



Haldimand-Norfolk

REACH

supporting children, families, communities

## Welcome to Haldimand-Norfolk REACH Early Learning & Care Programs

### Ready Set School

Haldimand Norfolk REACH provides early learning and care programs for children infancy to twelve years of age. Our Early Learning and Care Unit includes the following services; centre based care, licensed home child care, Ontario Early Years Centres as well as an Early Literacy Specialist. We offer programs which are licensed by the Ministry of Education and align with the following documents;

- The Child Care and Early Years Act 2014
  - Bill 10, Child Care Modernization Act, 2014
- How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years
  - Ministry of Education, 2014
- Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research About Young Children
  - Ministry of Education , 2013
- Ontario Early Learning for Every Child Today Guiding Principles
  - Ministry of Children and Youth Services; Best Start Expert Panel on Early Learning, 2007

A brief overview to the documents that guide our work:

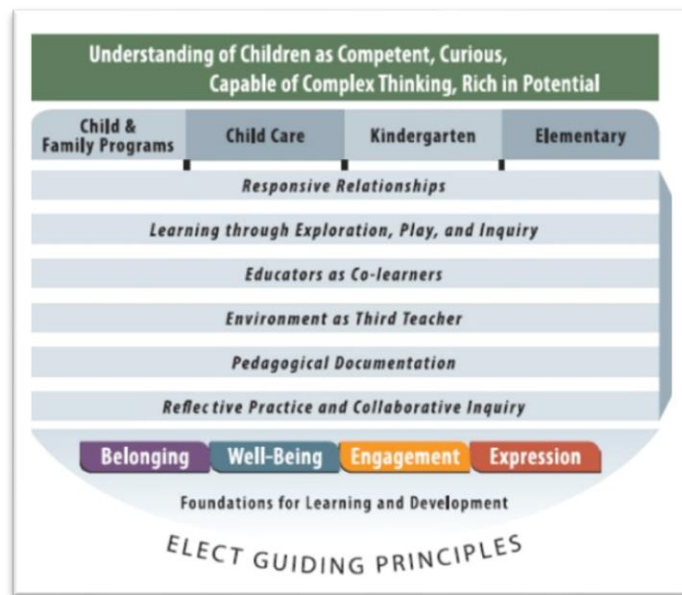
Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) came into effect on August 31, 2015. This legislation replaced the outdated Day Nurseries Act (DNA) and established new rules governing child care in Ontario

In 2014, The Ministry of Education introduced the research document How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years. This research based document provided Early Learning settings with a consistent approach and understanding of the relationship between educator, children and families. The document provides a framework to support play based learning and implementation is a requirement for all licensed child care programs in Ontario.

The research outlines the goals for children, expectations for programs, the importance of relationship between the child, family, educator, environment and community and asks questions for reflection for Educators. Children are viewed as capable, competent, curious and rich in potential. Play is how they learn.

Think, Feel, Act, 2013 Ministry of Education had six leading experts in the field of early childhood education write six researched briefs highlighting the latest research and strategies to support educators in their daily practices and reflections.

The ELECT Guiding Principles set the stage to ensure foundations for learning and development. These principles guide the delivery of service in our programs;



### **Our Program Goals and how we will meet them;**

#### **Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of children.**

- Families are asked to supply their own healthy snacks. It is our hope that this will enhance conversations around healthy choices with families and children. Prepare children for the balance day in school by encouraging independence around food choice and self help skills. Information around healthy food choices such as Canada Food Guide and other information from the local health unit will be provided to assist families in their snack choices. There will always be water and healthy snack options available on site for children who forget or still need more at snack time.
- Indoor environments are inspected daily and recorded in a log book daily prior to use and monthly on an inspection checklist. All safety hazards are reported and removed prior to use each day. Safety is a main consideration when planning activities.
- Supervision is provided by qualified and experienced educators. Anticipating hazards and supporting play with a focus on being safe. We guide children and scaffold on their prior learning so they can make safe choices during play. We communicate with children sharing with them an overview of what is happening in the day and throughout the day, so that they feel capable and confident as learner's in the environment.

