

READY, SET, GO! PRESCHOOL

Program Handbook, Bowness



About Trellis Society

Vision

A community where everyone can flourish.

Purpose

We support growth across generations.

Land Acknowledgement

Trellis's commitment to reconciliation starts with acknowledging our honour and privilege to live and work within the Treaty 7 territory. We acknowledge the traditional and ancestral territory and oral practices of the Blackfoot Confederacy, which includes the Siksika Nation, the North and South Piikani Nations, and the Kainai Nation. We also acknowledge the other members of Treaty 7 First Nations, the Tsuut'ina and Îyãñé Nakoda (Stoney Nakoda) which include Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations. In addition, the City of Calgary is home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (Region 3). Finally, we acknowledge all nations, genders, and spirits who live, work, and play in Moh'kinstsis, the Blackfoot name for Calgary, and Treaty 7 Region of Southern Alberta who help us steward this land, honor and celebrate this territory.

About Ready, Set, Go! Preschool

Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) is a play-based, emergent curriculum preschool designed for children ages 3 to 5. It is our hope that each child will have fun while learning and growing, whether they are experiencing preschool for the first time or getting ready for kindergarten.

Eligibility

Children must be three years old, completely potty trained, and able to use the toilet independently (wiping bums, getting dressed, etc.) by their preschool start date. We will not hold spaces for children who are not yet three years old (ex. if your child turns three in November, we will not hold a space in September and October for your child to start in November. We can add your child to the waitlist, and if there is room in the program in November, we will notify you.

What We Believe

- We believe children have the right to feel happy, safe, and secure.
- We believe all children are different and have individual learning needs.
- We believe children learn best through play.
- We believe children can expand their thinking skills, ability to play socially, and how they regulate their feelings.
- We believe children have the right to give and receive affection and attention.
- We believe you are your child's first and most important teacher.

Our Goals

- To encourage learning through play.
- To offer children choices within a safe classroom environment.
- To encourage self-esteem, intellectual, physical, and emotional growth, social development, creativity, independence, and good communication skills.
- To prepare your child for kindergarten and success in school with the help of YOU, the parent, as their most important teacher.

Four R's Philosophy

Trellis programs ask all children participating to follow the four R's:

1. Respect Yourself
2. Respect Others
3. Respect the Environment (or Club)
4. Responsibility

Our staff strive to model these four principles and review them with children regularly at the start of programs with examples of what these principles look like in action.

We make every attempt to role model positive social and emotional skills through programs and teachable moments.

Location & Contact Information

BOWNESS READY, SET, GO! PRESCHOOL

36, 7930 Bowness Rd NW Calgary

Phone: 403-571-051

Cell: 403-512-2330

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday	
Pre-Care AM	7:30 - 8:30 AM
Morning Class	8:30 - 11:30 AM
Lunch	11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Afternoon Class (Mon-Thu)	12:15 - 3:30 PM
Post-Care PM (Mon-Thu)*	3:30 - 5:30 PM
Full Day	Mon-Thu, 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM Friday, 8:30 - 11:30 AM

*not available at all locations

OPEN: September - June

All closures are communicated in advance.

The classroom will open each day at the scheduled times above. Although the teachers are in the room, they are busy preparing for the class. We ask that you wait with your child outside the preschool door until the doors are open.

Classes end at the scheduled times above, and we ask you to **arrive at the program on time to pick up your child** out of respect for the preschool staff team as well as the child's routine.

Program Activities

At Ready, Set, Go! your child will be exposed to a daily routine and a variety of play centers. Each center fosters growth in a variety of developmental areas. This is what your child will learn at each centre and beyond:

Dramatic Play Centre: Expand their imagination and other perspectives and roles, expand thinking and wondering, build friendships, and improve conversational skills.

Building and Manipulatives Centre: Strengthen fine motor skills, strengthen focus, expand imagination, think outside the box, and work together with other children.

Gym Time: Exercise, practice taking turns and teamwork, strengthen locomotor and stationary skills.

