

Program Statement

At Halton Hills Child Care Centre, we understand how children think and grow. We know that children learn through play. Our program is designed to guide the children to become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners in a safe, secure and loving environment. Within in our program statement are strategies outlining how we will achieve our goals. We begin by seeing the children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential; each with unique personalities and individual needs.

Halton Hills Child Care Centre believes in providing the highest possible standard of service to all the children and families that are a part of our program. Our child care providers utilize the documents *ELECT – Early Learning for Every Child Today, Think, Feel, Act, and How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years* as set out by the Ministry of Education under the Child Care and Early Years Act. The following foundations ensure optimal learning and development. These foundations set the goals and expectations for our program.

Belonging Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to the world.

Well-being Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.

Engagement Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.

Expression Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.

We know children flourish in a loving and caring environment where child care providers are responsive to the children’s daily needs.

*“The most important period of life is not the age of university studies,
but the first one, the period from birth to the age of six.”*

Maria Montessori

Our goal is to **promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children** throughout our programs. We believe each child is unique and learns in his/her own way. Each child has the ability to make choices, explore, ask and answer questions, problem solve with the support and guidance of their child care providers.

It is essential to provide the children with a healthy and safe environment:

- Our child care providers will ensure toys and equipment are clean and safe.
- We meet and surpass all health & safety requirements as set out by the Ministry of Education and local government agencies.
- Our child care providers will do a quick health observation of each child upon arrival every day.
- Our child care providers will monitor any changes in each child’s behaviour, demeanor and health throughout the day. We will notify the parent of changes.
- If a child becomes unwell, our child care providers will keep the child as comfortable as possible until the parent arrives.
- Our child care providers will always provide supervision both inside and outside.

Meals are set in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere, allowing of plenty time to enjoy our food. Our child care providers join the children to role model a positive attitude towards foods and pleasant table manners. Our child care providers are in tune with the children's capabilities so they can graduate from bowls and spoons to plates and forks. Older children are encouraged to practice self care skills (feeding themselves) and help with food distribution (filling their own glasses, setting the table). Delightful conversation occurs during meals with our child care providers carefully supervising the children for possible signs of choking. When spills occur, we will calmly help clean up with an "oops".

We work closely with families when it comes to food allergies, special diets or personal observances. Parents may be asked to provide speciality food items as required if our menu is unable to accommodate a specific need. Our anaphylactic policy ensures children's dietary needs and allergies are clearly communicated and that strategies are in place to minimize exposure.

"Our heritage and ideals, our code and standards - the things we live by and teach our children - are preserved or diminished by how freely we exchange ideas and feelings."

Walt Disney

Our goal is to **support positive and responsive interaction among the children, parents, child care providers and staff** by building respect for one another. Halton Hills Child Care Centre certifies its commitment to eliminate attitudes and behaviour directed at an individual or group based on race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic background, citizenship, religious belief, non-belief, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical challenges, education, and martial, economic or family status.

Our child care providers take a genuine interest in the children's accomplishments and efforts while providing a warm and responsive atmosphere for the children and families in our Centre.

Our child care providers will:

- Greet children and families as they arrive
- Ensure the environment is inviting and welcoming
- Make eye contact during conversations with children (at their level) and families
- Acknowledge children and families as they depart

"Self-regulation is a system for dealing with stress."

Dr. Stuart Shanker

Our goal is to **encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate** through development of positive social skills.

Our child care providers contribute to the children's self-regulation and well-being by:

- Role modelling appropriate social interactions
- Assisting the children to develop problem solving skills
- Building respect for individuals
- Guide the children to recognize emotions in themselves and others

- Support the children with calming techniques when faced with a challenging situation

*“Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood,
for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child's soul.”*

Friedrich Froebel

Our goal is to provide materials that extend and **foster the children’s exploration, play and inquiry**. Our child care providers observe of the children’s interests and emerging skills to develop program planning and promote skill development as outlined in the *ELECT: Early Learning for Every Child Today*. We encourage the children to express their feelings, experiences, and ideas.

Our child care providers will:

- Ensure there are enough play materials available
- Ensure toys/equipment/materials meet each child’s needs (inclusive)
- Provide new play opportunities through interest centres
- Become actively involved in play
- Provide a safe, nurturing and fun environment
- Support social interactions
- Provide developmental appropriate activities that follow the children’s lead
- Provide choices so children can choose their own play experiences and how they wish to explore
- Maintain open communication with families
- Provide support for parents as needed
- Provide a well-balanced environment for active and quiet times both indoors and outdoors

“When you're curious, you find lots of interesting things to do.”