- We record arrival and departure times in our daily attendance log.
- A healthy environment is maintained by providing families with an ill health policy and procedure describing inclusion and exclusion related to symptoms of ill health and communicable disease. Symptoms of ill health are recorded on a daily health check and communicated with parents.
- Educators disinfect the toys, equipment and environment on a scheduled basis. The maintenance is recorded in the log book. Children's washrooms are cleaned by school custodian. The environment is cleaned on a daily basis by custodial services.
- Water flushing is performed by the school custodian on a weekly basis to ensure all water is safe for drinking.
- Children are only allowed to leave program with a person that has been preapproved by the parent. New people picking up children will be required to show ID.



**Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and educators.**

- Each child and family is greeted with enthusiasm.
- We assist children in making the transition into our program.
- Educators prepare invitations to play within the environment to create inviting and exciting spaces for children that provoke creativity and open ended play.
- Educators initiate and encourage communication with parents about how their child is doing in the program, sharing observations about their child's development and any information that they would like to share. We listen to parents, demonstrating our care, support and respect for the parent as the expert on their child.
- Families have flexibility in arrival and pick up times.
- Parents are the child's first teachers and are the most knowledgeable about their children; our educators have a wide knowledge of children through their education and experience. Through a mutual appreciation of each other's expertise we ensure that all children have the best start in life.

- Educators are responsive to parent questions. They respond in a timely manner and will seek information to meet the inquiry.
- Educators model positive interactions and communications within the team.
- Educators work together to be supported by one another and the Supervisor when working through challenges.

**Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive manner and support their ability to self-regulate.**

- Educators assist children with opportunities to build their confidence. They encourage independence and provide children the room to try things with or without assistance as their level of comfort increases. They acknowledge this learning with the child.
- Educators acknowledge children by name, and position themselves at the child's level as much as possible to create meaningful interactions. Educators assist children in developing their problem solving skills by providing opportunities to practice using varying choices that are developmentally appropriate and by helping children develop awareness of tools that can help them problem solve independently. Educators help children build opportunities to learn new skills and guide behaviour in a positive direction.
- Educators assist children in developing communication skills. They achieve this by modeling, listening and responding to every child's individual needs.

**Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry.**

- Educators create intentional spaces where children have the ability to roam, investigate, observe, and be comfortable.
- Educators view the child as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Challenges are offered to reflect this belief. We celebrate each child and their journey through the continuum of development. We share these observations and moments with parents daily and we reflect with co-workers at bi-weekly team meetings.
- Educators coordinate services and work with other professionals to support children's individual needs. Collaboration is crucial to ensure coordination of services and a seamless experience for children.

- Educators observe and participate in play with children. They take opportunities to ask open ended questions that provoke a deeper learning experience. They weave in opportunities to expand on activities and follow the children's lead.

### **Provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences.**

- We provide a variety of activities for children that allow for discovery and choice. We intentionally plan the environment to reflect the children's interests and provide challenges to scaffold on their existing knowledge
- Our role is to become involved in play as a co-learner and offer ways to extend every child's learning. We utilize opportunities to observe play and document learning.
- We are aware of the priority to engage each child within the environment. We accomplish this by getting to know each child and plan environments and experiences that are responsive to each child and build on their culture, strengths and knowledge.
- We display enthusiasm in play and excitement to see what is next.



### **Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported.**

- We reflect and discuss observations, interests and achievements at our daily debrief and team meetings. This informs our next steps in planning the intentional environment and the rich materials and experiences that are offered.
- We take opportunities at monthly team meetings to share program updates and ideas.
- We support team building by ensuring time for planning, meeting, discussion, reflection and assist each person in professional growth and learning opportunities.

- We utilize the document How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (Ministry of Education, 2014), to assist us in planning and reflection.
- We create documentation capturing moments, activities and experiences. The documentation is shared with parents and children.
- We reflect back on the documentation with children to connect them back to the positive experience, which revisits learning and allows for more opportunities to expand on learning.
- We express to the individual growth with the children, helping them to recognize their achievements.

**Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time and give consideration to the individual needs of children.**

- We provide a balanced play time by ensuring that there are times for active and quiet play and rest periods within the schedule. Our schedules are flexible and focus on reducing the amount of transitions throughout the day.
- Every parent receives an individual tour of the facility and a copy of the parent handbook that reviews the balance of the schedule.
- Every parent is asked to complete a questionnaire that assists us in getting to know their child and the child's individual needs and preferences.
- Cozy areas are available to provide children with spaces that they can rest, relax and take a break.

