted, incorrect service description, etc.

A \$25 Administration Fee will be applied when hours in a families contract are exhausted or addendum not signed.

OUTSTANDING INVOICES

AdaptAbilities reserves the right to terminate services if invoices are outstanding for more than 90 days. This includes both funding agency

responsibilities, parent/guardian cost shares and program fees.

Invoices not paid for by the designated third party are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

NON-SUFFICIENT FUNDS

Any non-sufficient funds (NSF) cheques and/or pre-authorized withdrawals will result in a \$25 service charge, in addition to any late fees for invoices outstanding after 30 days.

After a second NSF charge occurs, AdaptAbilities will no longer accept these methods of payment.

DAMAGES & RESPONSIBILITY

Equipment, resources and facilities are essential to successful programming. It is understood that equipment and resources must be repaired and replaced over time.

Damage to the facility, resources, or other property by a participant is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. An incident report detailing the event will be completed and reported to parent/guardian at pick up.

The Program Coordinator will review the incident, assess damages, gather estimates as required and advise the parent/guardian of costs for the replacement of broken item and/or damage to facility.

What to Bring

LOST & FOUND

Purpose

To prevent undue financial hardship on AdaptAbilities for items lost during programming hours.
To establish a system of internal and external accountability for items brought to programming.
To discourage families sending expensive items to programming.

Policy

AdaptAbilities assumes no responsibility for loss or damage to personal property.

Only in instances where a medical assistance device is lost or damaged during programming beyond the participant's control will AdaptAbilities cover a portion of the replacement cost. These costs are outlined below.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that all items are labelled prior to attending programming with the participant's first name and last initial.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that belongings are checked prior to leaving.

If personal items are lost, AdaptAbilities will attempt to locate within the programming space and advise parents if items are found. If items remain lost, AdaptAbilities is not responsible for replacement.

An incident report must be completed and the missing items reported to family.

Family must provide an official quote and/or invoice for replacement within 10 business days of loss of use occurring.

Families are encouraged to contact their insurance provider or warranty program to inquire about replacement costs.

Participants are only eligible for replacement coverage once per calendar year

MEALS AND SNACKS

All respite facilities are Peanut-Free. This applies to products that may contain trace amounts of peanuts or nut residue.

Parents/Guardians are required to inform AdaptAbilities of any specialized dietary requirements or allergies for the safety of all participants

Participants should bring nutritious meals/snacks and water bottle for the duration of their booking.

Offsite programming requires a non-microwaveable lunch.

Individual food or drink purchases are not permitted unless planned as a part of programming.

In some programs, a light snack and refreshment are provided and the cost is covered through parent/guardian program fees.

CLOTHING

Participants should be dressed in clothes that are appropriate for planned activities and weather. Running shoes are recommended for physical activities.

An extra set of clothing is recommended for those that require it. Extra clothing cannot be stored on-site.

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

AdaptAbilities does not provide personal care items. If a participant wears diapers, disposable training pants or requires feminine hygiene products, send the required items daily.

TOYS/ELECTRONIC GAMES

Participants are discouraged from bringing expensive toys or electronic devices from home. AdaptAbilities assumes no responsibility for loss or damaged items.

LEISURE ACCESS PASS

Children who have a leisure access pass are requested to bring it to reduce program expenses. All adults are required

to bring their leisure access pass. Staff can facilitate the application (AISH health benefits card is required).

Our Team

Employees

AdaptAbilities matches the education and/or life experiences of our employees with the needs of each participant. Staff are recruited from fields such as education, occupational therapy, disability studies, and more. Staff are referred to as Relief Care Specialists (RCS) and/or Community Specialists (CS).

Practicum Students/Volunteers

AdaptAbilities provides post-secondary students with practicum placements. We also utilize volunteers to enrich our programs. It also lends to our vision of inclusion, one person at a time.

Individual participant rights are important; all employees and volunteers must sign a Statement of Confidentiality and adhere to AdaptAbilities' Code of Honour.

Each team member is required to have a clear Criminal Record Check and Intervention Record Check.

Staff are highly trained in a Human Rights Approach with mandatory First Aid, Medication Administration and Non Violent Crisis Intervention. AdaptAbilities also offers in-house training sessions on an ongoing basis.

Respite programs and camps operate in a group setting with staff to participant ratios varying from 1:1 to 1:5. Program Coordinators oversee programming; provide mentorship and support to team leads, front line staff and volunteers.

