

Lynwood
Charlton
Centre

Orientation Guide

Lynwood Charlton Centre is a publicly funded charitable organization in the City of Hamilton, which provides a spectrum of innovative and evidence-based mental health services to children, youth, families and the community. As a Children's Mental Health Centre our mission is:



“Hamilton’s children, youth and families feel supported throughout their journey towards mental well-being.”

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Welcome To Lynwood Charlton Centre

This guide is designed to provide you with important information about the Lynwood Charlton Centre.

We work with the unique strengths, needs and goals of individuals and their families to support better mental health. We use the term family in its broadest sense to include relatives, friends and any other supports you identify.

Please let us know if you have any identities, beliefs and/or preferences that we should be aware of to help guide us in our service to you. These could include, but are not limited to: strengths and needs related to your race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, family diversity, disability, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, cultural or language.

You can also let us know in what ways we should consider your traditions, connection to community and your extended family in our work with you.

If there is someone that you think could assist us in understanding how to be helpful to you, please let us know.

Mission Statement

As a Child and Youth Mental Health Centre, Lynwood Charlton Centre believes that positive mental health is an essential part of overall well-being.

Our Mission is twofold:

- To guide and support children, youth and their families and caregivers in strengthening their capacity to thrive, and
- To plan and deliver, in collaboration with children, youth, families and caregivers, and our community partners, a sustainable system of mental health services for children, youth, and their families and caregivers.

Table of Contents

Principles of Service Statements	1
Lynwood Charlton Centre	2
Rights – as defined in the Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA) 2017	2
Supporting Inclusion	2
Engaging Children, Youth and Families	3
Evidence-Informed Practice and Clinical Philosophy	4
Consultation and Collaboration Model	4
Quality Improvement and Program Evaluation	4
Assessments: Understanding the Strengths, Experiences, and Needs of Children, Youth, and Families	4
Sanctuary Environment: Welcome, Safe, Respected, and Listened to	5
Emergency Procedures	6
Smoke-Free Work Environments	6
Privacy and Confidentiality	6
Communicating through Technology	8
Complaints Process	8
Role of the Office of the Ombudsman	9
Discharge and Single-Session Follow-Up	10

Principles of Service Statements

The following statements are LCC's Principles of Service that are based on the value statements developed by the Board of Directors. These Principles of Service are the standards which guide the professional activity and interactions of the staff in their work with children, youth and their families:

- All interactions and activities will be recognized and valued for their importance in influencing and fostering of positive and reciprocal relationships with children, youth and families.
- LCC is committed to engaging children, youth and families in an invitational manner that promotes and maintains significant relationships for the child, youth and family.
- Families, children and youth are entitled to services that support them in taking charge of their lives and which provide hope and opportunities for change by enabling them to use the knowledge and skills that they already possess.
- Children, youth and families have individual needs, circumstances and experiences. They are entitled to have these issues recognized and addressed in a compassionate, caring and understanding manner within the service provided.
- LCC will be sensitive to the impact on children, youth and families of being involved with service providers.
- LCC is sensitive to the issues of culture, gender and financial status and will endeavour to treat others with the utmost respect and to address these types of issues within the parameters and the resources available to the programs.
- LCC acknowledges the rights of others to determine what is in their own best interest including how, when and where they wish to access service within the parameters and the resources available to the programs.
- LCC expects that there will be an active demonstration of this respect in our discussions with and reporting about our clients.
- Interactions between and amongst board members, professional staff, children, youth and families and others outside the organization will be guided by the principles of good stewardship; which we recognize to include trust, fairness, honesty, and integrity.
- All work and actions will be based on our value for excellence and productivity; supported through an environment which promotes professional development and organizational wellness.
- Provision of service at both the agency and community level must be based on a cooperative and coordinated effort in collaboration with our external partners.
- LCC must remain sensitive to the changing characteristics and needs of the community and will be committed to the promotion of mental health and the development of innovative service approaches, based on evidence-based practices, as the environment and current needs change.

