PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS, SUPPORT/ RELIEF STAFF AND STUDENTS POLICY

QUALITY AREA 4 | ELAA version 1.0



PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines for the engagement and participation of volunteers, support/relief staff and students at Parkdale Preschool, while ensuring that children's health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Parkdale Preschool is committed to:

- supporting connections with educational institutions to provide opportunities for students to undertake practicum placements as part of their studies
- engage with allied health professionals to support children and their families to participate in the preschool program
- building relationships with community members and providing suitable opportunities to engage volunteers to contribute to the programs and activities of the service
- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of each child at the service through consistent compliance with this policy and procedures when engaging volunteers and students.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Parkdale Preschool, including during offsite excursions and activities.

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R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted						
Developing guidelines for accepting applications from volunteers, support/relief staff and students to work at the service in consultation with the nominated supervisor, ECT and educators and which are aligned with the <i>Child Safe Environment Policy</i>	V	V	V			
Accepting or rejecting a potential volunteer, support/relief staff or student based on the circumstances of the service at the time, in consultation with the nominated supervisor	V	V				
Obtaining a valid WWC Check (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) and providing details to the service prior to commencement					V	
Checking the status of the Working with Children (WWC) Clearance (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) of volunteers, support/relief staff and students where required, and ensuring that the details are recorded in the staff record	R	V				
Ensuring that the staff record contains the name, address and date of birth of volunteers, support/relief staff and students attending the service (<i>Regulations 145, 149(1)</i>)	R	V				
Keeping a record for each day on which each student, support/relief staff or volunteer participates with the date and the hours of participation (<i>Regulation 149(2)</i>)	R	V				
Ensuring that volunteers, support/relief staff, students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected	R	V	V			
Following the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.				V	V	
Ensuring volunteers, support/relief staff and students on placement at the service are not affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair their capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children (<i>Regulation 83</i>) (refer to Tobacco, Alcohol and other Drugs Policy)	R	V	V	V	V	
Providing volunteers, support/relief staff, students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures (<i>Regulation 171</i>), and access to the <i>Education</i> <i>and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and</i> <i>Education and Care Services National Law (Regulation</i> <i>185</i>)	R	V				
Ensuring that volunteers, support/relief staff, students and parents/guardians comply with the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i> and all service policies and procedures (<i>Regulations 170</i>)	R	V	V	V	V	
Complying with the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Education and Care Services National Law (Regulation 185) and with all service policies and procedures, including the Code of Conduct Policy, Child Safe Environment and Privacy and Confidentiality Policy while attending the service				V	V	



Ensuring that volunteers, support/relief staff, students and parents/guardians are aware of how to comply with child protection law and Child Safe Standards obligations	R	V		V	
Identifying children with medical conditions, the child's medical management plan and the location of the child's medication (<i>Regulations 90, 168(2)(d</i>))	R	V	\checkmark		
Informing volunteers, support/relief staff, students and parents/guardians of the services emergency and evacuation procedures (<i>Regulations 97, 168 (2)(e)</i>)	R	V	V		
Developing an induction checklist for volunteers, support/relief staff and students attending the service <i>(refer</i> <i>to Attachment 1)</i> in consultation with the nominated supervisor and educators.	R	V	V		
Ensuring that volunteers, support/relief staff and students have completed the induction checklist <i>(refer to Attachment 1)</i> .	R	V	V		\checkmark
Developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service	\checkmark	V			

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

Support/relief staff and students may participate in programs and activities at the service from time to time including observing and experiencing the provision of centre-based education and care. This will be encouraged and facilitated by Parkdale Preschool wherever appropriate and possible.

Parkdale Preschool values the participation of parents/guardians and other family members, and the voluntary contribution they make to the education and care of their own and other children. "In genuine partnerships families and educators value each other's knowledge and roles, communicate freely and respectfully and engage in shared decision making" (Early Years Learning Framework – *refer to Sources*).

Parkdale Preschool aims to provide a range of opportunities for family members, volunteers and students to participate in programs and activities while adhering to clear guidelines regarding appropriate interactions and communication with staff, and other adults and children at the service (*refer to Code of Conduct Policy*).

The role that volunteers and students play in education and care services varies and can include working with groups of children, preparing materials or food, assisting with administrative tasks or working one-on-one with individual children. The service is responsible for ensuring that volunteers and students are suitable to work with children, and that children's health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.