Health & Safety

SICK PARTICIPANTS

People are too sick to attend AdaptAbilities and should remain at home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 38 degrees Celsius or higher
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Infected nasal discharge (thick or coloured, green or reddish brown)
- Persistent cough
- Persistent pain
- Undiagnosed rash or skin condition

If the individual has a cold, review the following prior to sending to programming:

- Nasal discharge must be clear and manageable in a group setting.
- Coughing and sneezing must have subsided.
- Ask yourself the following question prior to sending your child: Would you want your child to be exposed to a cold?

If a person is too ill to participate in programming, then they are too ill to attend. If you hesitate about sending your child/young adult, he/she is probably too ill to come. By assisting us with the above terms, all individuals receive the benefit of the healthiest environment possible.

If your child falls ill while attending a program, staff will call parents/guardians at the numbers listed on the emergency contact list to pick them up. Staff base parent/guardian contact on the best interests of the participant and the other people in the program. For this reason and emergencies, it is important to maintain current contact information..

MEDICATION

Staff can administer medications providing that the following requirements are met:

- Medication Release Form completed by parent/guardian including participant's name, medication name, dosage, date/time(s) to be given, instructions for administration; and
- Medicine is in original container with the current labelling.
- Prescribed PRN medications must have physician directions and a pharmaceutical MAR sheet.

AdaptAbilities recommends that all medications taken during programming are provided in a pharmacy packaged bubble pack.

Medications will remain locked in a lock box. If offsite activities are planned, medications will be transported in a locked medication pouch.

Self-administration of medications during programming is not permitted as AdaptAbilities does not have a licensed pharmacy or medical professional on site.

AdaptAbilities recommends that over the counter (OTC) medications, vitamins, supplements, etc. are administered prior to attending programming.

PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

Purpose

To proactively instill boundaries and guidelines for staff and participant to reduce the potential for inappropriate conduct by either party.

To educate participants on appropriate contact and conduct with members of the public, and their friends.

Policy

AdaptAbilities is committed to protecting staff and individuals from potential misconduct stemming from the lack of personal boundaries.

AdaptAbilities is committed to educating participants on personal boundaries and the definition of abuse. Review of these boundaries and education on abuse is completed on an annual basis, and when required.

AdaptAbilities requires all staff to be trained in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention and Risk Management. These courses educate on personal boundaries and utilize safe holds and restraints only as a last resort.

Staff are encouraged to maintain healthy space with participants at all times, and are encouraged not to lay down with participants. Due to safety concerns, AdaptAbilities recognizes that in certain circumstances touching may be required like holding hands to prevent wandering.

Allegations of potential misconduct stemming from violation of personal boundaries will be dealt with through the Corrective Measures process for staff, and the Incident Reporting process for participants, with the possibility of suspension or termination.

PARTICIPANTS IN PRIVATE HOMES

Purpose

To proactively instill boundaries and guidelines for staff and participants to reduce the potential for inappropriate conduct by either party.

Policy

AdaptAbilities strongly discourages staff from bringing participants into their personal homes under any circumstances, to protect the safety of both the participant and the staff. AdaptAbilities employs a Human Rights approach with all participants, and understands that friendships arise based on

the nature of our work. Any staff requesting participants to visit their private home must request the reason in writing to the Program Coordinator in advance. The Executive or designate will review and approve/deny all requests.

WASHROOM POLICY

AdaptAbilities uses same sex staff whenever possible to assist participants in the washroom. When an opposite sex staff situation occurs, best practice is a family washroom.

Parents/guardians should specify toileting needs and level of assistance required on the registration form (ie: prompting to flush toilet, assistance with personal care). Communicate any routines to staff.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Participants must complete an application form upon program entry and annually thereafter (Annual Update form). These forms must be completed prior to program participation.

All sections must be completed in full. If information changes during the year (ie. contact information, allergies, medications), please contact the program coordinator to update.

EMERGENCY PICK UP

Parents/guardians must be reachable by phone and available to pick up their child immediately during programming due to emergency situations, sickness, or behaviours.

FIRST AID POLICY

In the event a participant has had a minor accident while at AdaptAbilities, staff will comfort the participant and provide basic first aid.

Staff will contact a parent/guardian only if necessary to take your child for medical treatment. Otherwise, parents/guardians will be advised of first aid treatment at pick up.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If an accident occurs that requires immediate medical attention, an ambulance will be called. Staff will accompany participant with appropriate medical documentation.

Staff will contact a parent/guardian as soon as possible. Parents/guardians are responsible for all expenses incurred, including ambulance fees.