Lynwood Charlton Centre

Lynwood Charlton Centre (LCC) is an accredited children's mental health agency offering a variety of different programs that support children, youth, and families. Our services include several Intensive Out of Home treatment programs, respite programs, day treatment classrooms, student support services, as well as different community based services and groups.

Most pathways to access the programs originate from Contact Hamilton, however some referrals may be received from a Hamilton Child Welfare agency or School Board. Please feel free to look at descriptions on our website (www.lynwoodcharlton.ca) or by contacting a staff member.

We will make every effort to ensure needs are matched with the appropriate service.

LCC also acts as the Lead Agency for the Hamilton Service area, and provides system planning, working towards a stronger, more coordinated system of children's mental health services in Hamilton.

Rights – as defined in the Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA) 2017

All children, youth and families have the following rights when participating in Centre programs:

- To be informed of their rights
- To be treated with dignity and respect and without discrimination
- To participate in decisions about the service to be provided to them
- To have their views given due weight depending on their age and maturity
- To be advised of the decisions made, and how and why they were made
- To privacy and confidentiality
- To a safe and secure service environment
- To make a complaint
 - To express their views and raise concerns freely and safely about matters that affect them
 - To be told about the role of the Ontario Child Advocate and how to contact the Advocate.
- The right to discontinue or refuse service at any time

There are other rights and responsibilities that will be reviewed with children/youth and their parent/guardian when you begin working with the Intensive Intensive Out of Home Program. These will be reviewed upon admission, at one month, and at least every 3 months after that.

Supporting Inclusion

LCC is committed to supporting **all** children, youth, and families who are engaged in services. Please let us know anything that you feel may help your full participation in the Centre's services, such as strengths and needs related to your race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, family diversity, disability, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, culture or language.

If you are First Nations, Inuit, or Métis we will take into account information about your culture(s), heritage, traditions, your connection to community and your extended family.

If there is someone that you think could guide us in understanding how to be helpful to you (a Resource Person), please let us know. The Resource Person could be a friend, relative, or member of your community.

LCC strives to make our facilities as inclusive and accessible as possible.

LCC staff will strive to support your successful participation in our programs. We take a strengths-based approach that celebrates diversity and recognizes that individual differences are a source of resiliency. For example, where possible, the staff will...

- assist all children and youth in understanding and celebrating differences, in order to live together with respect and kindness,
- use preferred pronouns and ensure access to washroom of the child or youth's self-identified gender,
- support communication, for example, by making translators and sign language interpreters available,
- support barrier-reduced access for individuals of all ability levels,
- respect and support cultural and religious celebrations and practices (i.e. religious diets or fasting) at the request of the child, youth and/or family,
- support links to culturally relevant services and activities,
- support links to culturally relevant supports, services and activities for children, youth and families of indigenous heritage.

Every reasonable effort will be made to provide appropriate service within LCC's current capacity, and to the best of our ability. Where this is not possible, and it is your best interest to be referred to an alternative service, LCC will work with you to facilitate this transition.

Engaging Children, Youth and Families

LCC is committed to working in partnership with children, youth, and families to better understand, improve, and build upon LCC's services as well as Hamilton's child and youth mental health system. Meaningful engagement means two-way communication, working together as allies and sharing in decisions that are made.

LCC recognizes that children, youth and families know themselves best and bring their own unique knowledge, experiences, strengths and skills to their journey to mental health and well-being. Therefore, LCC strives to work in partnership with children, youth and families in all aspects of the care they receive. This means working together to co-create a plan that will work for you.

LCC understands that engaging children, youth and families at all levels of the organization will help ensure that services remain child, youth and family-centred. LCC is committed to creating opportunities for children, youth, and families to share their voices and perspectives in ways that have a meaningful impact. This may include helping make decisions about new or changing programs, how services look and feel, or working with staff and leadership to impact change.

LCC takes an active role in ensuring that children, youth and families are connected to community-wide engagement opportunities that help make a difference to our local child and youth mental health system. This can mean connecting with other youth, families, agencies or community

partners to improve our system. Young people and families have shared how wonderful it feels to be part of engagement initiatives, especially when they see the genuine impact they can have.