Volunteers should only be engaged to complement, not replace, the work of paid staff. Accordingly, services should not engage volunteers to fill the place of an employee who is ill or on leave, or to fill a vacant budgeted position.

Volunteers and support/relief staff must not be asked to perform tasks:

- that they are untrained, unqualified or too inexperienced to undertake
- that put the children or themselves in a vulnerable or potentially unsafe situation
- where there is a conflict of interest.



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Prior to participation at the service, a volunteer, support/relief staff or student (aged 18 years or over) must be in possession of a Working with Children (WWC) Clearance or relevant VIT Registration *(refer to Definitions)*. Parents/guardians whose children usually attend the service are exempt from needing a WWC Check *(refer to Definitions)*. However, a service may decide, as a demonstration of duty of care, that all parents/guardians who volunteer at Parkdale Preschool service are required to undergo a WWC Check *(refer to Definitions)*.

In line with Child Safe Standard 4 and the *Child Safe Environment Policy*, prior to engaging a volunteer, support/relief staff or student an assessment should be undertaken of the nature of the responsibility to determine whether a position description is required and based on that whether an interview and referee checks are required.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Child Safe Standards
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)
- Worker Screening Regulation 2021 (Vic)

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DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

Child-related work: In relation to the WWC Check *(refer to Definitions)*, child-related work includes work with children which may involve physical contact, face-to-face contact, oral, written or electronic communication.

Conflict of interest: (In relation to this policy) refers to an interest that may affect, or may appear reasonably likely to affect, the judgement or conduct of the volunteer, or may impair their independence or loyalty to the service. A conflict of interest can arise from avoiding personal losses as well as gaining personal advantage, whether financial or otherwise, and may not only involve the volunteer, but also their relatives, friends or business associates

Student: A person undertaking a practicum placement as part of a recognised early childhood qualification. This student will be supported by an educational institution in the completion of their placement.

Relief Staff: Qualified Early Years Teacher, Diploma or Certificate III Educator that is contracted from an external organisation to work a period of time in the education and care program at the service. Relief staff not directly employed by Parkdale Preschool. (eg. Anzuk, McArthurs, etc)

Support Staff: Any person employed by an external source other than Parkdale Preschool (ie Yooralla or a child's NDIS funding) to actively and safely assist a child to participate in their preschool sessions. This includes additional aids, carers and allied health professionals.

Volunteer: A person or parent (who's child attends the service) who willingly undertakes defined activities to support the education and care programs at a service in an unpaid or honorary capacity. These activities may include child-related work (*refer to Definitions*), administrative tasks, or preparing materials or food.

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SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au
- The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Belonging, Being, Becoming: <u>www.acecqa.gov.au</u>
- A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation (The Commission for Children and Young People) <u>www.ccyp.vic.gov.au</u>
- Working with Children Check unit, Department of Justice & Regulation provides details of how to obtain a WWC Check: <u>www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au</u>

RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Code of Conduct
- Compliments and Complaints
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Inclusion and Equity
- Interactions with Children
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Staffing



EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- check staff records on a regular basis to ensure details of students, volunteers and where appropriate parents/guardians are maintained in line with all legislative requirements as outlined in the policy
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).



ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Sample induction checklist for volunteers, relief/ support staff and students
- Attachment 2; Guidelines for all volunteers, relief/support staff and students
- Attachment 3: Contact Record for volunteers, relief/ support staff and students



AUTHORISATION



This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Parkdale Preschool on 4 May 2023 **REVIEW DATE:** APRIL 2026

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ATTACHMENT 1. SAMPLE INDUCTION CHECKLIST FOR VOLUNTEERS, SUPPORT/RELIEF STAFF AND STUDENTS

• Please print on letterhead

Induction Checklist for all Volunteers, Support/Relief Staff and Students

Name:

_____ Date: ___

To be completed by all volunteers and students participating at Parkdale Preschool and returned to the nominated supervisor prior to commencing at the service.