INCIDENT REPORT

An Incident Report will be completed immediately following an incident or at the end of the shift. A parent/guardian will be asked to review and sign the report.

A supervisor will also review the report and may call to follow-up. After a supervisor signs the report, it will be placed on file.

Rights of Adults

The following rights are specific to participants who are eighteen years of age or older as they have reached the legal age of majority and should be treated in kind.

As an adult with special needs and as a participant of AdaptAbilities, I have the right to:

1. Be treated as an adult
 - Have freedom to pursue my own interests
 - Choose my own goals
 - Choose my friends
 - Make mistakes
2. Be treated fairly and with dignity and respect
 - Be treated equally and consistently by staff
 - Not be labelled
3. Access the laws that protect me
 - Not to be discriminated against because of gender, the country my family comes from, my skin colour, my beliefs, my friends, or my disability.
 - Have the same rights as everyone else
 - Access legal help or advice
4. Make informed choices
 - Make decisions based on my feelings, beliefs and what is important to me
 - Takes risks once I know what might happen
 - Change my mind
 - Decide what I do with my own things
 - Get help from staff or parents/guardians with making decisions
5. Feel safe and protected
 - Learn to take care of myself
 - Feel safe when I use services
 - Feel safe out in the community
 - Not be threatened, ridiculed, hurt, attacked or have my things taken from me
6. Speak for myself and be heard
 - Speak my mind and give my opinion
 - Show my feelings
 - Make complaints if I am not happy
 - Say 'no'
 - Disagree with people
 - Have people try to understand me
 - Have people listen when I talk
7. To Privacy
 - Privacy of my personal space and belonging
 - Have people get my OK before they go into my belongings
 - Use the phone without someone listening to what I am saying
 - In the bathroom (unless assistance is requested/required)
8. Sexuality
 - To give or withhold consent
 - Be able to ask questions if I need to know more
 - Accept or turn down a service
 - Direct my guardian in a desirable direction
 - Have decisions respected
 - Give my consent without fear of peer pressure, retaliation, or loss or change of services.
9. Freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression
 - Express thoughts, emotions, beliefs, and opinions
 - Speak freely without censorship
 - Protest
 - Have my feelings and emotions recognized and valued
10. Freedom of association and movement
 - Free range of bodily motion
 - Choose who I want to spend time with
11. Access to all public and generic services
 - Public services and facilities (e.g. library)
 - Services in my community
 - Adaptive equipment and technology to enable me to be successful
 - Equal and full community participation
12. Quality service that is fair and equitable
 - Appeal any change or removal of services
 - Have service providers I can count on
 - Access programming that meets my participant needs
 - Make a complaint or lodge a grievance when I think I am being treated unfairly or my rights are not protected
13. Obtain support and advocacy
 - Have support that helps me grow succeed and belong
 - Get a referral to information or a professional that can support me

- Know that my service provider advocates for me in the community
- 14. To have the least restrictive methods of intervention
 - Be asked, prompted or cued, not forced
 - Experience natural consequences when safety and security is not compromised
 - Have alternate choices to my behaviour
 - Give informed consent before any approaches, positive or restrictive, to my anticipated behaviours
- 15. Own and enjoy personal property and belongings
 - Purchase Items of choice
 - Access my belongings at any time
- Enjoy my belongings
- Dispose of personal property
- Choose with whom to share personal belongings
- 16. Engage in healthy relationships
 - Have friends
 - Date
 - Get married
 - Have children
- 17. Exercise my rights as a citizen
 - Vote
 - Obtain a license
 - Hold membership in an organization
 - Hold office
 - Exercise treaty rights

Adapted in part from the Charter of Rights drawn up by participants with developmental disabilities at the 1994 *Open Doors* conference (VRRI) and the *Rights of Participants Receiving Service - South Region Document* (ARRC).

Informed Consent

INFORMAL

Informed consent is not always given in a written form. Informed consent is a daily process that gives participants autonomy and protects their individual rights. For example, an individual should be informed of and be able to give their verbal/ physical consent to any activities planned within a program.

Gaining an individual's views and desires can require staff to use creative ways of providing information and alternative means for them to express their thoughts. Informed consent should be a component of every program plan.

