Crossing All Bridges
Learning Centre

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

CONNECT, GROW, THRIVE

OUR VISION

To create a welcoming and inclusive community where individuals with varying developmental abilities embrace a love of life, a love of learning and lifelong friendships.

OUR MISSION

Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre exists to create and sustain, through compassionate dedicated staff:

- Programs to develop life skills in participants;
- A social and welcoming environment in which meaningful relationships and friendships are developed;
- Inclusive community experiences.

OUR BENEFICIARIES

Participants who are:

- age 18+ as well as youth transitioning out of high school;
- able to function with a 1:10 ratio with staff;
- able to participate and gain value from the program experience.

OUR VALUES

Community – We believe that by sharing common goals with our participants, families, and partners, a feeling of fellowship and value for each other will grow. When we work in collaboration with our community we can provide seamless and effective programs and services.

Inclusivity – We respect and value diverse life challenges as we commit to build programs and experiences that are inclusive of all participants, including those who might otherwise be excluded.

Respect – We demonstrate deep admiration and respect for our participants by treating them with dignity, encouraging their engagement, valuing their diversity and ensuring accessibility.

Choice – We create an environment that provides opportunity and empowerment for all. Exploring different and better ways to deliver programming ensures continuous improvement and promotes creativity in a stimulating learning environment.

Teamwork – We believe through our combined actions, we will build an effective and efficient community of colleagues, clients, families and partners.

Accountability – We are accountable to our participants, their families, our donors and sponsors by effectively managing our human, financial and physical resources.

Safety – We strive to provide a safe, secure and stable environment for our participants, staff, and volunteers.

At Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre, we measure our success by the personal growth of the participants we serve. This handbook applies to all participants enrolled in our day program, summer camp, and those who attend any external events such as after-hours programs. We pride ourselves in keeping the families and guardians well-informed about our programs and activities. We use a strength-based approach (methodology) to learning. CABLC's dedicated, knowledgeable and compassionate staff provide lifelong learning in a social, welcoming and inclusive environment where meaningful relationships and friendships are developed.

We are dedicated to enriching the lives of individuals living with special needs through a range of inclusive and engaging services. We offer a structured Day Program that provides meaningful daily activities focused on skill-building, social interaction, and personal development. During the warmer months, our vibrant Summer Camp delivers a fun and supportive environment filled with recreational, educational, and creative experiences tailored to meet diverse needs. In addition, we organize and participate in various external events throughout the year, promoting community inclusion, independence, and lasting memories for participants. Through these services, we strive to foster growth, confidence, and a strong sense of belonging for every individual we support.

The Participant Handbook was created as a tool to provide important information that will be helpful to the participants and families who utilize our services. Any additional questions that have not been answered after reading the Handbook can be addressed by contacting the Manager of Operations or Executive Director.

The following categories are covered in this Handbook:

- Registration
- Arrival and Departure Times
- Transportation
- Lunch Practices and Break Time
- Medications
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Code of Conduct
- Dress Code
- Sexuality
- Computer Conduct
- Cell Phones and iPads
- Safety Procedures
- Adverse Weather and Closure
- Illness, Sickness and Contagious Diseases

- Confidentiality
- General Information
- Questions/Concerns/Complaint Process
- Freedom from Abuse
- Community Outings

Registration:

- New participants to the program must complete an Intake Registration Form, which includes: general medical and behavioural information, emergency contacts, consent for transportation and social media release. These forms will need to be updated and resubmitted annually, or if any changes occur throughout the time the participant is attending.
- An intake meeting will be scheduled for new participants to review information and set up a trial visit.
- There is a 90-day (three month) trial period for all new participants to ensure CABLC is the right fit for everyone. At any time during the 90-trial period either party can decide that it's not a good fit.
- Tuition is based on CABLC's fiscal year (August 1 to July 31). All registration forms are to be completed and handed back into the Centre with the Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) Form by a determined registration date. The yearly tuition fee reserves a space for a participant and is essential for the successful operation of the organization.
- Payments are processed on the last day of each month for the current month service was received and receipts are issued once PAD has been successfully processed.
- Participants who wish to use their Passport funding through the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and who would like to designate CABLC as the Broker or Administrator, can do so by contacting the Manager of Operations directly, a fee will apply.
- Tuition refunds will be available only to participants who are permanently withdrawing from the Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre. Notice of withdrawal from program must be submitted in writing one month prior to ensure operations run smoothly and to qualify for a full refund.
- Refunds for a medical reason must be confirmed with a doctor's note.

