



AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING

“Come Grow with us”

Parent/Guardian Handbook

21 Hillside Dr, Hebron NS

B5A 5Z6

hebronbaptist.ca/roots | welcome@hebronbaptist.ca

(902) 742-2554

Welcome

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to roots: after school program!

Thank you for entrusting us with your child during these important after-school hours. We are excited to partner with families to provide a safe, supportive environment where children can grow in faith, friendships, confidence, and character.

Roots exists to help children establish strong Christian Values while providing meaningful opportunities for learning, recreation, service, and personal growth. We desire for every child who participates in our program to know they are loved by God, valued by others, and capable of making a positive difference in their homes, schools, churches, and communities.

Our program is hosted by Hebron Baptist Church and serves families by offering a welcoming space where children can connect, learn, play, and grow under the guidance of caring Christian leaders.

We look forward to partnering with your family.

Blessings,

The roots: after school program Team

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing, and inclusive after-school environment where children can grow academically, socially, and spiritually. We integrate God's Word and Christian values such as kindness, respect, prayer, and service into daily routines while meeting the developmental needs of every child.

Our Vision

To help children build strong roots in Christ that will guide them throughout their lives and equip them to positively impact their families, schools, and communities.

Statement of Faith

roots: after school program operates as a ministry of Hebron Baptist Church and is grounded in Biblical teaching.

We believe:

- The Bible is the inspired Word of God and our guide for faith and life.
- There is one God eternally existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Savior of the world.
- Salvation is available through faith in Jesus Christ.
- Every child is created in God's image and deserves dignity, respect, care, and love.

Faith is incorporated into the program through prayer, Bible lessons, worship opportunities, Scripture memorization, character development, and relationships.

"Let the little children come to Me..." — Matthew 19:14

Philosophy

At roots, we believe children grow best when they experience:

- Strong and caring relationships
- Consistent expectations and routines
- Opportunities to learn and explore
- Positive role models
- Encouragement in their faith journey
- A safe and welcoming community

Our program seeks to nurture the whole child by supporting spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth.

We recognize parents and guardians as the primary influence in a child's life and value strong communication and partnership with families.

Program Overview

Location

roots: after school program is operated at:
Hebron Baptist Church
21 Hillside Drive
Hebron, Nova Scotia

Ages Served

The program is designed for school-aged children and youth.

Suggested enrollment:

- Grades Primary–6

Program Components

Children participating in roots can expect:

- Safe arrival and attendance procedures
- Healthy snacks
- Recreation and physical activity
- Games and team-building activities
- Bible lessons and prayer
- Character development activities
- Service and community projects
- Creative arts and special events

Typical Daily Schedule

Time Activity Description

2:30 – 3:00 Arrival & Snack Bus drop-off, check-in, and a healthy, provided snack.

3:00 – 3:30 ROOTS Circle Time Worship through songs and a faith-based story or lesson.

3:30 – 4:15 Active Play Outdoor play (weather permitting) or organized gym games.

4:15 – 5:00 Discovery & Support Choice of crafts, service projects, or homework help.

5:00 – 5:30 Wrap-up & Pick-up Quiet table games and cleanup until parents arrive.

Schedules may vary depending on school calendars, special events, weather conditions, and seasonal programming.

Program Hours

Monday–Friday

After School until 5:30 PM

The program follows the local school calendar. We intend to open PDA days as well and the extra cost will be incorporated into the Monthly Fees.

Families will receive advance notice regarding school holiday programming, professional development days, and holiday closures.

Transportation and Arrival

Children may arrive by:

- School bus
- Parent drop-off (2:30pm)
- Approved transportation arrangements

Attendance is taken immediately upon arrival.

If a child is expected but does not arrive, parents/guardians will be contacted promptly.

Parents must notify the program if their child will be absent.

Authorized Pick-Up

For the safety of every child:

- Children will only be released to parents, guardians, or individuals listed on the authorized pick-up form.
- Identification may be requested.
- Any changes to pick-up arrangements must be communicated to program staff in advance.
- Children will not be released to unauthorized individuals.

Safety and Security

The safety of children is our highest priority.

roots maintains:

- Active supervision at all times
- Emergency contact records
- First aid supplies
- Emergency evacuation procedures
- Regular safety reviews

Parents will be notified immediately in the event of an illness, injury, or emergency involving their child.

Health and Wellness

Children should remain home when experiencing:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Contagious illnesses
- Any condition that prevents participation in program activities

Parents are responsible for informing staff of allergies, medical conditions, or medication requirements.

Medication may only be administered with written parental authorization.

Behaviour Expectations

At roots, we strive to create a respectful and encouraging environment.