Staff can use the following to assist participants with making informed decisions:

- Inform participants about his/her options and the implications (risks, benefits) of each option in a simple manner that is easily understood.
- To ensure understanding, ask the participant to repeat the options in his/her own words.
- Look for signs that the participant is agreeing out of fear or perceived social pressure and take action to amend the situation.
- Support the participant to uphold his/her rights and express their autonomy.
- Ensure that he/she understand that it is okay to say 'no'.
- Give the participant time to consider his/her options and give or deny consent.

FORMAL

In many cases, written consent is required.

- Program registration forms have numerous waivers that must be signed before a participant may attend our programs;
- Photo disclosure, audio-visual material and advertising purposes;
- Personal information; and/or
- Assessments

Participants and their parents/guardians should be involved in the consent process in proportion to the participant's competence to weigh the risks and benefits.

AdaptAbilities understands that participants may need additional time to process information prior to giving consent. If the participant's parent or guardian is giving consent, the participant should also indicate in some manner that they do not object to the activity or process

Abuse Prevention and Response Protocol

Purpose

To maintain a safe environment free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and security of person for participants, staff and families.

To follow a standard procedure when dealing with claims of alleged abuse or occurrences of abuse.

To understand the legislations associated with abuse situations and AdaptAbilities' duty to report.

To understand how to respond when abuse is disclosed and/or reported.

To know how and who to report allegations, suspicions, or occurrences of abuse.

Policy

AdaptAbilities takes a zero tolerance approach to abuse or neglect of any kind, whether physical, emotional, verbal, mental, sexual, financial, or otherwise. This includes a zero tolerance policy towards employees who fail to report suspected abuse.

AdaptAbilities follows *Protection of Persons in Care Act (PPCA Act)* and PDD's *Abuse Prevention and Response Protocol* when dealing with suspected, alleged, or occurrences of abuse involving adult participants (individuals 18+).

AdaptAbilities adheres to the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* when dealing with suspected, alleged, or occurrences of abuse involving child participants (individuals 17 years of age or younger).

As English is the primary language of programming, AdaptAbilities encourages all employees to speak English around participants to promote an environment of inclusion and understanding. While employees are permitted to speak native languages on breaks and on personal time, they are encouraged to do so out of earshot of participants. If a participant's primary

language is not English, AdaptAbilities will attempt to support that individual with an employee that speaks that language when possible.

AdaptAbilities has a duty to report suspected abuse immediately, regardless of circumstance. The employee witnessing, overhearing, or acknowledging reports of abuse must report the allegations immediately. An employee cannot delegate this responsibility to any other person, including another coworker or supervisor. Employees who knowingly fail to report abuse will be subject to termination and/or criminal charges.

AdaptAbilities will not take disciplinary action against an employee who reports abuse, unless it is determined that the complaint was made with malicious intent or without basis.

Participant confidentiality is not broken when reporting abuse. The identity of the employee reporting abuse will not be disclosed to the participant's family, or the person responsible for the abuse. AdaptAbilities employees will refrain from disclosing information regarding claims of abuse to families.

AdaptAbilities promotes abuse prevention & reporting by:

- Regular education and awareness through training and visual aids
- Increasing an individual's support network/natural supports
- Promoting and strengthening an individual's community involvement
- Following proper hiring practices including vulnerable sector checks
- Educating individuals about their rights, boundaries, and how to say no, in annual training sessions and organically throughout the year.

Beyond Behaviours

AdaptAbilities acknowledges that individuals can experience difficulty coping with their environment and/or stress. Some reactions to that stress can pose a hazard to the individual's safety, safety of others around and/or property. Some other manifested reactions can infringe on the individual's rights and quality of their life. At the same time they can affect the rights and quality of life of others around.

Challenging Behaviour

Whenever a person places themselves or others at risk of immediate physical harm or engages in significantly inappropriate, socially unacceptable, illegal or socially risky behaviour that may limit their ability to safely participate in the community or engages in actions that may cause significant property damage.

Adaptabilities identifies that people do not act without a reason and behaviours can be:

- Triggered and maintained by something in the person's environment.
- A way of the person communicating their wishes and/or unmet needs.
- An expression of frustration due to loneliness, ineffective communication, needs not being met, etc.
- The only way the person knows how to deal with the situation (ex. feeling crowded and pushing people to create space etc.).
- A side effect from medication taken for mental or physiological needs.

A support plan to help the person meet their unmet need or desire will be developed if the person's behaviour:

- Meets the criteria of a challenging behaviour and,
- Does not cease after the use of natural and logical consequences, and positive approaches.

Adaptabilities does not promote the use of Restrictive Procedures, as we concentrate on the use of planned positive approaches, logical and natural consequences based on

positive reinforcement, respect and dignity.