**Foster the engagement and on-going communication with parents about the program and their children.**

- We offer daily communication with parents so that they have knowledge of their child's day.
- We encourage open communication to welcome relationship building where parents are comfortable asking questions.
- We provide parents with email contacts to connect with educators and welcome telephone calls to share or connect at the best time for the parent.
- We look to the parent as the expert source of knowledge for their child. We share information and problem solve together to support individual needs.

- We encourage parents to participate in opportunities to provide feedback. We distribute an annual parent survey and have a suggestion box available at the site. Verbal suggestions direct to their child's educator or the supervisor is also encouraged.
- We use the results of the parent survey to directly inform the annual work plan and guide decision making in programming.

**Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and educators.**

- Since HN REACH is a multi-service organization we are able to refer parents for services and provide coordination of other services that we can provide for the family.
- We welcome community partners into the space and create opportunities to collaborate our services. We encourage the opportunity to learn from one another.
- Information is provided to parents that reflects events and resources available within the community.
- Resource consultants work together with our educators to increase knowledge and create individualized support plans for children that have been referred to the Family Early Intervention Program at request of the parent.

**Support educators or others who interact with the children at the child care centre in relation to continuous professional learning.**

- An annual employee survey is distributed within the agency to directly inform planning and supervision.
- Regular supervision and mentoring opportunities are made available to the educators.
- Annual/bi-annual performance appraisals are implemented for each educator.
- Educators participate in a continuous learning plan, displaying an on-going commitment to learning and professional development as required by the College of Early Childhood Educators.
- A culture of learning is encouraged and supported with financial support and time to attend events.

- Educators are encouraged to participate in the Cultivating Learners Network group of reflective practice.
- Supervisors attend the Early Learning and Care Network on a monthly basis.
- The entire Early Learning and Care Unit has an annual planning day where goals and training priorities are determined and set for the next year.
- We participate in the local Quality Initiative.

### **Program Statement Implementation**

This program statement will be reviewed with all educators, students and volunteers at the time of orientation and on an annual basis as a part of our annual policy review.

The program statement will be included as part of our team meeting agenda. We will reflect with the team about the program statement goals and how we will ensure that the goals are visible in our program.

Any changes to the program statement will include educator feedback through discussion via team meetings, emails and surveys.

The program statement will serve as a foundation at our unit planning meeting.

Educators will assist in providing on-going feedback related to the connection of goals and measurable outcomes.

Educators will assist in making the program statement visible for parents in the program using documentation of the children's learning and verbally sharing information on a daily basis with parents. The program documentations include; daily information sheets, learning stories and photo documentation.

Parents will receive a copy of the program statement at the time of program statement development completion and at orientation from there on and annually at the time of review of service of care contracts. Requests can be made at anytime from the parent. Eventually, the program statement will be available on the HN REACH website.

Communication with parents will reflect the language used in the program statement and will be used in verbal or written communication.

Reflective questions for parents will be included in the annual parent survey and will include our impact on children and families for services received.



## **Monitoring and Supervision of Educators**

The program statement will be included in individual supervision meetings through reflective discussion with the program supervisor. The discussion will include a review of their understanding and evidence of how they are meeting the goals. This will be documented on a supervision template and used for future reflection and professional growth.

Educators will be observed during facilitation of program and the observations will be recorded in the educator's personal file. The observation will be discussed as part of the mentoring culture that includes side by side learning opportunities with educators, regular coaching and supervision.

Educators will record observations regularly in the program log book and observation planning form which will be reviewed during supervision.

Educators will be expected to ensure evidence is gathered and documented daily and transformed into documentation on a regular basis monthly.

Policy and procedure review is an expectation for all employees and will be documented annually or when new or revised policies are implemented.

Observations will include how the educator is guiding children in a positive direction and will be focused on ensuring that prohibited practices are not used.

In the event that prohibited practices are observed, the implementation of the behaviour guidance policy will occur.

The program statement reflection will be included in the annual performance appraisal for employees.

If you have any questions or feedback that you would like to share about these goals or statements, please feel free to contact the Supervisor of the program or the Early Learning and Care Manager.