Arrival and Departure Times:

- Program hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Drop off begins no earlier than 8:30 a.m. and with pick up no later than 3:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

- Families requiring extended hours (8:00 am to 8:30 am and 3:30 pm to 4:00 pm) can request this at the time of registration at an additional fee extended period.

Transportation:

- **It is the sole responsibility of the parent(s) or caregiver(s) to arrange transportation for their participant to and from Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre on the days in which they are registered to attend our program. Fees will be incurred for late pick-ups.**
- We request that parent(s) or caregiver(s) inform us of any changes in regular transportation arrangements ahead of time.

Lunch Practices and Break Time:

At Crossing All Bridges, we provide a catered lunch option for an addition fee. Participants wishing to purchase the lunch option must do so at the time of registration or at least a week prior to the day they wish to participate to ensure proper planning.

- Each participant has a lunch break and is responsible for the cleanup of their lunch space after finishing their lunch.
- Participants who bring their lunch are responsible for the cleanup of the equipment that they use to prepare their lunch.
- Microwaves are available to warm lunches.
- No access to refrigerators.

Break Time:

- Healthy snacks can be brought to CABLC but can only be eaten during coffee time or lunch breaks. We designate these times to ensure food and beverages are cleaned up before program activities resume.
- We can make accommodations for medical reasons as prescribed by a health care professional.

Medications:

- The staff members at CABLC are not trained to administer medications.
- If a participant brings medication to the Centre, it is their own responsibility to administer the medication. Approval must be obtained by management.

Rights and Responsibilities:

Participants who attend Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre are asked to follow our "*7 Daily Standards*" which include:

Respect yourself and others
Respect the Centre's property
Arrive to programs on time
Always use appropriate behaviour and a positive attitude
Always use appropriate language
Participate in programs
Finish tasks accordingly

- Participants have the right to a safe environment and must follow safety rules.
- Participants have the right to voice their opinion but have the responsibility to respect the opinions of others.
- Participants have the right to use CABLC's books, materials, and equipment but also have the responsibility of taking care of all CABLC's possessions.
- Participants have the right to respect and fair treatment but also have the responsibility to respect and treat others fairly regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or ability.
- Participants have the right to quality programming but have the responsibility to do their best.
- Participants have the right to privacy (washrooms, personal space, personal devices etc.).

Code of Conduct:

Any person attending on CABLC property for any reason, while on transit vehicles, at CABLC related events or activities, during community outings, or in any other circumstances that could have an impact on the climate of CABLC must not:

- Engage in bullying behaviours;
- Commit sexual assault;
- Commit theft;
- Be in possession of any weapon;
- Use any object to threaten or intimidate another person;
- Cause injury to any person with an object intentionally or recklessly;
- Compromise the safety and dignity of persons with the potential for invasion of personal privacy made possible by the inappropriate use of PED (personal electronic devices). PED's are wireless and/or portable electronic handheld equipment that can be used for the purpose of communication,

entertainment, image capture/recording, sound recording and information transmitting/receiving/storing, etc.
- Be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or any other illegal substance
- Violate privacy.
- Abuse of any type will not be tolerated.

Participants are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves and for others. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when a participant:

- Fully participates to the best of their ability in all aspects of the program.
- Attends program punctually and regularly.
- Follows the established rules.
- Obeys the safety rules.

Dress Code:

- For safety reasons CABLC has developed a "No open toe or open back shoe policy", this means closed toe shoes must be worn at all times.
- Please dress appropriately for the seasonal weather and seasonal activities.
- CABLC cannot be responsible for lost items. Items that have been left at the Centre longer than one month will be donated to Goodwill.

Sexuality:

At Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre we encourage participants to honour personal boundaries in all of their relationships at the Centre.

- Our bodies are our own and nobody has the right to touch us.
- We all respect one another and our differences.
- We ask for permission first (consent) before crossing personal boundaries.
- Hugging is discouraged, alternative forms of greeting such as: fist bumps, high fives, thumbs up are encouraged.
- Participants do not ask staff members, volunteers, other participants or co-op students on dates or for personal information such as cell phone numbers or social media contacts.

Computer Conduct:

- Computers can only be used when permission is given by staff.
- Participants are not permitted to put personal passwords on CABLC electronic devices.

- Only appropriately identified sites are to be used while accessing the Internet. CABLC enforces parental controls and has the right to monitor sites. Participants are strictly prohibited from surfing the Internet or accessing popular culture sites or any sites that may be considered racist or pornographic. Participants caught using inappropriate sites may be subject to immediate disciplinary action.