AdaptAbilities permits the use of restrictive procedures as means of:

- **Crisis intervention:** where the person's behaviour poses a threat to their immediate safety, the immediate safety of others and/or the property.
- **Planned approach:** a last resort, where the person's behaviour is significantly inappropriate, socially unacceptable, illegal or socially risky and impedes their ability to safely participate in the community as well as impinging on their quality of life.

The use of any restrictive procedures by staff must be carried out as a last resort. Any Restrictive Procedure must not be derogatory or harmful to the person's health and well being. All staff will use the least restrictive, unobtrusive procedures to manage crisis situations and reduce risks associated with it.

All staff are strictly forbidden from using Corporal Punishment and Prohibited Procedures under any circumstances. It is abusive, cruel, illegal and inappropriate as per Protections for Persons in Care Act (PPCA) and PDD Abuse Protocol. Any employee that does not abide by this rule will be terminated immediately and prosecuted accordingly.

Prohibited Procedures include:

- Forced hand over hand guidance: applying physical force to make someone complete a task against their will: forcing to eat etc.;
- Locked confinement: physically locking someone in a room as a result of behaviour;
- Corporal Punishment: any action meant to humiliate, exploit, infringe on person's human and legal rights (not providing necessities of life) or pose as a hazard to their health and safety;
- Use of mechanical restraints: handcuffs, strait jackets, tying someone up;

- Use of any mechanical restraints for other than safety reasons;
- Body searches: patting someone down, physically searching the person;
- Extended Isolation;
- Any action which purposely causes pain;
- Food deprivation; and/or
- Presentation of noxious substances.

RESTRICTIVE PROCEDURES

Restrictive procedures are only used when required for the protection of the person involved, employee or any bystander that has been physically threatened. Any action or physical or chemical restraint that limits the rights or freedom of an individual is a restrictive procedure.

Restrictive procedures are defined as any action in response to a situation or behaviour of concern that:

- Restricts a person's rights, freedoms and choices;
- Restrains a person's normal range of movement;

- Involves the use of medication, such as PRN or ongoing sedation – medication that is used to address a person's behaviour which is not required to treat the person's medical or psychiatric diagnosis; and/or,
- Limits a person's access to events, relationships, privileges or objects that would normally be available to them.

Restrictive procedures should be implemented as a component of a positive procedure and only in high risk cases should a planned restrictive procedure stand alone.

PLANNED RESTRICTIVE PROCEDURES

This is defined as predictable and foreseeable behaviour, events or situations. In situations where positive procedures alone have not adequately addressed an individual's response to an unmet need/want or interim safety concerns must be addressed, restrictive procedures, which may include verbal or physical interventions, or consequences for behaviour, may be considered as part of a planned response.

Where the use of restrictive procedures is permitted, it is essential that staff be trained before being expected to carry out the intervention. Training includes instruction pertaining to the implementation of the intervention and documentation requirements.

During the development process the following must be considered

- Will any of the individual's rights be limited by the procedure?
- What are the risks associated with the intervention?
- Do the staff have the proper training to carry out the procedure? If not, can they be provided with the proper training?
- Are planned positive procedures included in the plan in order to provide people with other responses, skills or tools to respond to situations?
- Are restrictive procedures limited and only used when absolutely necessary?

The following documents should be considered when developing the plan

- Client profile
- Medical history
- Service Plans and/or IPP
- Incident reports

- Contact Notes

REVIEW PROCESS

AdaptAbilities promotes a review process for the requirement, development, amendment and implementation of positive and restrictive procedures. The review process helps to protect participant rights, ensure that ethical and professional interventions are employed and support staff in their efforts to provide quality service.

The Review of planned restrictive procedures takes place after 6 months and thereafter yearly . Three main areas are evaluated:

- Impact
- Effectiveness
- Implementation

Three courses of action are considered:

- Continue
- Discontinue
- Change

The Review Process for Restrictive Procedures requires the Executive Director and Program Coordinator to complete the following:

- Monitor the use of interventions;
- Review the appropriateness of specific interventions and recommend alternatives;
- Provide or deny authorization for the use of restrictive procedures, including previously approved procedures that have been amended;
- Ensure the approved interventions are documented and available to staff; and,
- Identify needs as they relate to behavioural interventions, i.e. training and resources.

Restrictive procedures should also be reviewed for their effectiveness, and whether or not they should be continued, or changed.

