



**Muskoka Family Focus  
& Children's Place**

## **PROGRAM STATEMENT**

Our Early Learning Centres and School Age Programs strive to provide a positive learning environment for your child to enhance his or her level of development through play experiences and the guidance of professionally trained Registered Early Childhood Educators (and assistants) who are members of and in good standing with the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators. Staff, students and volunteers will review this program statement prior to interacting with the children and at least once annually and when this statement is modified.

We believe children are "competent, capable, curious and rich in potential".

Our Early Learning Centres use the *How Does Learning Happen, (HDLH) Ontario's Pedagogy for The Early Years - 2014*<sup>1</sup> as the document to guide programming and pedagogy<sup>2</sup>

For the children, their families and our staff, our program strategies are designed to foster physical, social, emotional, intellectual, creative and spiritual development by offering experiences that promote:

- a) Health, safety, nutrition and well-being;
- b) Curiosity, creativity, initiative and independence;
- c) Self-esteem, confidence and decision making capabilities;
- d) Respect for themselves, others and their environment;
- e) Encourage responsive feelings of friendship and consideration;
- f) Communication and interaction to foster positive responsive relationships;
- g) Self-regulation and co-operation;
- h) Inquiry based play through child initiated exploration and adult-support experiences;
- i) A well balanced daily schedule that includes active indoor and outdoor play as well as rest/quiet time that provides consideration to individual needs;
- j) Integration of children with challenging needs. Along with the assistance of various resource services in the community, we strive to meet the needs of all children.
- k) Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in (a) to (j) on the children and their families.

As stated in the *How Does Learning Happen?* document, "Learning and development happens within the context of relationships among children, families, educators and the environment." Our qualified staff,

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<sup>1</sup>The HDLH document can be found on the Min. of Ed. website:  
[www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Pedagogy - The method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept.

students and volunteers guide the early learning environment to promote the Four Foundations of *How Does Learning Happen?* These four foundations include: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression. Our staff, students and volunteers use these foundations to provide a nurturing environment that creates a vision for all children's future potential. Our staff, students and volunteers are supported to participate in continuous professional learning. They are required to document and review the impact of the strategies as stated above on the children and their families. Our staff, students and volunteers are also monitored throughout the year to ensure that all components of this program statement are implemented in the operation of each program.

Our goal is to provide a secure and safe learning environment through enjoyable experiences for all children attending our program. We involve local community partners and allow those partners to support children, their families and our staff, students and volunteers.

## **Program Statement Goals Approaches**

### **Health, Safety, Nutrition and Well Being (a) (g)**

- Staff, students and volunteers create positive eating environments
- Staff, students and volunteers are responsive to children's cues
- Stimulating, safe environment available for intentional active play that supports individual children's abilities
- Challenging experiences in available that support varied abilities in order for children to practice self-regulation skills and work towards mastering a skill
- All meals, snacks and beverages must meet the recommendations in the Canada's Food Guide
- Child health check completed daily (on attendance)
- Safe, calming and nurturing environment
- Self-regulation and co-operative skills encouraged
- Children are dressed appropriately for the weather

### **Inquiry Play Based Programming (b) (h) (i) (k)**

- Well balanced daily schedule
- Outdoor time (2 hrs) with activities offered OR indoor physical activity during inclement weather
- Indoor physical activity
- Creative opportunities available
- Diverse age appropriate books available
- Science/nature exploration available
- Music/language opportunities available
- Block play available
- Sensory experiences offered
- Dramatic play opportunities available
- Co-operative opportunities offered to children
- Area available for spiritual reflection ie: cozy tent
- Quiet/rest period offered with appropriate activities
- Program plans current and posted based on the interests of the children

- Various documentation is visible to support the pedagogical learning of all children

### **Interactions with Children (c) (e) (f) (j)**

- Tone of voice is calm and nurturing to the children
- Genuine interest shown to each child
- Children are listened to and respected to help foster positive reciprocal relationships
- Children are supported with positive reinforcement to build self-esteem, self-confidence and to nurture decision making skills
- Children's emotions are recognized and responded to with empathy through responsive communication between educators and children
- Educators, students and volunteers at child's level role modelling and encouraging independence, curiosity, initiative and self-help skills through reciprocal age appropriate conversation
- Educators, students and volunteers communicate with children to identify feelings/emotions encouraging friendship and consideration of others ie: 'bucket filling' and inclusion of all
- Educators, students and volunteers encourage children to be respectful of others and themselves
- Frequent age appropriate verbal interaction with children to foster a sense of security
- Frequent appropriate physical contact with children
- Appropriate use of body and verbal language to foster positive communication and relationships
- Each child greeted (by name) and acknowledged
- Children encouraged to meet individual developmental goals
- Children with special needs are integrated including the development and implementation of Individual Program Plans (IPP)
- Focus is on children as opposed to the adults in the room

### **Interactions with Families and Our Community (f) (j) (k)**

- Families are greeted daily by name in a friendly welcoming manner (eye contact)
- Family inquiries answered or redirected/referred
- Communication between educators, students, volunteers and families is respectful to foster positive relationships between the children, parents and educators
- Families are encouraged to participate in the program ie: scheduled visit, drop in, call, etc. and engage in the documentation displayed/demonstrated to ensure our strategies are effective
- Respect for individual differences, sensitivity to differing parenting styles, culture, etc...

### **Sanitary Practices (a)**

- Staff, students and volunteers follow all recommendations by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
- Children helped to wash before eating, after toileting, outdoor play, and as needed
- Surfaces cleaned and disinfected as appropriate
- Equipment/toys cleaned and disinfected per policy
- Cots cleaned and disinfected, linens laundered at least weekly
- Children assisted/encouraged to use sanitary practices when using the toilet

**Safety Practices (a)**

- Children supervised AT ALL TIMES
- Cleaning supplies inaccessible to children
- Children sitting while eating or drinking

**Environment (d) (g)**

- Educators, students and volunteers use the environment as a 'third teacher' ie: children are involved in room set up
- Respect for the environment is woven into all activities throughout the day
- The environment is designed to accommodate varied children`s sensitivities and arousal states and to allow for a calm, focused, alert state as well
- Toys/equipment to promote all areas of development – inquiry play based learning
- Toys/equipment suitable to developmental levels

**Food Handling (a)**

- Allergies listed – staff, students and volunteers aware of allergies, list up to date
- Staff, students and volunteers sit with children during meal times and it is a friendly social time
- Good eating habits and manners encouraged
- Children are assisted when needed
- Children are encouraged to serve themselves
- Proper food eating techniques modelled (use of utensils, dishes, cups)
- Proper use of dishes ie: wet food must be on a plate or in bowl

**Kitchen Maintenance and Duties (a)**

- All meals, snacks and beverages must meet the recommendations in the Canada's Food Guide
- Culturally diverse options offered
- Individual food preparation opportunities offered to children ie: fruit sticks
- Healthy meals and snacks are being prepared with as much 'homemade' food as possible ie: homemade granola bars
- Low fat, aspartame, trans fat and high sodium food are not included in our menus
- Homogenized milk is being served to children under 2 years of age
- Water is offered and available throughout the day
- Kitchen floor swept daily
- Cleaning and disinfecting happens regularly throughout the day
- Cleaning checklist is completed daily, weekly, etc.