

**HALIFAX & REGION
MILITARY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE**



**HENDERSON SWEETMAN
YOUTH CENTRE**

PARENT HANDBOOK

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The Halifax & Region Military Family Resource Centre (H&R MFRC) is proud to provide the Henderson Sweetman Youth Centre at our Shearwater site. The Youth Centre is a non-licensed program for youth 8 years old to 18 years old. Youth membership and some program fees are required to defray some of the operational costs (equipment & supplies).

Youth Centre memberships of \$50 give youth access to over 280 hours of Open Drop-ins annually!

LOCATION & HOURS OF OPERATION

Henderson Sweetman Youth Centre
5 Labrador Drive
Shearwater Building 204
Shearwater

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Drop-in: 1-5pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Program: 6-8pm	Drop-in: 4-6pm	Program: 1-5pm

*Hours are subject to change. Please refer to our monthly calendar (www.halifaxmfr.ca/youth) for specific program times and hours, including information regarding holidays and school closures.

Before a program, Youth Centre staff are not able to adequately supervise youth as staff are setting up activities and ensuring the program is ready. Parents picking their children up are asked to arrive five minutes before the completion of a program.

AGES

8 – 18 years old

FEES

Annual Youth Centre Membership: \$50 for military youth

CONTACT NUMBERS

Henderson Sweetman Youth Centre: 902-720-1776

Youth Program Coordinator: 902-720-1040

Shearwater site, H&R MFRC Main Office: 902-720-1885

24/7 Administrative Services: 902-427-7788

H&R MFRC MISSION

To strengthen the well-being of all those who share the unique experience of military life.

The Henderson Sweetman Youth Centre (YC) believes in the 4 C.A.R.E. qualities of youth.

Creative

- We have space and programs at the YC that encourage youth to foster and explore their creativity.
- We take a creative approach to programming to ensure we are running new and fun activities that promote a variety of skill sets.

Authentic

- Differences are embraced. We are welcoming of differences of opinions, thoughts and behaviour. We do not have to agree, we have to be kind and accepting.
- Youth are celebrated for being themselves. The YC is a safe space that is inclusive and accepting.

Resilient

- Military youth are the definition of resilient. It is our commitment to understand and meet the unique needs that they face.
- YC staff are supportive in weathering the storms of adolescence and military life. They are genuine and encouraging.

Empowered

- Staff are supportive and help foster skills in the youth, and give them the ability to see and believe in their best selves.
- Staff encourage youth to try new activities and things that may challenge them mentally or physically.

PROGRAM INFORMATION AND POLICIES

PROGRAM REGISTRATION

Registration for programs is available at the H&R MFRC from 8am-4pm, by calling: 902-427-7788, online (www.hrmfrc.ca/store) or at the Youth Centre during open hours, in-person or by calling: 902-720-1418. All payment methods are available at the H&R MFRC, however, the Youth Centre staff can only accept cash or cheques (when paying cash, please bring smaller bills - we have a limited cash float). If there are challenges paying registration/membership fees, parents are encouraged to discuss this with the Youth Program Coordinator.

Youth must be paid and registered in advance to attend a program. If registration is full, you can request to be placed on our wait list. If a space becomes available you will be called and offered the space.

Program Changes/Cancellations

Fees, dates, times, and locations of programs are subject to change. For the most up-to-date information on programs, visit www.halifaxmfrc.ca, call the Youth Program Coordinator: 902-720-1418, or check out our social media accounts: Facebook (www.facebook.com/HalifaxRegionMFRC) Instagram (@H&RMFRC or @HSyouthcentre).

Programs will not run if there are less than 6 youth registered in a program. Program cancellations are made at noon the day before the scheduled program; Youth Centre staff will notify families via email. Further, there are times when organizers must cancel an individual session due to inclement weather, instructor- or facility-related conflicts. When this happens, every effort will be made to reschedule the cancelled program. Should a program

be abruptly cancelled, Youth Centre staff will call participants to let them know. If program is cancelled, you will automatically be given a refund. The H&R MFRC reserves the right to cancel any program or to change class times and/or locations.

You will not be reimbursed if you choose to withdraw from a program. If you register online, you are able to cancel online, however, you will not be reimbursed. Participants who are unable to attend a program must call and notify youth staff.

Receipts for programs and membership will be issued upon request.