Cell Phones and iPads:

- iPads are to be used as assistive tools only.
- Cell phones are not to be used during programming time and should be kept in a safe place if brought to the Centre.
- Lost or stolen items are the responsibility of the participant.

Safety Procedures:

- Fire drills, including alarm testing and building evacuation, are completed regularly throughout the program year. This is a mandatory procedure approved by the Brantford Fire Department. Participants will be leaving the building through the approved routes outlined in CABLC's Fire Plan and will remain outside in the designated spot until given the "all clear" signal. Upon the event of a real fire, participants will use the fire drill practice routine but will be led to a safe building that has been prearranged, and telephone emergency numbers will be called to make arrangements for participant pick up. We highly encourage active participation in all safety procedures.
- All employees working in our Social Enterprise, Shredding Barriers have undergone basic Health and Safety training including but not limited to; safe equipment operating, how to ensure a clean and safe work environment, and proper evacuation during an emergency.

Adverse Weather and Closure:

- In the event of closure due to inclement weather, Crossing All Bridges staff will post on Facebook and will provide information to local radio stations Lite 92.1.
- If closure occurs during operating hours, participant's emergency contacts will be called, and it will be the responsibility of the parent(s) or caregiver(s) to arrange for immediate pick up.

Illness, Sickness and Contagious Diseases:

It is the responsibility of Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre to provide an environment that is as free of germs, illness and disease as possible which includes professional daily cleaning. This policy applies to all employees, students,

volunteers, co-op students, and anyone else attending or onsite at Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre and must be followed to ensure the health of everyone.

- It is the responsibility of the parent(s) or caregiver(s) to recognize the symptoms of illness and contagious diseases and to notify CABLC of same.
- If a participant shows visible signs of illness and is sent to program when they should have stayed home, CABLC staff has the right to contact parent(s) or caregiver(s) and request that the participant go home.
- Participants should not return to the Centre until they are free from symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhea for 48 hours and are able to participate fully in the programs.

Confidentiality

- CABLC takes the issue of confidentiality very seriously and values and respects the privacy of all individuals.
- CABLC pledges that personal information will not be used or disclosed for purposes other than those for which it was collected except with the consent of the participant or legal guardian or as by law.
- Participant files will be maintained in a locked, secured area. The Executive Director and Manager of Operations will manage all requests to view participant files.
- A participant and the parent(s) or guardian may, by appointment, review or obtain a copy of the participant's file at the Learning Centre in the presence of the Executive Director or Manager of Operations.
- A consent form and Authorization for Access to Participant Files must be completed prior to access of the participant file.
- Participant files could be stored for up to seven years in compliance with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) standards.

General Information:

Washrooms:

- Our Centre is equipped with one accessible washroom as well as separate men's and women's washrooms, to ensure comfort and accessibility for all participants, staff and visitors. These washrooms are maintained regularly to uphold high standards of cleanliness and hygiene, supporting a safe and inclusive environment for everyone.
- Participants are not to leave sink taps running.
- Participants are not to flush large amounts of toilet paper, paper towel, or other foreign objects in the toilet.

Lockers:

- CABLC has a number of lockers available for participant use.
- Staff will remind participants to keep their locker space clean as well as designate specific times throughout the year for locker clean-out.

Extra Clothes:

Participants are encouraged to keep an extra set of clothes in their locker. Extra clothes can be left in a bag on the participants hook. Please ensure names are written on each individual clothing item. Indoor shoes are also recommended.

Concerns/Questions/Complaints Process:

- CABLC has an "open door policy". We value ideas, suggestions and input.
- Concerns, ideas and suggestions can be made to the Executive Director or Manager of Operations directly by email, phone or in writing.
- CABLC offers an anonymous comment/feedback box located in administration. All comments and feedback are monitored by the Executive Director. Formal complaints can be submitted directly to administration.
- Upon request, the Manager of Operations can set up an appointment to meet with families/caregivers to discuss matters pertaining to the Centre and their participant(s).

Contact Us:

Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre

65 Sky Acres Drive

Brantford, ON N3R 5W6

Phone: 519-751-0123

Email: info@crossingallbridges.ca

Website: www.crossingallbridges.ca

(Please return this page with your completed registration)

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I, _____ (insert your name) have read and understood the contents of CABLC's Participant Handbook.

Also, I understand that the practices and policies contained in the Handbook are guidelines prepared by the Organization and may be changed or altered at any time.

Please sign below to let us know you have read and understood the contents of the CABLC Handbook. When complete, please return the signed document to the Supervisor of Operations.

Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Parent/Caregiver _____

Date: _____