Children are expected to:

- Treat others with kindness and respect
- Follow staff directions
- Use appropriate language
- Respect church property and equipment
- Participate safely in activities
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, violence, or intentional destruction of property will not be tolerated.

When behavioural concerns arise, staff will work with children and families to encourage positive growth and accountability.

Discipline Philosophy

Our approach to discipline is rooted in Biblical principles of grace, truth, restoration, and personal responsibility.

Staff will:

- Redirect inappropriate behaviour
- Encourage problem-solving
- Teach conflict resolution skills
- Reinforce positive choices
- Communicate concerns with parents when necessary

Our goal is always growth, learning, and restoration rather than punishment.

Electronic Devices

To encourage positive interaction and participation:

- Personal electronic devices should remain in backpacks unless permission is granted by staff.
- Devices may not be used during Bible lessons, group activities, or recreation periods.
- roots is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal items.

Communication with Families

We believe strong communication builds strong partnerships.

Families can expect communication through:

- Email updates
- Newsletters
- Church announcements
- Program calendars
- Direct communication from staff

Parents are encouraged to contact staff with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Snacks

A healthy snack will be provided each program day.

Parents must notify staff of:

- Food allergies
- Dietary restrictions
- Medical nutrition concerns

We strive to maintain a safe environment for all children with food sensitivities.

Photography and Media

From time to time, photographs may be taken during program activities for:

- Church publications
- Program promotion
- Social media
- Special events

Written parental permission will be obtained prior to using any child's image.

Registration and Enrollment

Enrollment requires:

- Completed registration forms
- Emergency contact information
- Medical and allergy information
- Signed handbook acknowledgment
- Program fees as applicable

Enrollment is subject to available space.

Compliance & Safety Standards

We adhere to the Nova Scotia Day Care Act and Regulations regarding safety and supervision:

Background Clearances: All staff and volunteers must provide a clear Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Search and a Child Abuse Registry Check, updated every three years.

Emergency Preparedness: At least one staff member per group will hold a valid First Aid/CPR certificate at all times.

Supervision Ratios: We maintain ratios that meet or exceed provincial standards for school-age care to ensure every child receives individual Attention.

Withdrawal from the Program

Families are asked to provide two weeks' written notice if withdrawing from the program. Outstanding fees remain payable through the notice period.

Partnership Agreement

By enrolling your child in roots: after school program, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the policies outlined in this handbook and agree to partner with the program in supporting your child's growth, safety, and participation.

Together, we will help children develop strong roots in Christ and flourish in faith, character, and community

DAILY PICK-UP

Child Release & Pick-Up Procedures

For the safety of all children enrolled in roots: after school program, children may only be released to a parent/guardian or an individual authorized on the child's registration form.

When picking up your child, please:

- Sign your child out with program staff.
- Inform a staff member that you are leaving with your child.
- Collect all personal belongings.
- Encourage your child to assist with clean-up before departure.

If someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking up your child, written notice must be provided to program staff prior to pick-up. Identification may be requested before a child is released.

Children must be picked up by the designated program closing time. Repeated late pick-ups may result in additional fees or review of program enrollment.

ABSENCES

Because staffing and program planning are based on enrollment, program fees are not adjusted for absences.

Parents are asked to notify staff when a child will be absent.

If a participant is absent for an extended period without communication, the program reserves the right to review and potentially release the child's space to a family on the waitlist.

WEATHER, SCHOOL CLOSURES & EMERGENCIES

School Cancellation Policy

Because roots: after school program operates after school hours, program availability may be affected by:

- School cancellations
- Early dismissals
- Severe weather
- Community emergencies
- Facility-related concerns

Families will be notified as soon as possible through email, text message, phone call, or the program communication platform.

The safety of children, families, and staff will always guide closure decisions.

HOLIDAYS & PROGRAM CLOSURES

roots: after school program follows the closure schedule established by Hebron Baptist Church and local school calendars.

Families will receive an annual list of planned closures, including:

- Christmas Break
- March Break
- Statutory Holidays
- Professional Development Days (if applicable)
- Church facility closures

Program fees remain payable during scheduled closures unless otherwise specified.

Program Governance

roots: after school program operates as a ministry of Hebron Baptist Church and is committed to providing a safe, welcoming environment for children and families.

The program follows all applicable Nova Scotia health, safety, child protection, and employment requirements.

CHILD PROTECTION

Duty to Report

All staff and volunteers serving in roots: after school program are expected to uphold the highest standards of child safety.

Under Nova Scotia law, any person who suspects a child may be in need of protection has a legal duty to report their concerns to child protection authorities.