Art Centre: Expand creativity, strengthen fine motor skills, explore tools and materials, and self-expression.

Circle Time: Increase their attention span, take turns speaking in a group, practice conversation skills, practice thinking and sorting, and explore academics.

Outdoor time: Our program emphasizes the importance of outdoor play and learning through nature. As such we will be outdoor every day nurturing childrens love for exploration and the outdoors.

Sensory Bins: Learn to take turns, regulate emotions, and explore different textures and sensations.

Quiet Space: Learn self-regulation techniques and have a quiet and calm space to take time alone.

Program Costs & Fees

Government of Alberta Affordability Grant

Preschool fees are reduced for families through the Government of Alberta Affordability Grant for children who are not yet attending Grade 1 and who are attending the program during regular school hours.

Government of Alberta Child Care Subsidy

Families can apply for additional subsidies through the Government of Alberta Child Care Subsidy: www.alberta.ca/child-care-subsidy.aspx. Families are responsible for applying for subsidies and renewing their subsidies to help offset the costs of their childcare fees. Any unpaid portion of subsidized childcare is the financial responsibility of the enrolling parent.

When applying for subsidy, families should select Ready Set Go Preschool and Family Program in the drop-down menu.

Due Dates

Payments are due on the 1st of each month. Payment plans are always available, and parents can speak to staff about setting up these plans.

Payment Options

Payments can be made by credit card online through our Online Registration Portal, or by cash, debit, credit, or cheque at reception. Families also have the option of setting up signing up for auto payments.

Cancellation

Trellis reserves the right to modify and/or cancel program offerings where required due to low registration and/or changes to provincial regulations. Cancellation and/or modification decisions made regarding registration will be communicated to families no less than 5 days prior to the start of programming.

Cancellation and/or modification decisions made in relation to provincial regulations and guidelines will be communicated to families as quickly as possible after Trellis receives notification.

Withdrawals

If you wish to cancel your registration and withdraw your child from our programs, we require 30 days' notice (ex: notice must be given March 1 for an April 1 withdrawal. Fees will still be charged for March). This allows us to ensure that we can move children into our programs from the waitlist at the next month's start date.

Refunds

There will be no reduction of childcare fees due to child illness, family vacation, identified closure dates, and/or unexpected closure due to circumstances beyond the control of the Trellis Hubs. Due to the fixed nature of operational costs to Trellis, refunds will:

- Be made available in the case that programming is closed for more than 50% of programming days (50% refund)
- Not be made available for short-term closures of programming (such as 72-hour closures in case of a single outbreak)
- Be available to families when registration is cancelled by the family with at least 2 weeks' notice

Attendances/Absences

If your child is going to be absent, please phone or send a message to your child's teachers at the corresponding RSG number listed on the front page of this welcome handbook.

If you cannot reach the teachers directly, please leave a voicemail message. If your child misses class, the teachers will reach out to see how your child is doing.

If your child is going to be away from preschool for more than one week, please let the program staff know.

PLEASE NOTE: If your child is away for an extended period, parents are still required to pay in full unless arrangements have been made with the Program Manager.

Pick-Ups

Your child(ren) will not be released to anyone you have not identified during registration as someone authorized to pick them up. If you would like to add additional people, please let the Club staff know. Staff reserve the right to ask for identification from anyone who is picking up a child.

Late Pick-Ups

Our programs end at 5:30 p.m. each day and children must be picked up by this time. Late pick-up fees will apply to all children **not picked up by 5:30 p.m. or by the end of their registered program time**. The late fee is **\$1/minute** until the child is picked up. Late fees must be paid the following school day, and parents will be provided a receipt.

Continual late pick-ups will result in an increase in the late pick-up fees. If late pick-ups continue, staff will assess whether the program is the right fit for the family's needs and may remove the child from the program.

If a parent/guardian is late picking up their child and did not notify staff, staff will begin contacting the provided emergency numbers. If both the parents and the emergency contacts cannot be reached after 30 minutes, the Southern Alberta Child Intervention Services (SACIS) will be contacted and notified.