Volunteer/Student/ Support or Relief Staff	Please tick
I have been given a tour of the preschool and its facilities.	
I have been given access to all the policies and procedures of Parkdale Preschool, The policies and procedures manual of Parkdale Preschool is available on the preschool website (<u>www.parkdalepreschool.com.au</u>) and in the preschool foyer.	
I understand the content of service policies and will follow all procedures, including those relating to:	
• conduct while at the service (Code of Conduct Policy)	
 CCYP Child Safety Standards and that Parkdale Preschool is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. 	
• emergency, evacuation, fire and safety, including locations of fire extinguishers and emergency exits (<i>Emergency and Evacuation Policy</i>) and in the event of an emergency, relief staff, child learning support staff/volunteers/students must comply with the directions of the preschool staff.	
• must abide by the conditions of use for the Parkdale Preschool IT facilities when accessing the preschool computers, iPads and any other technology, including use of the preschool Wi-Fi. (Information and Communication Technology Policy)	
• accidents at the service (Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy)	
• dealing with medical conditions (Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy, Asthma Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy, Diabetes Policy, Epilepsy Policy and Administration of Medication Policy)	
• good hygiene practices (Hygiene Policy and Food Safety Policy)	
• dealing with infectious diseases (Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy)	
• first aid arrangements for children and adults, including the location of the nearest first aid kit (childrens bathroom, emergency evacuation kits and storage shed. (Administration of First Aid Policy) .Please note that all preschool educational staff are qualified first aid providers and volunteers, and students should immediately inform staff if any children require first aid	



Volunteer/Student/ Support or Relief Staff	Please tick
 daily routines- An outline of the preschool's daily routines and timetables is available on the preschool noticeboard in the office and classroom. 	
• the importance of OHS and following safe work practices (Occupational Health and Safety Policy). You should follow safe work practices at all times, including when lifting (manual handling), climbing ladders etc.	
• interacting appropriately with children (Interactions with Children Policy)	
 reporting of serious incidents and notifiable incidents at the service (Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Occupational Health and Safety Policy) 	
• reporting hazards in the workplace (Occupational Health and Safety Policy). Please report any potential hazards to a member of staff as soon as practicable.	
handling complaints and grievances (Compliments and Complaints Policy)	
• child safety and wellbeing and child protection including how to respond to concerns (<i>Child Safe Environment Policy</i>)- Parkda Preschool has zero tolerance for child abuse, harassment, bullying and discrimination. Concerns should report to the Nominated Supervisor, Committee of Management or your supervisor from your school/organisation as appropriate.	
• privacy and confidentiality of information (Privacy and Confidentiality Policy)	
I am aware of the non-smoking policy of the service and not be affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair my capacity to complete my tasks (<i>Tobacco, Alcohol, and other Drugs Policy</i>). Parkdale Preschool buildings, playgrounds and within four metres of the front entrance/ parking area are non-smoking areas.	
The expectations of my placement/engagement, my role and responsibilities (including attending to the requirements of children with additional needs) have been clearly explained to me by my supervisor	
I am aware that I am expected to participate in general tasks, including maintaining the environment in a clean, safe and tidy condition	

Induction and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement

I hereby acknowledge that I have participated in the induction (as above) and have read the Participation of Relief Staff, Child learning support staff/Volunteers and Students Policy, Guidelines and Code of Conduct. I understand its contents and I agree to abide by the principles, practices and consequences set out within. I understand that the Approved Provider (Parkdale Preschool Association) will address any breach of this policy, and that any *serious* breach could lead to legal or disciplinary action.

Name:	Signature:
Date:	
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Participation of Volunteers & Students Policy |Date reviewed April 23

Staff Member Conducting Induction (Name & Signature):

Students Under 18 Years of Age

As the parent/guardian of the above named volunteer/student, I agree that my child is permitted to use the preschool's IT facilities (in line with the guidelines for use). I understand that Parkdale Preschool provides no censorship for anything a volunteer/student may access.

Name: ______ Signature: ______

Date: _____





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ATTACHMENT 2. GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS, SUPPORT/RELIEF STAFF AND STUDENTS

Support Staff, Volunteers and Students Guidelines

Welcome to Parkdale Preschool. We hope you enjoy your experience here. If you have any questions, please ask!