Walt Disney

Our goal is to **provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences** by seeing ourselves in a partnership as co-learners and co-planners with the children. We support a sense of belonging by asking the children for their input (if age appropriate) as to what toys/equipment/materials they would like more/less/change/add.

Having the children express themselves is a valuable part of our planning strategy. By collaborating, we provide materials that extend and enhance play and learning, giving the children opportunities to engage individually or as part of a group. We will reflect and evaluate using our observations to ensure individual and group needs are met.

*"Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited,
whereas imagination embraces the entire world ..."*

Albert Einstein

Our goal is to **plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child’s learning and development will be supported** through observations, reflective

practices and collaboration. Our child care providers interpret what is occurring in their classroom. They will review what is working and what is not.

Our child care providers will ask themselves:

- What do I see?
- What do I hear?
- What do I think?
- How can I support an emerging interest?

“Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand.”

Chinese proverb

Our goal is to provide a variety of activities that **incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day and give considerations to the individual needs of the children receiving child care.** As the children play, they are developing an appreciation for the world around them. We value and build on their strengths and abilities.

Children benefit from a variety of opportunities to engage with the natural world, including exploration, investigation and observation of the environment. Not all outdoor play needs to be high energy or focused on gross motor skills. Our playground toys/equipment provide for both energetic and quiet activities. Our learning environments are natural and safe, but still allow the children to take reasonable risks.

During sleep time, our child care providers help soothe the children by sitting with them, rubbing backs and providing comfort. We realize that need for rest and sleep varies greatly at different ages, and even among children of the same age; however, rest is an important part of the day for all children. Quiet activities are provided for children who do not sleep.

We offer a vast variety of experiences daily

- Dramatic play
- Science & nature
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Gross motor
- Music
- Fine motor
- Cognitive
- Art
- Group & individual activities
- Construction

“Whatever we accomplish is due to the combined effort.”

Walt Disney

Our goal is to **foster the engagement of ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children** to create the best possible learning environment where the children construct knowledge through physical activity, social interactions and their own

thinking. Ongoing communication is essential. *“High-quality early childhood programs ... engage with families and support each child within the context of his or her family, recognizing that family and child well-being are inextricably linked”* (How Does Learning Happen?).

Our child care providers will observe and document through pictures and words what they see and hear, focusing on what is happening and less on the actual materials. Documentation takes the form of postings in the classroom of either group or individual experiences. Parents will receive electronically on HiMama daily individual activities. A classroom book of photos and stories is assembled for the children to look at and revisit past events.

Our child care providers will convey information directly to parents through daily conversations, phone calls, via HiMama, and during special events such as our annual Family BBQ.

We arrange Heart to Heart meetings with parents at least annually or when requested. We know that the parents’ input is essential and valuable to ensure each child’s needs are being met.

“Free the child’s potential, and you will transform him into the world.”

Maria Montessori

Our goal is to **involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff** to provide accessibility to our services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of each individual making every reasonable effort to accommodate their unique needs.

Halton Hills Child Care Centre works closely with local community partners to support the children, their families and our staff such as:

- Halton Region – Community Services for Families
- Erin Oak Kids
- ROCK – Reach Out Centre for Kids
- CAS – Children’s Aid Society
- Halton District & Catholic School Boards

We utilize resources available to provide the right care for all of the children. During your time with us, you may see or work with consultants and/or support staff to ensure the best environment for your child.

Parents and staff can explore resources for:

- Speech
- Hearing
- Behaviour
- Development

Our child care providers will ensure an up-to-date individualized support plan is in place for each child with special needs in consultation with the parent and any regulated health professional or other person who works with the child in a capacity that would allow the person to help develop the plan.

“The goal of early childhood education should be to activate the child's own natural desire to learn.”

Maria Montessori

Our goal is to **support staff who interact with the children in relation to continuous professional learning** to explore new ideas, meet objectives and refresh practices. The Centre believes that part of a quality program includes the opportunity for our staff to network in the community, have access to professional development, and have additional support through coaching and supervision. Regularly scheduled staff meetings and training allow for collaboration of information, experiences and thoughts among all the staff; and an opportunity to review Centre policies, practices and procedures.

“Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning.”

Fred Rogers

We will **document and review the impact of strategies set out in its program statement on the children and their families** over the course of year through:

- Parent surveys
- Conversations with parents and children
- Observations of play areas and children
- Quality First partnership
- Board of Directors
- Annual General Meeting

Our program is constantly evolving to meet the needs of the children. We are committed to open communication, encouraging children, families and staff to express their ideas, thoughts and concerns to ensure we accomplish our goals.