Personal Rights & Conduct

Please review this section with your child/young adult prior to attending any AdaptAbilities' program. Staff are familiar with the rights and responsibilities of both staff and participants.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Participants and staff shall treat other participants and staff with dignity, respect, and fairness.
2. Participants shall be provided with an environment that is free from physical, emotional, and social abuse.
3. Participants and parents/guardians shall be informed of the program expectations for participant behaviour within the program, the program grounds, and during program activities.
4. Participants shall exercise their responsibilities to:
5. Use their abilities and talents to gain maximum benefits from their program experiences;
6. Contribute to a climate of mutual trust and respect conducive to effective learning, personal development, and social living; and
7. Attend programs regularly and punctually.
8. People will have the right to provide explanation and have access to services that support gaining insight into personal responses if others are put at risk. They also have the right to an explanation for and information regarding measures that will be taken as a result of those actions.
9. Appropriate opportunities for participant consultation and involvement in participant related matters shall be provided.

HARASSMENT, BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATION

Harassment, bullying or discrimination will not be tolerated in any form. As per the *Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act*, all individuals have the right to be free from discrimination

based on race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, ancestry, place of origin, family status, source of income, family status, source of income and sexual orientation.

PARTICIPANT BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT

AdaptAbilities supports the endeavours of staff, participants, parents/guardians, and the community to ensure positive participant behaviour and conduct. Participants must behave in a manner that does not compromise the safety of oneself and/or others. In addition, parents/guardians and participants must recognize their responsibility in developing a participant's self-discipline.

Accountability

- Participants shall be responsible and accountable for their behaviour and conduct. Participants will show respect for:
 - Program property, rules and regulations
 - Ethnic, racial, religious and gender differences of staff and other camp participants

Parental Role

Parents/guardians play a vital role in supporting their child or adult son or daughter. It is expected that parents/guardians:

- Will be called and asked to pick up their child/young adult if behaviour is destructive and beyond the

capabilities of staff interventions. Behaviours of this nature include, but are not limited to, hurting themselves or other participants and staff, destruction of property and severe defiance.

- Work with the program to resolve issues as they affect their child/young adult; and
- Co-operate with the AdaptAbilities recommended course of action prior to re-admission of the participant following a participant suspension.

Consequences

Failure to meet the expectations for behaviour and conduct shall result in some or all of the following consequences:

- Problem solving, monitoring or reviewing expectations with participant;
- Parental involvement;
- Behaviour contract with participant;
- Suspension;
- Expulsion from a program and/or all AdaptAbilities programs for severe behaviours or activities; and,
- Involvement of police if warranted (carried out as a last resort).

SUSPENSION

Purpose

To maintain a safe, professional and accessible environment for our participants, staff and families.

Policy

AdaptAbilities is committed to protecting staff and individuals from aggressive conduct or destructive behavior occurring on AdaptAbilities' property, in community or between program participants. Any participant displaying extreme behavior will be given a suspension from our programs.

Guidelines

What is an Extreme Behavior?

Behavior causing but not limited to:

- Intentional damage to personal, rented, public or AdaptAbilities' property
- Injury to a participant
- Injury to a staff or community member
- Endangerment to staff or participants of AdaptAbilities (ie: pushing into traffic)
- Threatening with intent
- Sexual harassment

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

Purpose

To maintain a safe, professional and accessible environment for our participants, staff and families.

Policy

Safety of staff and individuals is AdaptAbilities' utmost priority.

AdaptAbilities is committed to protecting staff and individuals from aggressive, unsafe, or destructive behavior occurring on AdaptAbilities property or between program participants. AdaptAbilities reserves the right to revoke program participation and terminate services for a determined or undetermined amount of time in extreme circumstances.

AdaptAbilities is committed to maintaining the well-being of the participant and families we support. AdaptAbilities is committed to working with the funding agency and family to transition services to an alternate agency upon termination.

COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES & APPEALS

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that complaints, grievances and appeals are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner, as well as to ensure that families and individuals are aware of their rights in this area. The policy describes the route families and individuals may take to address any concern they may have with service delivery.

Process for Complaints, Grievances and Appeals:

1. Parent/Guardian and/or individual may complete and return a Complaints, Grievance and Appeal form which can be obtained from Program Supervisor.
2. AdaptAbilities investigates all allegations of family and individual rights violations and complaints or grievances relating to its service delivery.

An Adaptabilities' representative will meet with the individual and/or parent/guardian to address the concerns and create an action plan that fulfills the needs of parent/guardian, individual and organization.