Registration Information

Registration can be completed on our website www.growwithtrellis.ca/for-children/preschool. You can also set up a registration appointment with a staff by calling reception. New registrations are processed monthly, with monthly start dates throughout the year, until program capacity is reached.

During the school year, a non-refundable \$50 deposit is required to hold your space.

Once programs are full, new registrants are put on a waitlist. If space opens up in a program, we will contact families on the waitlist to offer a space in our program. New registrations are processed monthly, with monthly start dates available on the first school day of the month until program capacity is reached.

Allergies

All preschools are nut-free zones!

If your child has an allergy, please NOTIFY the leaders.

Teachers need to know the severity of the allergy and be instructed on what to do in the case of an allergic reaction. If your child has an inhaler, epi-pen, or ana-kit, one must be left on the premises in case of an emergency. Please ensure it is clearly labeled with your child's name, and dosage instructions and that it is in the original container. Licensing requires that a list of the names of any children with allergies be posted on our notice board.

Administration of Medication

Preschool teachers do not administer medication other than life-saving medications listed in the allergy section above. Please ensure forms for life-saving medication are properly filled out. Life-saving medication (such as epi-pens) must be clearly labelled with your child's information. If your child requires any other type of medication, you will be responsible for ensuring they have received the required dose before or after class.

Meals & Snacks

We provide two nutritious snacks in the day for the entire class, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. If your child is attending full days, please pack a healthy lunch with them.

If your child has specific dietary restrictions, please let the staff know. Preschool locations are allergy-aware and sensitive. We ask that no parent or guardian send their child with any food that contains nuts.

Safety

When your child joins one of our Ready Set Go! Preschools, you and your child will get a tour to learn everything you need to know about staying safe while in the program.

This includes:

- **Emergency exits, routes, and where we gather**
- **The location of fire extinguishers and first aid kits**

There are also signs throughout our areas reminding us how to stay safe and where to go in an emergency. If you're ever unsure of these things or want more information about what we do in emergencies, please ask staff.

In the event of an emergency, the following steps will be followed:

- **Children will be calmly directed to stop all activity and line up by the emergency exit located in the classroom.**
- **The staff will lead children to the designated location (see Emergency Evacuation Locations)**
- **Under no circumstances will anyone re-enter the building unless directed by emergency personnel and/or a program supervisor**
- **All children and staff will be accounted for**
- **When staff leave the program, the emergency contact file will be taken with them containing each child's personal information, as well as the daily attendance sheet**
- **If required, parents/guardians will be contacted by phone and the children will stay at the designated location until they can be picked up**

Safety Drills

Emergency evacuation and fire drills will be practiced once per month during the school year. Children are told in advance when the drill will happen and why. At the time of the drill, children will be escorted single file out of the preschool to a specific muster point at the specified evacuation location. Once each child has been accounted for, we return to the classroom and resume normal activity.

Practicing these safety drills is essential to your child's safety so they are comfortable with drill procedures.

Emergency Evacuation Locations

In the event of a real emergency, the children will be evacuated to:

BOWNESS: Muster Point, Green wall behind the Club

Universal Precautions & Illness Prevention

We follow the guidelines of universal precautions in all interactions in our program. For the health and safety of all children and staff, please do not send your child to the Club if they are feeling unwell and/or are displaying symptoms of any other illness that could put the health of others at risk.

Some indicators that your child should stay home may include but are not limited to:

- **Fever over 99.5F (37.5C) Head Lice**
- **Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea**
- **Yellow skin or eyes**
- **Eye infections e.g. conjunctivitis**
- **Cough**
- **Runny nose**
- **New or unexplained rash with fever**
- **Rapid or difficulty breathing**
- **Sore throat**
- **Present ear infection Muscle or joint aches Chicken pox, measles, etc.**

If your child shows up and/or becomes ill while at preschool, you will be called immediately so you can take them home or to the doctor. Until you arrive, a staff

member will be assigned to care for your child while ensuring that others in the program have limited exposure.

Children who have been sick must be symptom-free for 24 hours or have a physician's note prior to returning to the program.