MEMBERSHIP FORMS/FIRST VISIT

Our H&R MFRC Youth Centre is a site-specific service, not offered by all MFRC's across the country. We value youth as an important part of our military family community and continue to invest in youth specific services. The Youth Centre is subsidized with the support of some funding, donations, and user fees. All youth who attend the Youth Centre (drop-ins and/or registered programs) are required to have a membership. Memberships are renewed on an annual basis and help offset the cost of certain programs such as Movie Nights, Bingo, Trivia Night, Minecraft and more. Specific youth activities such as cooking programs may have nominal fee to offset the cost of supplies and materials.

First time users of the Youth Centre are encouraged to come in for an introductory visit and to meet with the Youth Centre staff to talk about the needs of the youth and the policies of the Youth Centre.

All membership forms are required to be updated every year or as information changes (phone numbers, addresses, emergency contacts, allergies/special needs, etc.). It is important for parents to let us know any allergies, medical conditions, diagnoses, and other conditions a youth may have so we can provide the best care and support. All information is kept confidential and used only for the purposes of our Youth Programs. The H&R MFRC adheres to the Military Family Services Program's Privacy Code.

Legal documentation will be required in any case where a parent and/or legal guardian are not permitted to pick up youth from the centre.

Guests

There may be times when a Youth Centre member wants to bring a friend or when a youth wants to try the centre out a couple of times. A *Guest Pass* is still required to be on file in order to have emergency contact information and to ensure both the youth and parent(s)/guardian(s) are aware of the Youth Centre rules and guidelines. A drop-in fee will be charged. A guest is permitted to use the Youth Centre up to 3 times, at which point they will be asked to purchase a membership.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All information collected by the Halifax & Region Military Resource Centre will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose for which it is collected within the H&R MFRC. All personal information is collected and used in accordance with the Privacy Act and the MFSP Privacy Code. Information gathered through youth memberships and/or guest passes allows H&R MFRC to be connected with military families and offers timely updates on programs, services, activities and events to families.

INCLUSION PRACTICE

The complete *H&R MFRC Inclusion Statement of Practice* is in the Youth Centre and is available on our website: www.halifaxmfr.ca.

Excerpt: H&R MFRC is committed to fostering a sense of belonging to military families of all abilities by providing an environment and experiences that promote positive social relationships, development and learning. Inclusion means participants are able to access programs in meaningful ways that will create positive experiences. We view families as partners, who lead the decision making process, meaning that families know what their needs are and what works best and therefore must influence the approaches developed by service providers.

How inclusion support is provided

Parent/guardians are required to disclose any diagnosed or complex needs, behavior challenges as well as medical conditions that may require specific strategies, adaptations and /or accommodations to facilitate full participation in our programs.

The H&R MFRC Special Needs & Inclusion Navigator is available to meet with families prior to attending programs to discuss the participant's needs as well as develop any adaptations/accommodations that will facilitate the participants ability to fully participate in the program.

We will work with families on case by case basis to the best of our ability to ensure each participant can actively participate in all aspects of the program and that it is a good fit and meets the needs of the participant as well as taking into consideration limitations of the program.

Please note: Participants who have a tendency to run away (flight risk) may be required to have a family member or respite care worker accompany them on outings and field trips to provide one on one support. Participants who have personal care needs, will be required to have a respite care worker or family member attend programs and outings.

Non-disclosure of information negatively impacts the staff's ability to adequately prepare and be responsive to challenges, behaviours and needs, and could result in the parent/guardian being asked to pick up the participant early from the program.

CODE OF CONDUCT

We want your child to have a good time at the Youth Centre. These basic guidelines are to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone.

Members who don't follow these guidelines risk losing the opportunities available to them and can have their membership privileges revoked. Parents/Guardians will be contacted when the following guidelines are not adhered to:

- Treat other members, volunteers and staff with respect.
- Treat all equipment with respect and put it away after use, this includes proper use of computers and video games.
- Follow instructions of staff at all times. If there are questions, comments or concerns, please advise a staff at any time.
- Safety is an important part of our activities and facility. We expect youth to act responsibly at the Youth Centre. There is zero tolerance for unsafe behaviour. (Examples: playing in or around a train or the train tracks, climbing the basketball court fence or fence beside the Youth Centre.)
- Zero tolerance for alcohol, drugs, vandalism, stealing and weapons.
- Zero tolerance for name calling, swearing or inappropriate language, and bullying.
- Zero tolerance for fighting or any physical violence or harm to self or others.
- Inappropriate images, videos and content found in magazines, books, cellphone and/or websites are NOT allowed to be viewed at the Youth Centre. (Examples: illegal substances, pictures not appropriate for minors, derogatory and foul language or cyber bullying.)
- Inappropriate cellphone use will not be tolerated.