For more information on how you can access engagement opportunities, please feel free to reach out by emailing: engage@lynwoodcharlton.ca, calling the main LCC office at 905-389-1361, or visiting the LCC website www.lynwoodcharlton.ca.

Evidence-Informed Practice and Clinical Philosophy

LCC is committed to using the best available treatment approaches that have been proven to be effective through research and practice. Lynwood Charlton's belief is that children, youth and families should receive the best clinical treatments or services to meet their needs.

Consultation and Collaboration Model

Each team and program is made up of a unique blend of disciplines, dependent on the services offered. In order to support a multidisciplinary and holistic approach to providing service, each program has access to various disciplines and consultations across the agency.

From time to time, the program you are working with may access the following supports for direction and information:

- Occupational Therapist
- Social Work or Mental Health Clinician
- Nurse Practitioner
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Consultant
- Developmental Disabilities/Dual Diagnosis Consultant

Quality Improvement and Program Evaluation

LCC continuously evaluates and strives to improve its services, in a number of different ways. The input of children, youth and families is one of the most useful ways we can do this because it helps us learn about what we're doing well and how we can improve. At the end of service youth and families will be invited to complete an LCC Feedback Form about their experiences with our services. The form will take about 5 minutes to complete, and is optional and will not affect any care you receive.

Reports on how our programs and LCC is doing are created periodically. These reports do not identify any individual people. If you'd like a copy of a recent report, they are available on our website or you can ask a staff member.

Our website is: www.lynwoodcharlton.ca

Assessments: Understanding the Strengths, Experiences, and Needs of Children, Youth, and Families

LCC has several ways that we gather information about children, youth and families. One of the most important ways is through assessments. As part of the assessment process, it is important

to alert staff to any known high risk behaviours. Formal assessments are usually a set of specific questions that help get a good understanding of the strengths, challenges and experiences of children, youth and their families. Depending on which assessment is being completed, the questions can be asked in person by staff, or on paper, or on a digital device.

The information gathered by completing assessments will be used to decide the best ways that will help children, youth and families engaged with LCC. The information provided will also help us find out whether our work is helping, both for individual children, youth and their families, and in general as a program and agency.

The Child and Youth Mental Health (ChYMH) is the most common assessment used at LCC. More information on the ChYMH can be found at:

<http://www.interrai.org/child-and-youth-mental-health.html> .

Other assessments are used as-needed, depending on specific programs or circumstances.

Sanctuary Environment: Welcome, Safe, Respected, and Listened to

LCC believes that everyone has the right to feel welcome and safe, to be treated with respect, and to be listened to.

Everyone is encouraged to communicate with each other in a respectful manner. If any conflicts arise, staff will support conversations to resolve issues collaboratively. Conflicts are opportunities to build and practice problem-solving skills and strategies, including those that a child, youth or family may learn or further develop during service.

As an agency, LCC understands that some children and youth have experienced or witnessed traumatic events. Staff are respectful of their experiences and are committed to supporting children, youth and families through a trauma-informed approach.

LCC strives to make the environments where services are provided as safe, respectful and free of violence as possible. This includes for those attending appointments or meetings, participating in on-site programs (day treatment classrooms, Intensive Out of Home programs) or being part of a group (on-site or off-site). Efforts towards this may include limiting inappropriate language, being conscious of physical safety when children/youth are very upset and other influences (including violent toys/games, movies, etc.).

LCC staff understand that sometimes support is needed to help manage difficult situations and to maintain safety. If there is a risk of harm to anyone, staff are trained in the Prevention and Management of Aggressive Behaviour (PMAB), which enables staff to respond to dangerous behaviour in a safe and supportive way, using the least amount of physical intervention necessary. A child or youth may be physically restrained as a last resort and only when there is imminent risk of the child or youth physically harming or continuing to harm themselves or others. Please ask staff if you have any questions.