If your child is exposed to or has a viral infection (contagious disease) such as measles, mumps, or chickenpox, they must be immediately removed from the program by a parent/guardian.

Staff are required to notify Alberta Health Services and other parents of the children who have been exposed.

You will be notified immediately in the event of a serious accident or illness involving your child. Staff will also seek out the appropriate emergency and/or medical attention and care. If you cannot be reached, staff will contact your emergency contact. Any minor incidents will be dealt with by staff and debriefed with you at pick-up.

Spontaneous Outings & Field Trips

Often when the weather is nice, the class will go for a walk or visit a nearby park. Please dress your child in appropriate clothing for the weather. Dress them in layers if it is cold, and remember it is better to overdress than underdress.

All off-site field trips require parental consent for a child to participate. This consent will include specifics about the off-site activity including mode of transportation, supervision arrangements, date of the off-site activity, time of departure from our location, and anticipated time of return. Modes of transportation could include walking, public transit, or a chartered bus.

Field trips will only occur when there are enough parent volunteers to meet student needs and required ratios.

What to Pack for Your Child

- Backpack
- Change of clothing including socks and underwear Indoor shoes
- Water bottle
- Lunch for full-day children
- Outdoor clothes/ items needed depending on the season (winter gear, raincoat, sunscreen, and a hat)

Open Door Policy

We have an open-door policy, which means you can come into the classroom as a parent volunteer. Due to licensing requirements, all volunteers must have a criminal record check with vulnerable sector verification completed.

The classroom volunteer provides an extra set of hands, eyes, and ears that help the program run as smoothly as possible. Please speak to the teachers to sign up for volunteering either within the classroom or for class outings.

Parent Support

We know that while parenting can be very rewarding, it can also be stressful at times. Our team is available if you have any questions, need a referral to another agency, or just need to talk. Parent involvement is a key component of our program.

The program also provides parents with opportunities to meet one-on-one with a teacher to discuss specific parenting challenges or to access referrals to other Trellis programs or community agencies.

If you ever have a question or concern, the teachers will be happy to speak to you outside the room rather than in front of the children. If you are unable to resolve any concerns, please contact the Program Manager.

Our Team

All our RSG staff are trained professionals who excel in delivering quality education to children based on their stage of development.

Preschool Teacher: Oversees daily operations of the preschool, curriculum plans, teacher-led activities, and overall safety of the classroom.

Early Childhood Educator: Supports the lead teacher in daily activities and maintains overall functioning and safety of the classroom.

Float Staff: Supports the program as an extra set of hands and provides support when a teacher is away.

Classroom Team: 2-3 Early Childhood Educators oversee daily operations of the preschool, curriculum, program planning and activities, and safety of the classroom.

Clubs Facilitators: Provide additional coverage to support programming and overall safety of the program space.

Child and Family Therapist: Children and families can be referred to our clinical team and counselling programs. The Child and Family Therapist works with children and families to best meet their needs.

Circle Keeper: Works with all participants to help kids and families strengthen a connection to culture in a good way. Guided by Elders and Knowledge Keepers, Circle Keepers invite individuals to participate in Ceremonies, Smudges, Sweats, community dinners, and Sharing Circles, engage in traditional learning, connect with Elders, and prepare medicine bundles and medicine bags.

Manager: Oversees the overall operations of the preschool and all associated staff.

Director: Provides direction and oversight to the preschool in alignment with other Trellis programs and priorities.

We also partner with community organizations to provide early intervention services and specialized supports for children in our Preschool who are experiencing learning challenges and developmental delay.

Your Rights

Voluntary Involvement: You have a choice whether you want to work with us or not. We encourage you to talk to staff and your supports before you decide. We can support you with accessing a different program if needed.

Advocacy: You have an important voice, and we will support you in advocating for yourself. We will also be there to advocate for you and can connect you to other advocates.

Dignity & Respect: You will always be treated with dignity and respect by everyone.

Support in Diversity, Safety, and Well-being: You will be respected and supported for who you are, what you believe in, and how you practice your culture.