- Youth are to remain at the Youth Centre until picked up by a parent/guardian. Staff are not responsible for preventing youth from leaving the Youth Centre or for supervising youth outside of the Youth Centre (excluding off-site programming).

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

Behaviour Guidance techniques will be implemented as a method of re-enforcing positive behaviour rather than punishing negative behaviour. Careful consideration will be given to the youth's age and developmental level. Our staff will demonstrate a positive attitude and will assist youth in learning appropriate behaviour by showing consistency when setting limits.

Every effort will be made to positively re-direct youth when they are exhibiting inappropriate behaviour. This may include removing youth from one activity in which they are being disruptive and introducing them to a new activity.

The following forms of Behaviour Guidance **shall** be used:

- Limits set will be enforced consistently and fairly;
- Youth will be asked to leave the youth centre, with supervision, if staff believe that the youth can use a period of cooling off;
- Staff will assist youth in resolving conflict by discussing the behaviour with the youth immediately following the incident; and
- Staff will watch for potential conflicts that are arising and redirect youth to another activity before problems occur.

Should youth behaviour cause continual disruption, the youth may be asked to leave the program.

The following forms of discipline **shall not** be used:

- Corporal punishment, including but not limited to the following:
 - striking a youth directly or with any physical object, and
 - shaking, shoving, spanking or other forms of aggressive physical contact; and requiring a youth to repeat physical movements;
- Harsh, humiliating, belittling or degrading responses of any form, including verbal, emotional, or physical;
- Confinement of and/or isolation; and
- Food is not offered to reinforce positive behaviors; or withheld as a consequence for inappropriate behaviors; food is not used as a reward for completing a task or finishing a meal.

SUPERVISION

Staff are responsible to supervise the inside area of the Youth Centre building. Youth are allowed to leave at any time and we encourage parents/guardians to explain the boundaries that their youth are to abide by. Unless otherwise indicated, staff will assume youth are allowed to come and go at their own discretion. The basketball court is unsupervised and a sign has been posted stating its use is at the risk of the user regardless if the Youth Centre is open. Only during a designated program will the basketball court be supervised.

As well, we are very aware of the proximity to the train tracks next to our building. We ask that parents/guardians discuss the dangers of playing around train tracks and that it is strictly prohibited. Youth disregarding this safety concern can be suspended and/or expelled from the Centre, with no membership refund.

STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

Youth staff are screened through the Child Abuse Registry and Police Criminal Records checks. The providers have current first-aid training and are regularly encouraged to attend workshops to enhance their knowledge of youth care trends and practices. Volunteers provide valuable assistance in the delivery of youth programs. All

volunteers who work with youth are well supervised, carefully selected, interviewed and screened through the Child Abuse Registry and Police Criminal Records check.

PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and staff is essential for providing quality programming. Information pertaining to the Youth Centre is located on the front door as well as in the Youth Centre for parents to see the activities available.

Parents are encouraged to bring comments and/or concerns to the Youth Centre Staff.

PHONE CALLS

The staff's first priority is interacting and supervising the youth so some phone calls may go directly to voicemail during regular program hours. The staff will call you back if you've left a message.

TOYS FROM HOME

Youth are permitted to bring things from home so long as they are appropriate, i.e. no M (Mature) rated video games. The Youth Centre is not responsible for any items that are damaged or stolen.

VIDEO GAMES/COMPUTER PROGRAMS

All video games and computer programs at the YC are rated by the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB). Youth are permitted to play video games and computer programs for a set amount of time to allow everyone to have a turn. Please ensure that you complete the portion of the membership form regarding viewing and playing video games. Video games at the Youth Centre are E (Everyone); E10+ (Everyone 10 and older), and T (Teen).

WHAT YOUTH NEED

For youth to enjoy their time, it is important they wear comfortable clothing as there may be active components to any program and worry-free clothing due to activities involved (painting, gardening, etc.)