The safety and well-being of every child entrusted to our care is our highest priority.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Program Activities

Children participating in roots may engage in:

- Homework support and quiet study time
- Bible lessons and devotional discussions
- Arts and crafts
- Games and recreation
- Team-building activities
- Community service projects
- Music and creative expression
- Outdoor play
- Leadership and character-building activities

Activities are designed to be age-appropriate, engaging, and consistent with Christian values.

FAITH INTEGRATION

Christian Foundation

Faith is woven throughout every aspect of the roots program through:

- Prayer
- Bible teaching
- Worship and music
- Character development
- Service opportunities
- Positive Christian role models

Children are encouraged to grow in their understanding of God's love while respecting the backgrounds and experiences of all participants.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Illness Guidelines

Children should not attend the program if they:

- Have a fever
- Have experienced vomiting or diarrhea within the previous 24 hours
- Have a contagious illness
- Are unable to participate comfortably in program activities

Parents will be contacted if a child becomes ill during program hours.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Update to local information:

Emergency Contacts

In the event of a serious emergency:

1. Emergency services (911) will be contacted.
2. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately.
3. Staff will remain with the child until a parent or guardian arrives.

The program maintains emergency contact information for all participants and conducts regular safety drills.

Partnership with Families

roots: after school program believes parents and guardians are the primary influence in a child's life.

We value open communication and encourage families to:

- Share concerns promptly
 - Participate in program events
 - Review communications regularly
 - Support program expectations at home
- Together, we can create a positive and encouraging environment where children thrive.

.Outdoor Play and Weather Safety

Outdoor recreation is an important part of the roots experience. Children will participate in outdoor activities whenever weather conditions permit.

Outdoor activities may be modified, shortened, or cancelled when:

- Extreme cold or wind chill creates unsafe conditions
- Extreme heat or humidex levels create health concerns
- Heavy rain, thunderstorms, lightning, freezing rain, or other hazardous weather conditions are present
- Air quality advisories are issued by public health authorities

Staff monitor weather conditions and use professional judgment when determining whether outdoor activities can proceed safely.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring children arrive with appropriate seasonal clothing, including:

- Rain jackets and boots
- Winter coats, hats, mittens, snow pants, and winter footwear
- Sunscreen and hats during warmer months

Clothing and Belongings

What to Bring

Children should bring:

- Weather-appropriate outdoor clothing
- A labeled water bottle
- Any necessary medications that have been approved through the program's medication procedures

Children should not bring:

- Electronic devices unless authorized
- Valuable personal items
- Toys that may distract from programming

roots is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal items.

Celebrations and Special Occasions

roots enjoys celebrating birthdays and special milestones.

Families wishing to provide treats should contact program staff in advance to ensure accommodations for allergies and dietary needs.

Celebrations may include:

- Birthday recognition
- Seasonal events and holiday activities

Communication

We believe strong communication between families and program staff is essential.

Communication may occur through:

- Email
- Program newsletters
- Church announcements
- Phone calls
- Parent meetings
- In-person conversations at pick-up

Parents are encouraged to contact program leadership with questions, concerns, or updates regarding their child.

Volunteers

Parents and church members may be invited to assist with activities and special events.

All volunteers who work directly with children must:

- Complete a Criminal Record Check
- Complete a Vulnerable Sector Check
- Follow Hebron Baptist Church's Child Protection Policy
- Adhere to all supervision and safety expectations

Family and Community Events

Throughout the year, roots may host:

- Family game nights
- Christmas celebrations
- Easter activities
- Community service projects
- Family BBQs
- Church-wide events

All Families are welcome to participate.

Snacks and Nutrition

roots provides a healthy afternoon snack and access to drinking water throughout the program.

Whenever possible, snacks will include a variety of:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Dairy products or dairy alternatives
- Nutritious protein options

Parents/guardians must notify the program in writing of any allergies, dietary restrictions, or medical food requirements.

As a church-based program, children may be invited to participate in a brief prayer of thanksgiving before snack time. Participation is always respectful and age-appropriate.

"Give us this day our daily bread." — Matthew 6:11

Our Commitment to Inclusion

At **roots: after school program**, we believe every child is created in the image of God and deserves to be welcomed, respected, and valued.

Our program is committed to creating a safe, caring, and inclusive environment where children of all backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and learning styles can participate fully in program activities and develop meaningful relationships with peers and staff.

"I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made." — Psalm 139:14

Inclusive Program Philosophy

We recognize that children develop, learn, and engage in different ways.

Our staff and volunteers strive to:

- Foster a welcoming environment for all participants.
- Adapt activities whenever reasonably possible to support participation.
- Encourage respect, empathy, and kindness among children.
- Work collaboratively with families to understand each child's strengths and support needs.
- Promote inclusion while maintaining a safe and positive environment for all participants.