Access Options to Connect or Reconnect with Natural Supports: Who are the people who are important to you? We can help you stay connected with them.

Indigenous, Cultural, Spiritual, 2SLGBTQIA+ Resources: You will be encouraged and supported to access communities that are important to you.

Future Planning: You have the right to be actively involved in planning for your future. This means you get to set goals that you want to work towards and make decisions that are important to you.

Conflict Resolution & Grievance Procedure: You have the right to be supported through times when you may not agree with your worker or the program. The full procedure is outlined later in this handbook.

Confidentiality: You tell us who we can share your information with. The only times we would share your information without your permission is because of a medical emergency, a concern for you or someone's safety, or a legal subpoena. We keep your information for at least seven (7) years, as required by law.

Intervention and Guidance Policy

Attending preschool is an exciting new experience for your child. To be able to play and learn as much as possible, some children may need to be refocused at times. We use what is called "positive discipline."

Our Approach

- Gain the child's attention in a respectful way Acknowledge the child's feelings
- Set limits
- Remind

- **Redirect**
- **Offer acceptable choices**
- **Use natural consequences**

At preschool, your child will never be punished or addressed in a way that diminishes their self-worth. Approaches like time-outs and limiting your child's movement will never be used. Instead, inappropriate behaviors will be addressed by:

- 1. Spending one-on-one time with a child to positively resolve the problem and redirect activity appropriately.**
- 2. Activities will be planned so that each child will have time on their own and time socializing in small peer groups, learning to cooperate with others.**
- 3. The teachers will use respectful language and encourage children to solve problems by negotiating.**
- 4. Children's feelings will be acknowledged. They will be given actual words to label their feelings and will be taught how to deal with a variety of emotions.**
- 5. Children will also be encouraged to understand the natural consequences of their actions.**
- 6. The children's ideas will be considered, and their cooperation encouraged.**
- 7. Problem-solving will be part of many activities, not just discipline situations.**

Because your child is in a new and exciting situation, they may need many reminders before they learn these rules. By talking things over, responding positively to good behavior, refocusing the child, and acknowledging feelings, the preschool can help your child learn valuable life skills.

In the event of continued inappropriate behavior that endangers themselves or other children, a discussion will take place with parents to determine strategies and develop a plan. If the behavior continues, the parent(s) of the child will be called to be part of the discussion and possible solutions must be decided upon before the child can return to the program.

Abuse, Harassment, and Bullying

Trellis is committed to ensuring everyone can achieve success in an environment free from abuse, harassment, and/or bullying.

Under no circumstances will any forms of abuse, harassment, and/or bullying be tolerated (from, to, and/or between persons served and staff alike). Such behaviours may result in disciplinary actions or criminal charges.

Due to the nature and concern of abusive, harassing, and bullying behaviour, Trellis will ensure information regarding support/advocacy, investigation, and resolution is available to all personnel employed by Trellis and/or individuals receiving services.

The following are protocols for reporting such circumstances:

ABUSE is considered to have occurred if one person experiences the following at the hands of another person:

- Physical actions that are intended to inflict violence or pain
- Emotional or psychological coercion used to manipulate
- Inappropriate and unwelcome sexual contact
- Failure to meet physical and/or emotional needs (also known as neglect)
- Bullying, inappropriate administration of medication
- Exploitation

HARASSMENT, as defined by the Alberta Human Rights Commission, occurs when someone is subjected to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct because of:

- Race
- Religious beliefs
- Colour
- Place of origin
- Gender
- Physical or mental disability
- Age
- Ancestry
- Place of origin
- Marital status
- Source of income
- Family status
- Sexual orientation

Alberta Human Rights Law prohibits worksite harassment based on these grounds.

BULLYING is “seen as acts or verbal comments that could ‘mentally’ hurt or isolate a person. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact as well.

Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate a person or group of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression.”

To formalize an abuse, harassment, or bullying complaint, follow the grievance procedure.

Grievance Procedure

The result should be that everyone understands the issue, how it was fixed, and how to prevent it from happening again. Every step of this process will be documented in your file.