- Outside clothing appropriate for the weather i.e. snow suit and boots, splash pants and rubber boots, mittens, hats; and
- Footwear must always be worn in the Youth Centre.

NUTRITION

The H&R MFRC is "peanut reduced". Please DO NOT bring nuts or products containing nuts into the Youth Centre. We do not permit nuts or nut containing products at the Youth Centre but as a public facility (H&R MFRC) we cannot guarantee the building is nut-free.

Parents are required to advise staff if youth have special dietary restrictions due to allergies or for religious reasons.

COVID-19

Throughout the unprecedented times of Covid-19, the H&R MFRC has and continues to provided youth programming. We will adhere to and implement all Public Health regulations to maintain a healthy and safe environment. All our employees will receive a copy of the COVID-19 Guidelines for the Youth Centre, as well as a COVID-19 Employee Handbook detailing requirements and expectations. Families will be informed of any changes to public health directives and our operations as a result.

ILLNESS AND MEDICATION

Sick children are not to be brought to the Youth Centre or registered program. This includes but is not limited to high fever (101°F or 38.3°C), vomiting, diarrhea, and other communicable diseases. Parents are required to notify the staff if youth has, or has come in contact with, a communicable disease.

If a youth becomes ill while at the centre, including but not limited to fever (101°F or 38.3°C), vomiting, diarrhea and other communicable diseases, the parents will be contacted immediately for arrangements to be made for pick up. For these reasons it is vital to leave an emergency contact number with the youth staff. Youth cannot return to the program for 24 hours should they be sent home with these symptoms. If youth has been prescribed antibiotics please keep them home for 24 hours after the first dosage and ensure they are feeling well enough to join in upon their return.

Youth Centre staff are not authorized to administer non-prescription medication. If youth require prescription medications, parents are to fill out a Medication Authorization form.

All prescription medication must be in the original container, labeled with the youth's name, prescribed dosage, and doctor's name. All medications must be given directly to a staff member for proper storage. For risk management these cannot be stored in youth's bag. Any prescription medication which states "as needed" (puffers) will not be given to youth unless accompanied with a detailed description of what signs describe the "as needed" state from the doctor.

Youth who do not come in with their required medication i.e. Inhalers/EpiPens or come in with expired medication will not be accepted into the program.

STORM POLICY

H&R MFRC Closure

When the H&R MFRC is closed due to weather, all on-site and off-site programming will be cancelled, including the Henderson Sweetman Youth Centre.

Early Closure

If the H&R MFRC has early closure due to weather, programs will be cancelled.

Delayed Opening

When the H&R MFRC has a delayed opening due to weather, any morning programs will be cancelled. Staff availability, weather conditions, road conditions and clearing of parking lots are factors that determine if afternoon and evening programs will run.

Participants are to check with one of the following sources prior to coming to the program:

- H&R MFRC Facebook: www.facebook.com/HalifaxRegionMFRC
- H&R MFRC website: www.halifaxmfr.ca
- H&R MFRC Twitter: @HRMFRC
- H&R MFRC Information & Referral Line: 902-427-7788

School Closure (Halifax area)

When the H&R MFRC is open and Halifax Regional Centre of Education (HRCE) schools are closed or have a delayed opening due to weather, all programs will be cancelled. Staff availability, weather conditions, road conditions and clearing of parking lots are factors that determine if afternoon and evening programs will run.

Refunds

If we are closed due to inclement weather, registered participants will receive a refund. If the registered participant decides not to attend, there will be no refund. For complete details, please read our policy on Registration, Cancellations & Refunds.

POWER/WATER/HEAT OUTAGE POLICY

In the event of a power/water/heat outage where the centre cannot ensure the safety and health of youth (i.e. no heat, prolonged outage) the staff will not accept youth into the program. If youth are already present parents may be contacted in cases of prolonged outages. In the event parents/guardians cannot be reached, those listed as emergency contacts will be contacted. In the event of an evacuation, youth will be taken to a secondary site: H&R MFRC, Shearwater site (Bldg 14).

HIRING STAFF AS AFTERHOURS BABYSITTERS

Due to conflict of interest, code of ethics, confidentiality, and professional parent/staff boundaries parents are strongly discouraged from asking our staff to provide babysitting services. Our staff are highly valued and have a professional relationship with you. Please help us all respect boundaries.