Additionally, Lynwood Charlton Centre has a number of protocols in place with community partners to ensure safety for all:

1. In the event that a child/youth poses a significant risk to self, LCC has a policy to identify, assess and respond to the risk. The response may involve reaching out to family members/caregivers and/or others involved in the monitoring and risk assessment process by discussing what to look for and how to recognize the importance of potentially suicidal behaviours. In these instances, LCC will clarify the limits on information sharing and remind family members/caregivers that if suicide risk is suspected, confidentiality may need to be breached as safety outweighs risk.
2. In the event that a child or youth poses a significant risk to others, LCC is part of a community protocol (Violent Threat Risk Assessment – VTRA). The protocol is triggered in situations where there is a threat of significant harm by a child or youth. The goal is to bring involved and relevant partners together to be proactive in developing an intervention plan that addresses the emotional and physical safety of the child/youth and all or any potential persons threatened.
3. In accordance with Ontario's Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA) we have a duty to report to a Children's Aid Society any suspected child maltreatment where there are reasonable grounds. A child is anyone under the age of 16. Where possible and appropriate, children, youth and/or families will be involved in this process.

Emergency Procedures

All LCC Sites have policies and procedures in place that staff are required to follow related to safety, security, fire, and emergency situations. In the event of an emergency, please follow staff direction.

Upon admission to an on-site program, staff will provide information to the child/youth and family on the location of emergency exits, the emergency assembly area, and what to do in the event of an emergency alarm sounding. Monthly fire drills occur at all LCC sites and children/youth are encouraged to participate.

Smoke-Free Work Environments

Smoking at our sites is permissible in designated smoking areas.

While staff are working in family homes, we request that those present do not smoke during the visit. If this is not possible, then arrangements can be made to meet at an alternative smoke-free location. Should an agreement for an alternative smoke-free service location not be reached then the service may not be able to be provided.

LCC staff will be expected to refrain from smoking while engaged in service with any client.

Privacy and Confidentiality

LCC is committed to meeting the highest standards with respect to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of your information. Ways in which we work to maintain this are:

- Only asking for information that will help us to provide you the best service possible

- Always asking for consent prior to sharing any information (exceptions noted below).
- Ensuring staff members, consultants and contractors are signing LCC's Oath of Confidentiality
- Ensuring up-to-date policies and practices about how we collect, store and destroy your information, including:
 - Passwords, firewalls and safeguards in place for electronic files
 - Careful storage (double locked) and restricted access to paper files
- Ensuring that in the event that your privacy is breached (stolen, lost, shared or accessed by an unauthorized person), we will notify you at the first reasonable opportunity

Consent may be withdrawn, withheld or limited by youth and/or families during service and this will not prevent the continued offer of treatment. The decision to withhold consent may impact the service LCC is able to provide.

Information collected is only used for assessment, treatment planning and service provision, and is shared with clinical and administrative staff at LCC involved in your care, and whoever you have consented to share information with.

Information will also be disclosed, where necessary, in the following circumstances:

- where it is required by law (ie: subpoena)
- in circumstances of imminent risk, including identified harm to self or others which may trigger a Violent Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Protocol
- any allegation or suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child or youth, which staff have a duty to report to a Child Welfare Agency
- reporting instances of suspected animal cruelty or neglect
- Ministry personnel (program funder and licensor, and for instances of Serious Occurrence reporting)
- Accreditation Site Review Team (ensures we are meeting high service standards)
- Lead Agency (LCC) for system planning
- For purposes of program evaluation and quality improvement.

Should you have any questions or concerns about privacy or confidentiality, such as:

- accessing information in your file
- requesting a correction to information in your file
- identifying a possible breach of privacy

Please directly contact your primary worker at LCC or LCC's Privacy Officer:

Executive Director/Privacy Officer

Lynwood Charlton Centre
526 Upper Paradise Rd.
Hamilton, ON L9C 5E3
905-389-1361

Communicating through Technology

LCC understands that the use of technology has become an increasingly common and accessible way to communicate. If the youth and/or family requests and consents to the use of e-mail and texting, LCC would like to highlight the following:

- Written consent from youth and/or family to use e-mail and/or texting is required and discussed with the youth and family during intake.
- Certain programs and/or staff are not available/permitted to utilize texting; this will vary depending on the type of service provided, and will be discussed with child/youth, and family.
- E-mail and/or texting is not our primary method of communicating or providing service; as such LCC requests that these methods of communication are used for information sharing (i.e.: confirming appointment time) and not for treatment purposes.
- In order to provide the best quality service, LCC believes that providing quality treatment requires face-to-face interactions and conversations.
- Depending on the circumstances, it may be determined that e-mail/texting may not be the best method of communication, and the consent/agreement may change at any time.