Attendance, Absences and Belongings

- If you are going to be away or late please phone the kindergarten on 9580 1155. You can leave a message anytime or speak to staff from 8am 4pm every day.
- Make sure you are aware of any parking restrictions in the area we recommend parking in the untimed spots along the northern end of the train station or one of the streets further back from the preschool. A spot is only available in the kinder car parks on some days/times (please check before parking your car there you will need a pass).
- Upon arrival and departure, please sign the visitor's book located in the classroom near the front door, on top of the children's lockers.
- Please store your personal belongings in the office (visitor basket) or in one of the visitor baskets on top of the classroom lockers, away from the children's reach, Mobile phones should always be kept in bags and only checked after the session is finished or during your break. If you need to be contactable during the session or will need to check your phone please speak to the teacher at the beginning of the session.
- Please wear smart casual clothes that are suitable for playing with children, getting down on the floor and being involved in a variety of activities and general tasks that may include paint and other messy materials. Shoes should be closed-toed.
- We will go outside every day if it's cold or rainy, bring a jacket and gumboots, scarf etc. A broad brimmed hat (not a cap) and sunscreen must be worn outside from 1st September to 30 April (if you do not bring one, we can give you a spare hat).
- There is always something to do in the classroom. If you are not busy or engaged, look around and see what needs to be done or if there are any children that you might want to spend time with. If you are still unsure ask a staff member.
- If you are doing a work experience placement through your school and are entitled to be paid, please remember to fill out the payment request form and return it to the Administration Officer.

Interactions with Children & Families

- Child learning support staff, Volunteers and students at the preschool are always to be under the direct supervision of the staff and are **not to be in sole supervision of individuals or groups of children**.
- Tell the children your name and learn and use the children's names. Get to know all of the children. Tell us if you would like the children to wear name tags for the first day or two.
- Position yourself facing into the classroom with your back to the wall or facing towards the centre of the playground when possible so you can see as many children as possible. This assists you to supervise better and also helps to invite other children into play.
- Encourage children to express themselves and their opinions and respect the rights of all children.
- Make plans to ensure children's success eg. "try turning the puzzle pieces over first" when a child asks you for help with a puzzle. Suggest children try for themselves before helping/doing if they ask you. Before helping a child who appears to need help, ask if they would like assistance.
- Make sure you have a child's attention by getting down to their level so you can look in their eyes (try crouching or sitting) and saying their name before you start to talk, ask questions, give instructions.
- Speak to children in an encouraging and positive manner. Give each child positive guidance and encourage appropriate behaviour. Use phrases such as "we walk inside" rather than "don't run" or "feet stay on the floor" rather than "don't put your feet on the chair" help children to understand what is expected of them.
- Let children's artwork be their own. If a child asks you to do or draw something for them, ask them to try first. If they ask you to write their name, check the spelling on the class list and write it for them.

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- Give children appropriate choices such as "which blocks will you pack away first?" rather than "do you want to help pack up?"
- Be a positive role model at all times. Role model what children should do as they watch and learn from you and those around them eg. at pack up time, help to give children materials to put away and show them what to do. Avoid standing over them during play or group times sit on the floor with the children and join in singing, dancing etc. at group times.
- Regard all children equally, and with respect and dignity including their cultural values, age, physical and intellectual development and abilities.
- Ensure all interactions with children are undertaken in full view of staff and avoid unnecessary physical contact. If physical contact is required, inform the child and ask them if they are comfortable with this interaction. If a child repeatedly initiates physical contact such as sitting in your lap (or initiates contact you are uncomfortable with), redirect their attention. If you are unable to redirect the child's attention, speak with staff for assistance and advice.
- All assistance to children with activities of a personal nature such as toileting and changing clothes should only be done by staff.
- We welcome you to chat with parents, but please be mindful of your role as a volunteer or student.

Confidentiality

- Maintain confidentiality about all children and respect the child's and their family's rights to privacy. We welcome you to share information with others about the centre and our program and philosophy but when you do, the identities of the children and families must remain anonymous.
- If you have concerns about a child, please have a quiet chat to the class teacher. Please do not speak directly with the parent about your concerns.

