

Our Program Statement

At Halton Hills Child Care Centre, we know that children learn through play. Our program is designed to guide children to become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners in a safe, secure and warm environment.

Our educators create a loving and caring atmosphere where children can flourish, and are responsive to the children's daily needs.

We see 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.

We utilize documents set out by the Ministry of Education to set goals and expectations in our program statement to ensure optimal learning and development.

- ◆ Child Care and Early Years Act
- ◆ How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years
- ◆ Ontario Early Years Framework
- ◆ Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research about Young Children
- ◆ Early Learning for Every Child Today

Our program statement outlines strategies to achieve our goals.

Four Foundations from How Does Learning Happen?

Belonging

Belonging refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual's experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with other and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world.

Well-Being

Well-being addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation skills.

Engagement

Engagement suggests a state of being involved and focused. When Children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.

Expression

Expression or communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words, and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy.

Our goal is to ***promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children*** throughout our programs.

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

- ◆ We ensure toys and equipment are cleaned and disinfected properly.
- ◆ Playgrounds are inspected twice daily to ensure that they are free of hazards.
- ◆ We adhere to all requirements as set out by the Ministry of Education, local government agencies (Halton Public Health and Halton Hills Fire Department) and our Centre policies and procedures.
- ◆ Hand washing, throughout the day, by the children and staff is key to stopping the spread of germs.
- ◆ We will do a quick health observation of each child upon arrival every day.
- ◆ We will monitor any changes in each child's behaviour, demeanor, and health throughout the day. We will notify the parent of any changes.
- ◆ If a child becomes unwell, our educators will keep the child as comfortable as possible until the parent arrives.
- ◆ We will always provide supervision both inside and outside.
- ◆ Our educators discuss safety with the children, identifying classroom and playground rules.
- ◆ Safe practices are in place for fire drills, lockdown drills and evacuations.

Meals are set in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere, allowing of plenty time to enjoy our food. Our educators join the children to role model a positive attitude towards foods and good table manners. We 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). Pleasant conversation occurs during meals with our educators 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. Dietary food/allergies lists are posted in food preparation areas, in classrooms, and on tables during snacks and lunch.

Our anaphylactic policy ensures children's life-threatening allergies have strategies in place to minimize possible exposure to an allergen. All staff have First Aid, CPR, and EpiPen training.

Our educators take an active interest in each child. We look forward to making trusting and caring relationships with the children and their families.

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 is committed to eliminating 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 marital, economic or family status.

Our educators 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.

We 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
- ◆ Ensure no child is overlooked
- ◆ Provide TLC throughout the day
- ◆ Maintain open communication with families
- ◆ Provide support for families with parenting challenges

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 educators support the children's self-regulation and well-being by:

- ◆ Listening to the children and responding positively
- ◆ Role modelling appropriate social interactions
- ◆ Assisting the children to develop problem solving skills
- ◆ Building respect for individuals
- ◆ Guiding the children to recognize emotions in themselves and others
- ◆ Supporting the children with calming techniques when faced with a challenging situation
- ◆ Engaging with the children, to build strategies for self-regulation

- ◆ Observing the environment to identify areas, things, and interactions that may be causing stress for the children

Our goal is to provide materials that extend and **foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry.**

Our educators observe the children's interests and emerging skills to develop program planning and promote skill development. We encourage the children to express their feelings, experiences, and ideas.

We will:

- ◆ Ensure the environment is well-organized with lots of materials easily accessible to the children
- ◆ Ensure toys, equipment, and materials meet the children'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 developmentally appropriate activities that follow the children's lead
- ◆ Provide choices so children can choose their own play experiences and how they wish to explore
- ◆ Provide a well-balanced environment for active and quiet times both indoors and outdoors

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, and materials.

Involvement in play adds to the partnership between the educators and children. Educators become in-tune with the children, knowing when to stand back and observe, and when to enter the children's play, to support as they build on their ideas.

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 offer a vast variety of experiences daily:

- ◆ Dramatic Play
- ◆ Science & Nature
- ◆ Literacy
- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Gross Motor

- ◆ Music
- ◆ Fine Motor
- ◆ Cognitive
- ◆ Construction
- ◆ Art
- ◆ Group Activities
- ◆ Individual Activities
- ◆ Quiet Spaces

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 educators interpret what is occurring in their classroom. They will reflect and evaluate their observations to ensure individual and group needs are met. They will review what is working and what is not.

Our educators will ask themselves:

- ◆ What do I see?
- ◆ What do I hear?
- ◆ What do I think?
- ◆ How can I support an emerging interest?
- ◆ What's next?

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 educators.

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.**

Children benefit from a variety of opportunities to engage with the natural world, including exploration, investigation and observation of the environment.

As the children play, they are developing an appreciation for the world around them. We value and build on their strengths and abilities.

Not all outdoor play needs to be high energy or focused on gross motor skills. Our playground toys and 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 educators 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 those children who do not sleep.

Play and learning go hand-in-hand. They are not separate activities. They are intertwined.

- ◆ Dramatic play invites children to role-play while at the same time, they are learning to get along with others, and coping with challenges.
- ◆ Block play is not just building towers. The children explore many different aspects such as counting, geometry, measurement, planning, and probability.
- ◆ Give children crayons or pencils with some paper and they will start scribbling away. This is teaching children how to hold the pencil properly and over time to strengthen their hand and finger muscles so they can really start to write and draw.
- ◆ Through literacy activities such as looking at books and listening to stories, children learn to turn the pages, think about what will happen next in the story, understand that printed words have meaning, and develop an enjoyment of books.

While the children are playing and having fun, they are developing life-skills, increasing their knowledge, and spark creative thinking.

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 educators will observe and document through pictures and words what they see and hear, focusing on what is happening.

- ◆ 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 and families to look at and revisit past events.
- ◆ Educators will share resources with parents.
- ◆ Concerns will be addressed promptly.

We will convey information directly to parents through daily conversations, phone calls, and via HiMama.

Meetings can be set up if requested from the parent or educators. We know that the parents' input is essential and valuable to ensure each child's needs are being met.

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. You may see or work with resource consultants or support staff to ensure the best environment for your child.

Parents and staff can explore resources for:

- ◆ Speech
- ◆ Hearing
- ◆ Behaviour
- ◆ Development

We 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.

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 educators to network in the community, have access to professional development, in-house training, and have additional support through coaching and supervision.

Regularly scheduled staff and team meetings allow for collaboration of information, experiences and thoughts among all the staff. The Centre's policies, practices and procedures are scheduled for staff review throughout the year. Centre policies cover a

wide range of areas; Ministry of Education mandatory policies, Accessible Customer Service, WHMIS, Centre practices, etc.

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:

- Review of our Program Statement
- Parent feedback surveys
- Conversations with parents and children
- Observations and documentation of play areas and children
- Licensing inspection by the Ministry of Education
- 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.