1. Talk to STAFF directly about what is bothering you. You can ask a support person to be with you if you feel uncomfortable doing this on your own.
2. You may ask the PROGRAM MANAGER (your staff's boss) who will connect with you within 7 business days after getting your contact information, to be involved.
3. You may ask the PROGRAM DIRECTOR (your MANAGER'S boss) who will connect with you within 7 business days after getting your contact information, to be involved.
4. You may ask the COO and/or CEO (the Director's boss), who will connect with you within 7 business days after getting your contact information, to be involved. The outcome of this meeting will be shared in writing with everyone involved within 7 days. This will be the end of the Grievance Procedure and the decisions agreed on are final.

Office of the Child & Youth Advocate:	Office of the Ombudsman:
Toll-free 1-800-661-3446	Toll-free 1-888-455-2756
403-297-8435	403-297-6185
	info@ombudsman.ab.ca

Adjusting to Preschool

When starting preschool, your child may need some extra time to adjust to the new setting and new routine. Here are three tips to make the adjustment easier:

1. **Try staying a little less time each day.**
2. **Say goodbye and then leave promptly and avoid lingering.**
3. **No matter what, always tell your child when you are leaving. Children need to know they can trust us and that you'll be back later to get them.**

Preschool Supply Checklist

The following is a list of items that are required to be on-site daily for each individual child enrolled in the preschool program. Please remember that all items should be labeled with the child's name.

- **One pair of indoor shoes (no slippers, Crocs, or open-toe sandals, as these are not acceptable based on licensing regulations, and supportive footwear is required for running around)**
- **Please always send your child to preschool wearing socks!**
- **One pair of close-toed outdoor shoes (no sandals or Crocs)**
- **Two complete sets of change of clothing including the following:**
 - **Pants**
 - **Shirt**
 - **Underwear**
 - **Socks**
- **Reusable/washable bag to put soiled clothes in**

- Please store extra clothing in a labeled Ziplock bag and place in a cubby for easy access.
- Weather-appropriate attire (please check the weather forecast as Calgary is sometimes winter in the morning and summer in the afternoon)
- Hand moisturizer for after handwashing (and if your child has sensitive skin, please send appropriate hand soap)
- Reusable water bottle that your child can use (open and close) independently. Please avoid single-use drink containers.
- For spring/summer: a bottle of sunscreen (check expiry) if your child's skin is sensitive.
- Bug repellent (if you deem it necessary)

Seasonal Clothing

FALL: Jacket, something to cover ears (hoods do not count), light mitts (none on string), running shoes

WINTER: Coat, snow pants, insulated hat, waterproof mittens only, waterproof winter boots

SPRING: Raincoat, splash pants, light toque/warmish hat, light mitts, rubber boots

SUMMER: Light jacket, wide brim sunhat (preferably one that covers the neck too), sunglasses (if you find your child sensitive to the sun), running shoes

Who You Can Call for Support

For after-hours assistance or support:

Distress Centre 24/7 Crisis Line	403-266-4357
Non-Emergency Calgary Police Service	403-266-1234
Emergency Services	911
Southern Alberta Child Intervention Services	403-297-2995

Other important numbers:

HealthLink	811
Calgary Transit	403-974-4000
Office of the Child and Youth Advocate	1-800-661-3446
Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-387-KIDS (5437)
Calgary Child Advocacy Centre	403-428-5300
Kids Help Phone	1-800-668-6868 (or text CONNECT to 686868)
Centre for Sexuality	403-283-5580
Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse	1-866-403-8000
Poison and Drug Information Service	1-800-332-1414



OUR VISION

A community where everyone can flourish.

OUR PURPOSE

We support growth across generations.

OUR VALUES

Courage

We willingly embrace growth and don't see it as optional.

Empathy

We relentlessly care about the growth of others and won't let anyone go unsupported.

Learning

We choose to grow through uncertainty, even when the status quo feels easier.

Impact

We go beyond what seem doable and prove that growth is possible.