CHILD ABUSE PROTOCOL

All persons are required to report suspected child abuse. The duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect overrides the confidentiality of all professional relationships and includes information considered to be privileged. Every person in Nova Scotia is required by law under the Children and Family Services Act to report child abuse and neglect.

Suspected cases of child abuse will be reported to the Department of Community Services.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Our Youth Committee is a dedicated group of volunteers ages 12-17 who work hard to make the Youth Centre what it is today. These youth are from military families that live in and around 12 Wing Shearwater and HRM. Committee minutes are posted in the Youth Centre. If you want something added to the agenda, have a suggestion or feedback, let us know by dropping by the Youth Centre office or by emailing Hannah.purcell@hrmfrc.ca. We're always looking for new members to join the committee.

Youth Committee Mission:

- Provide youth driven programs that are developed by youth that are for the youth.
- To involve youth in the planning and evaluation process.
- Work in collaboration with the surrounding Military Community.
- Provide leadership, knowledge and resources to develop lifelong skills.

HENDERSON SWEETMAN YOUTH CENTRE PARENT HANDBOOK

I(we) have read, understood, and will adhere to the Halifax & Region Military Family Resource Centre's Youth Centre policies, as outlined in this handbook.

Parent/ Guardian's Name: _____

Parent/ Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Child(ren)'s Names (print as applicable)



VETERAN FAMILY PROGRAM
 For Military Housing Unit Members,
 Military Reserve and Reserve Unit Families
PROGRAMME POUR LES FAMILLES DES VÉTÉRANS
 Pour les membres des FUC en poste de Militaires pour des unités militaires,
 les vétérans libérés ou des unités militaires et leur famille

MFSP
 MILITARY FAMILY
 SERVICES PROGRAM



PSFM
 PROGRAMME DES SERVICES
 AUX FAMILLES DES MILITAIRES

PROTECTED A
 (when completed)

PRIVACY NOTICE AND CONSENT STATEMENT

Client Information

First

Name: _____

Last Name: _____

All information and communications gathered is considered confidential and private. The Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC) will take all possible safeguards to protect client information.

Personal information is collected pursuant to sections 2 and 38 – 41 of the *National Defence Act*. The information is used to administer the Military Family Services Program and the Veteran Family Program, which are managed by the Military Family Services (MFS), a division of the Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services (CFMWS) through local MFRCs. The personal information may include name, contact information, biographical information, date of birth (when required), identification number (partial military ID), physical attributes, signature, services provided during contact, opinions and views of, or about individuals.

The information may be used by the MFRC and/or MFS for reporting, audit, evaluation, and statistical purposes. In accordance with the memorandum of understanding between CFMWS and Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), VFP user statistics will be provided to VAC for reporting on program performance indicators to Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS). Information is stored in Canada in a cloud-based case management system provided by Athena Software (service provider). Case file information may be transferred to a MFRC with the written consent of the individual. Information may also be used or disclosed for program mailing and outreach purposes.

In accordance with applicable laws, information may be disclosed in the following circumstances:

- **Child protection** – when the MFRC becomes aware of harm or potential harm to a child, it is required by law to report this to the local child welfare agency
- **Harm to self or others** – Professional Codes of Ethics and standards of Practice bind the MFRC to notify the proper authorities if there is a reason to believe that there is potential for the client to harm themselves or others
- **Testimony in court** – There are times when the MFRC may be requested by a court of law to disclose information obtained during sessions, under the above noted items

Personal information is protected, and only used and disclosed in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy Act* (and other provincial/territorial privacy legislation applicable to the MFRC), as described above and in personal information bank CFMWS PPU 825 Military Family Services Program / Veteran Family Program. Under the *Privacy Act*, individuals have rights of access to and correction of their personal information, and the right to file a complaint to the Privacy Commissioner of Canada regarding the institution’s handling of personal information.

If you require clarification about this statement, contact our privacy coordinator at ATIP.AIPRP@cfmws.com. For more information on the *Privacy Act*, consult the [Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada](#).

By selecting “I Agree”, I certify that I understand, and consent to the collection, use and disclosure of my personal information as stated above.

I Agree

Date

 Name of signing parent or legal guardian (if necessary)

14 November, 2018