Individual Support Plans

When a child requires accommodations, additional support, or individualized strategies, roots may:

1. Meet with parents/guardians to discuss the child's strengths, interests, and support needs.
2. Develop an Individual Support Plan when appropriate.
3. Implement reasonable accommodations within program resources and staffing capabilities.
4. Communicate regularly with families regarding progress and effectiveness of supports.
5. Review and adjust strategies as needed.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to share any relevant information that may help staff support their child successfully.

Developmental, Learning, or Behavioural Concerns

If staff observe concerns regarding a child's participation, behaviour, emotional well-being, or development, the following process will be followed:

1. Staff will document observations objectively and confidentially.
2. Concerns will be discussed privately with parents/guardians.
3. Staff may recommend consultation with appropriate community supports or professionals.
4. Families and staff will work together to identify strategies that support the child's success within the program.

The purpose of these conversations is to support children and families, not to label or exclude.

Community Partnerships and Support Services

With parental consent, roots may collaborate with community professionals and support agencies, including:

- School-based support teams
- Guidance counsellors
- Speech-language pathologists
- Occupational therapists
- Mental health professionals
- Public Health Services
- Family support organizations
- The Nova Scotia Early Childhood Development and Family Resource Centre network
- Regional Centre for Education personnel

Information will only be shared with written parental permission unless otherwise required by law.

Confidentiality

Information regarding a child's personal circumstances, support needs, medical conditions, or assessments will be treated confidentially.

Information will only be shared with:

- Parents or legal guardians
- Program staff directly responsible for the child
- Authorized professionals involved in supporting the child (with consent)
- Authorities where disclosure is required by law

All records will be maintained securely and respectfully.

Faith-Based Encouragement

As a ministry of Hebron Baptist Church, roots seeks to reflect God's love for every child.

We teach children to treat others with kindness, compassion, patience, and respect. We celebrate the unique gifts, talents, and abilities that God has given each person.

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." — Galatians 6:2

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgements & Permission Forms

Parent/Guardian Handbook Acknowledgement

Child's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the **roots: after school program Parent/Guardian Handbook**.

I understand that it is my responsibility to become familiar with the policies and procedures outlined in the handbook and to follow them as a condition of my child's participation in the program.

I understand that roots: after school program reserves the right to revise policies and procedures as necessary. Families will be informed of significant updates.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Program Director Signature: _____

Date: _____

Photo & Media Consent

During program activities, children may occasionally be photographed or recorded participating in games, crafts, events, celebrations, or ministry activities.

Images may be used in:

- Parent communications
- Church presentations
- Program displays
- Promotional materials
- The church website
- Church social media platforms

Please select one:

YES, I consent to my child's photo/video being used.

NO, I do not consent to my child's photo/video being used.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Sunscreen & Insect Repellent Permission

To protect children during outdoor activities, staff may assist children with applying sunscreen and/or insect repellent supplied by parents.

- I authorize staff to assist my child with sunscreen application.
- I authorize staff to assist my child with insect repellent application.
- I do not authorize application of these products.

Products must:

- Be supplied by the parent/guardian.
- Be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Be age-appropriate and not expired.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Community Walks & Off-Site Activities Permission

Roots may occasionally participate in supervised walks or approved activities within the Hebron Baptist Community Playground, which is considered a Public space.

Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of organized field trips requiring transportation.

- I give permission for my child to participate in supervised walking activities.
- I give permission for my child to participate in approved off-site activities and field trips.
- I do not give permission for my child to participate in off-site activities.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Emergency Medical Authorization

In the event of illness or injury requiring emergency medical attention, I authorize roots: after school program staff to provide basic first aid and obtain emergency medical care if I cannot be reached immediately.

I understand that staff will contact emergency services (911) when necessary.

Preferred Hospital: _____

Family Doctor/Nurse Practitioner: _____

Phone: _____

Provincial Health Card Number (optional): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Communication Consent

Roots communicates with families through email, phone, text messaging, newsletters, and approved communication platforms.

I consent to receiving program communications electronically.

I consent to receiving text message notifications.

I do not consent to electronic communications.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Summary

Please initial each statement:

____ I have received and read the Parent/Guardian Handbook.

____ I understand and agree to follow the policies and procedures outlined in the handbook.

____ I have completed all required registration, emergency contact, and medical information forms.

____ I understand the program's attendance, behaviour, and safety expectations.

____ I authorize emergency medical treatment if required.

____ I understand the program's communication and confidentiality policies.

____ I have reviewed the photo/media permissions and consent forms.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Program Director Signature: _____

Date: _____

"Whatever you do, do it all in love." — 1 Corinthians 16:14