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# VOLUNTEERING AT WEE CARE



## INFORMATION PACKAGE

# History of Wee Care

In 1974, Wee Care also welcomed all children with special needs. The HMCS Iroquois adopted Wee Care as a philanthropy project. The IWK Children's Hospital continued their liaison with us. Wee Care carried on working with other community organizations.

In 1985, Wee Care recognized the importance of an integrated setting and began providing services to all children. Physiotherapy services were introduced at Wee Care.

In 1986, the community rallied together to renovate the building that had been Wee Care's home since 1973. These improvements continued until 1990.

In 1987, Wee Care became a Metro United Way agency. Funds donated through the United Way allow Wee Care to provide on-site rehabilitative services such as physiotherapy.

In November of 1991, Wee Care's home was destroyed by a fire. The generosity and support of the people of Nova Scotia enabled them to re-open just one day after the fire, operating at the Bethany United Church on Dutch Village Road. Wee Care held its 1st Annual Fundraising Auction to support the replacement of items lost in the fire.

From 1992-1995, children and staff worked, played and grew in a space that was generously donated by the congregation of the Bethany United Church. Occupational therapy services were introduced at Wee Care. Obstacles for the ground breaking were overcome and capital funding and fundraising for the new building were complete. Ground breaking took place at Wee Care's original site, 5217 Young Street.

On a stormy April 1, 1997, Wee Care moved into phase one of its new building. By April 14 of the same year, an infant program was created to enable Wee Care to accommodate children as young as six months. Wee Care's program was also expanded from 24 to 42 children.

During 1998/1999, the HMCS Iroquois, along with local businesses and organizations provided funds and volunteers to build our new deck, playground and "Snoezelen" multi-sensory room. In 2000 Thyssen Elevator and the general community installed an elevator in our centre.

In 2003 "Wee" celebrated a milestone -- our 30th Anniversary -- in the newly improved and fully completed building.

In 2006 "Wee" extended our playground to introduce an infant/toddler play space, water park, and sports pad - all of which are wheelchair accessible.

In 2007 "Wee" expanded into a neighbouring building, introducing 12 new childcare spaces.

## Goal

The overall goal of Wee Care Developmental is to give each child the opportunity to reach their maximum potential and prepare them physically, socially and emotionally for public or private school, or other community options.

## Philosophy

Wee Care is a non-profit community service. It provides pre-school programs based on the rationale of early intervention and integration. Care is available for children with special needs from six months to six years, as well as a smaller number of children with regular needs.

## Structure

Wee Care is operated by a full-time staff of trained early childhood educators. The Centre strives to maintain a ratio of four children to one teacher. The staff also attend workshops and training sessions to learn of new developments in their field. The added knowledge and new skills help them meet each child's different needs.

Wee Care Developmental Centre also provides field placements for students interested in planning careers with special populations. Placements are available for students who are studying:

- Special Education
- Recreation
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Psychology
- Community Services
- Child Studies

## Interested in Volunteering?

Are you interested in becoming a volunteer at Wee Care? Volunteers have made amazing contributions to the children's lives and help the Centre retain its four to one ratio at most times.

Volunteers who are interested in working with children, or who plan on entering the field of childcare, often enjoy participating in the Wee Care program. Volunteers are especially important on outings when an even lower ratio is needed.

## Volunteers

Wee Care welcomes those who like assisting in the care of children and calls on them to work with the teachers whenever possible. Volunteers work under direction of the Executive Director and guidance of the staff. This promotes the optimal utilization of the abilities of the full-time staff.

## Volunteering Opportunities

### Board of Directors- Committee Work

- Fundraising
- Personnel
- Maintenance and yard

### Classroom Support

- Assist teaching staff with the program
- Interact with the children
- Promote peer relations
- Supervision and safe practices
- Attending walks and outings

### Kitchen Support

- Baking
- Cleaning

### Other Centre Support

- Organizing library area (repairing books, sorting)
- Sewing (bibs, costumes, puppets)
- Assisting the resource teacher with creating supports for individual children

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What can I expect once I send in my volunteer application form?**

Once you have sent in your application form, you will then be asked to fill out the following forms: child abuse registry, police background check, behaviour management form, occupational health and safety form, and confidentiality forms.

## **What kind of training will I receive?**

You will receive a tour of the centre with all of the basic knowledge needed to volunteer at Wee Care. When volunteering in the classrooms of Wee Care, your first few days are for you to observe the program and see how teachers interact with the children. It is a time to ask questions and feel comfortable with the program. Then we encourage you to take initiative and assist the teachers.

## **Is there a dress code for volunteers?**

When volunteering at Wee Care you must wear comfortable footwear. Flip-flops and open backs shoes are not allowed. Your clothes should be comfortable, neat and clean. The clothes should also be something that can get dirty or stained. Anything revealing your chest, backside or belly is not allowed. This includes: Spaghetti straps and short shorts. At Wee Care the children go outside even in light rain and snow. You should dress appropriately for the weather.

## **Is there anything important I should know as a volunteer?**

Volunteers are not to be left alone with the children. If you are not an employee of Wee Care you cannot be counted as part of ratio. You are also not required to do personal care, i.e. - diapering and toileting. You can assist in this process by entertaining the children during diapering or toileting.

## **What type of recognition is in place for volunteers?**

On a day-to-day basis, it is our standard to verbally thank our volunteers on a regular basis for the important contribution of their time. We also thank our volunteers on our website.

## What Role is Best for Me?

It is important for both the volunteer and the staff at Wee Care that an appropriate match is made between the individual and the role.

We are looking for volunteers who have:

- A professional; appearance and conduct
- A willingness to work as a team
- A positive attitude
- Good communication skills
- A willingness to learn new skills and information
- A love for children

Here is a listing of some of the skills needed for key volunteer roles:

### Advocacy

- Excellent communicator
- Ability to influence others
- Passionate and knowledgeable about children with special needs
- Strong desire to make a difference for children and families

### Administrative support

- Excellent computer skills
- Strong communication skills
- Attention to details
- Ability to multi-task and organize
- Understanding of and ability to maintain confidentiality

### Classroom Support

- Good communication skills
- Good observational skills
- Interest in children and child development
- Positive attitude
- Team player
- Comfortable taking initiative
- Creative

We hope that this package has provided you with all of the information you will need about our volunteer opportunities.

For more information on becoming a volunteer please contact us at (902) 455-1081