Occupational Health & Safety

- When you arrive at the preschool, please wash your hands before commencing any duties. Please remember to wash your hands before and after eating, after using the toilet or blowing your nose or a child's nose.
- Please encourage children to wash their hands at the appropriate times, to cover their cough with the inside of their arm and to blow their nose as needed.
- In the event of an emergency, Child learning support staff/volunteers/students must comply with the directions of the preschool staff. Take note the location of emergency exits and evacuation/lockdown assembly points. This is also listed on the evacuation plans located near the door of each room at the preschool.
- Occupational Health and Safety is of great importance. Child learning support staff/Volunteers/students should follow safe work practices at all times, including when lifting (manual handling), climbing ladders etc.
- Help to maintain a safe environment for the children by ensuring that hot drinks, chemicals and cleaning products are not left in reach of children and doors are kept closed. Inform staff of identifiable hazards as soon as practicable.
- Tell a staff member every time you leave the group/room/playground/premises (such as to go to the toilet) and close all doors behind you.
- If a child, staff member or volunteer has an incident, injury, trauma or illness at the preschool; a staff member will complete the necessary reports. If you witness an incident, injury or trauma, please alert a staff member immediately. As a witness, you may also be asked to contribute information and sign the report. If the incident, injury or trauma involving a child is serious, a report will also be made to the Department of Education and Training.

Use of IT Facilities

Users of the Internet and IT facilities including computers, iPads and printers provided by Parkdale Preschool must not:





- Create or exchange messages that harass, slander, intimidate, embarrass, defame, vilify, and seek to offend or make threats against another person or group of people
- Access or transmit at any time material (language and images) that a reasonable person could consider indecent, offensive, obscene, profane, sexually explicit or objectionable including pornographic material (it will not be a defense to claim that the recipient was a consenting adult)
- Create, copy, transmit or retransmit chain letters, spamming or other unauthorised mass mailings
- Use Parkdale Preschool IT facilities as a platform to gain unauthorised access to other systems
- Carry out activities that are illegal, inappropriate or offensive to fellow employees or the public; such activities include, but are not limited to, hate speech or material that ridicules others on the basis of race, creed, religion, colour, sex, disability, national origin or sexual orientation
- Make any personal communication that could create the perception that the communication was made in that person's official capacity as an employee or volunteer of Parkdale Preschool
- Conduct any outside business or private employment
- Play games (unless granted permission)
- Assist any election campaign or lobby any government organisation
- Exchange or take any confidential or sensitive information held by Parkdale Preschool unless authorised as part of their duties including photographs of children and the preschool environment
- Publish the centre email address on a 'private' business card
- Breach copyright through making copies of, or transmitting material, or commercial software.
- View or interfere with other users' files or directories (for example, staff/committee) or knowingly obtain unauthorised access to information or damage, delete, insert or otherwise alter data without permission.

Child Protection

- Support staff, Volunteers and students at the preschool are always to be under the direct supervision of the staff and are not to be in sole supervision of individuals or groups of children. Ensure all interactions with children are undertaken in full view of staff and avoid unnecessary physical contact. All assistance to children with activities of a personal nature eg. toileting and changing clothes should only be done by staff.
- Parkdale Preschool is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. We are committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.
- Child abuse refers to an act or omission by an adult that endangers or impairs a child's physical and/or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident but often takes place over time. Child abuse includes physical, sexual (including grooming), emotional and psychological abuse as well as neglect, family violence and Racial, cultural or religious abuse.
- Criminal offences have been introduced in Victoria in the Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014 to protect children from child abuse:
 - o Failure to disclose: All adults (not just those working with children) have a legal duty to report information about child sexual abuse to Victoria Police. The offence applies to any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 and fails to report that information to the Victoria Police.
 - o Grooming offence: The offence targets predatory conduct by an adult with the intent of committing child sexual abuse. Conduct may include communication, including online communication, with a child under the age of 16 or their parents.



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ATTACHMENT 3. CONTACT RECORD FOR VOLUNTEERS, SUPPORT/RELIEF STAFF AND STUDENTS



Relief/ Support Staff, Volunteers and Students Record

*Required as per Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 145, 147, 149

Date of Birth*:

Address*:	Ad	dr	es	s*	:
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Phone Number:

Email:

Signature:_____

Date:_____

Working With Children Clearance copy attached and original sighted by:

(if aged 18 and over)

Known Allergies or Medical Conditions: (include or attach management/action plan if required)

Emergency Contact Details

Name:

Relationship:

Phone Number:

Name:

Relationship:

Phone Number:

Anticipated Dates, Days and Hours of Participation*:

(see visitor log sign-in for daily participation)

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