Complaints Process

LCC is committed to ensuring that clients, community partners and the public have access to a complaints procedure to address concerns in a timely and effective manner.

LCC has a full and comprehensive policy identifying the steps taken to resolve a complaint and who will be notified in the event of a complaint, which may include informing the Board of Directors. When a complaint is received, LCC works with all relevant parties, including children, youth, and families to acknowledge the concern(s) and follows the identified process to resolve the concern(s) as best as possible.

If you would like a full copy of LCC Internal Complaints policy, please visit the website www.lynwoodcharlton.ca. Alternatively you can request a copy from the program you are receiving service from, or by calling our Main Office at 905-389-1361 ext. 0.

What to Do If You Have a Complaint:

1. If you are comfortable, please share your concern with the staff person that you are working with, and they will listen to you and attempt to resolve the issue. Whenever an LCC staff person becomes aware of a complaint we will respond within 24 hours to indicate we are aware of the complaint and will work with you to resolve it.

2. If your issue is not resolved during Step 1, or if you are not comfortable approaching the staff person involved, or if the concern is of significant nature, please speak with the Manager of that Program, who will get back to you as soon as possible.

To contact the Program Manager:

- The contact information for the Program Manager is provided during orientation to service
 - It is also available at www.lynwoodcharlton.ca
 - You can also find out who the Program Manager is by calling 905-389-1361 ext. 0
3. If the issue continues to not be resolved at Step 3, then an Internal Complaints form will be completed. You can choose to submit your complaint in writing on the form (available at www.lynwoodcharlton.ca) or through the Program Manager. You can also share your complaint by e-mail, letter, fax or verbally, including doing this anonymously. We will arrange to discuss your complaint (in person or by phone). At this stage, the Board of Directors is notified of the complaint.

Additionally, any client or member of the public may contact the following:

Office of the Ombudsman of Ontario

483 Bay Street
10th floor, South Tower
Toronto, ON M5G 2C9

Toll-free (inside Ontario only): 1-800-263-1830

Outside Ontario: 416-586-3300

TTY (teletypewriter): 1-866-411-4211

Fax: 416-586-3485

Email: info@ombudsman.on.ca

Role of the Office of the Ombudsman

The Ombudsman is an Officer of the Ontario Legislative Assembly who is independent of government and political parties. The office promotes fairness, accountability and transparency in the public sector by resolving and investigating public complaints and systemic issues within the Ombudsman's jurisdiction, including the rights of children and youth and French Language Services.

In response to a request, a complaint, or on its own initiative, the Ombudsman acts on behalf of concerns of individuals or groups of children or youth and can undertake reviews, make recommendations, and provide advice to governments, facilities, systems, agencies, or service providers.

Additionally, Agencies or service providers must inform the Ombudsman in writing of the circumstances surrounding any incidents of death or serious bodily harm of a child or youth receiving services if they currently, or within the previous 12 months, are involved with a children's aid society. Service providers will remind the child/youth and their parent about the Ombudsman's Office in these circumstances (see contact information above).

Discharge and Single-Session Follow-Up

In order to support children/youth and families beyond the length of service, LCC will work partnership with you and other supports to develop a discharge plan that will help you transition out of service. A discharge plan may include connections to both formal and informal supports. Additionally, a follow-up session can be provided upon request within one year of discharge. This can be accessed by calling your primary staff member directly. Should this person be unavailable, you can call the Manager of the Program, or the reception of the site you were receiving service from. At the end of service, you will be provided with the contact information in your discharge letter.