

# Selecting Space for Mobile Care

Mobile Care is a valuable service for the families in your community. By offering child care in conjunction with settlement services in a variety of neighbourhoods; more newcomer families can benefit from your programs and be supported in their transition to Canadian society.

As an administrator, you are responsible for the overall operation of Mobile Care. One area of responsibility that can impact major aspects of the program is the selection of space. When selecting space for Mobile Care, one of your first tasks is to select a safe, appropriate space that meets the requirements. Selecting space is the foundation of the safe operation of Mobile Care. By selecting the right spaces you will not only improve the quality of care for the children in your program, but reduce safety risks as well. Also keep in mind that if you decide to offer Mobile Care in your community, the task of selecting space will be an ongoing one.

Mobile Care is available to multi age groups; and as such, the space needs to be suitable for all children. The risk is higher for spaces that are not designed for use by children. Choosing spaces that are already suitable for use by children can lower any safety risks considerably. The space selection form will help you identify safe and appropriate spaces. This document is found in the requirements



and on the CMAS website. The information you collect on the space selection form will also guide your approval decision and provide a record of the space.

Prior to beginning your selection process consider your organizational needs. Answering the following questions will help you to determine the type of spaces that you will be looking for:

- What type of service will you be offering your clients?
- How long will you be offering the service to the clients?
- When are you planning to operate the session?

- How many sessions will there be?
- In how many locations are you considering operating the sessions?
- How many children are expected?

## Key Considerations for Selecting Space

- **# of Children Expected:** The number of children expected to attend the sessions will help to determine the size of the space required.
- **Plan Ahead:** When selecting space set aside sufficient time to make the best choice. It is wise to make your selection ahead of time, rather than on the day you



plan to hold the session. By selecting spaces early you will also ensure there is time to make alternative plans if the space is found to be unsafe.

- **Have Options:** Select and approve a variety of spaces. By doing so, you will have additional options when operating multi sessions or expecting a large group of children.
- **Consult with your Early Childhood Educators (ECE);** they are trained in child development and understand the needs of young children, and how these needs relate to space.
- **Consider Potential Changes:** Consider the length of time between approval and use. Room variables can change between approval time and use. An example of this concerns temperature changes. If you selected space in the winter the temperature may have seemed comfortable. When the summer months arrive and it is time to use the space you may find that it lacks air conditioning and it is simply too hot for the children.
- **Proximity to Washrooms:** When selecting spaces you will want to consider ones in close proximity to washrooms. Young children will be able to access the washrooms more easily and they can be properly supervised while doing so. If possible also select spaces near emergency exits for safe evacuations. As well, try to select spaces that are accessible to children with special needs.
- **Proximity to Parent Activity:** Space is most appropriate when it is closest to the parent activity. Separation anxiety is especially high for newcomers who are experiencing life changing transitions. Whenever possible, select spaces near the parents as both children and parents are likely to feel anxious when they are separated from each other. An added benefit to this is that parents will be nearby if needed.

Although the use of the same room as the parents is permitted in Mobile Care it is generally not recommended as a first choice. In some cases, however it may not be pos-

sible to find space in a room that is separate from the parents' activity. Boundaries must ensure that the children remain separate from the parent activity and yet, do not obstruct the vision of caregivers who must be able to see all the children at all times.

- **Water Source:** If you are planning on serving snacks ensure the space or the building has an appropriate preparation area and is near a water source. Have a plan in place that meets the public health standards for food preparation.
- **Storage Space:** In addition to activity space, the requirements also state that you must have additional temporary storage space when the session is in operation for: strollers, mobile kit, toys and equipment.
- **Accessibility to Public Transportation:** For clients with children, it is always best to choose spaces that are easily accessible by public transport or within walking distance.
- **Safety:** As an administrator, you will need to consider how the children will be safe in areas accessed by the public. Build in safeguards for children if you are choosing spaces with public access; for example, public libraries and community centers.

when selecting space notify partners of your responsibility to follow the requirements.

- **Keep Good Records:** Whenever possible, gather information from caregivers on spaces that they feel worked well for Mobile Care. For future reference, also maintain a record of partners who you have worked with and the spaces you have used.

Please visit our website for further resources and support.  
[www.mascanada.ca](http://www.mascanada.ca)

