

OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN

LEARNING AND CARING WITH
INFANTS AND TODDLERS

Professional Support Document



IMAGE OF THE CHILD

VALUING RELATIONSHIPS

VALUING FRIENDSHIPS

VALUING CULTURES

VALUING ENVIRONMENTS

VALUING OBSERVATION AND DOCUMENTATION

WELL-BEING

PLAY AND PLAYFULNESS

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACIES

DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • INDIVIDUALITY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • INDIVIDUALITY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY

NEW BRUNSWICK
CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK
FOR EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE ~ ENGLISH

OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN
LEARNING AND CARING WITH INFANTS AND TODDLERS —
Professional Support Document



By Enid Elliot, Emily Ashton, Anne Hunt, and Pam Nason.

Published 2011 for Social Development, Government of New Brunswick by the Early Childhood Centre.

Series Editors: NB Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Collection: Emily Ashton, Ann Sherman, and Pam Whitty.

Design and Layout: Mandy Wright

Printing and Binding: Taylor Printing Group Inc., Fredericton

Text (front matter, exemplar annotations, reflective questions and references),
design, and front cover artwork copyright © Early Childhood Centre UNB.

Individual exemplars (text, illustrations, and photographs) copyright © corresponding children, parents, and childcare centres.

This collection copyright © Early Childhood Centre, UNB.

All rights reserved. Enquiries should be made to the publisher.

Educators are permitted to photocopy the exemplar materials for teaching purposes only.

ISBN 978-1-55131-147-0

COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND
INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • INDIVIDUALITY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND
INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • CREATIVITY AND PLAY • AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PRIMARY AUTHORS

Enid Elliot

Emily Ashton

Anne Hunt

Pam Nason

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

Tammy Basque

Kiona Bedard

Karen Clark

Irene Copeland

Monique Doucet

Sherry Mackey

Sharon MacPherson

Jackie McGraw

Dianna Morris

Lori O'Neill

Tammy O'Neill

Linda Richardson

Jean Robinson

Sarah Stewart

Tera Theriault-Hervet

UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Pam Whitty, Project Director, University of New Brunswick

Pam Nason, Project Director, University of New Brunswick

Emily Ashton, University of New Brunswick

Anne Hunt, University of New Brunswick

Sherry Rose, University of New Brunswick

Kim Stewart, University of New Brunswick

Gillian Yeomans, University of New Brunswick

ON SITE SUPPORT FACILITATORS:

Jennifer Arsenault

Tammy Hachey

Donna Baisley

Lynda Homer

Wanda Butt

Shirley-Ann Howe

Kembubi Christie

Kelly Naish

Jennifer Curtis

Sue Sears

Linda Gould

Avril Wood-Toner

Sharon Hachey

CONTRIBUTING RESEARCHERS

Early inspiration for this document comes from the Canadian Council on Learning Project titled *Conversations about infant/toddler learning and care: Sharing what we know and creating new hybrid texts.*

Leslie Allan, UNB Practitioner-in-Residence

Jane Beckerton, Passamquoddy Children's Centre Inc.

Tiffany Gladstone, 100 Aker Woods Daycare

Linda Haynes, Lincoln Day Care Centre

Kate Inghram, Crafty Corner Childcare Centre

Monica Little, L'il Spuds Daycare

Robin Miller, Centreville Child Care Preschool and Full Daycare

Jean Robinson, Lincoln Day Care Centre

Pam Whitty, Project Co-Director

Patty Woolridge, Passamquoddy Children's Centre Inc.

Tammy Basque, Crafty Corner Childcare Centre

Hilary Duncan, Angels "R" Wee

Tina Goguen, L'il Spuds Daycare

Ashley Hodgins, Little Angels Daycare Inc.

Elaine Larlee, Little Angels Daycare Inc.

Sharon MacPherson, Military Family Resource Center Childcare

Pam Nason, Project Director

Ann Shears, Military Family Resource Center Childcare

Sierra Willis, Centreville Child Care Preschool and Full Daycare

Tiffany Yeomans, 100 Aker Woods Daycare

CONTRIBUTING CENTRES

We are inspired in our work by the commitment of early childhood educators throughout the province and by the children in their educational care.

A 2 Z LEARNING AND CARE CENTRE

BEARY SPECIAL DAYCARE INC.

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS DAYCARE INC.

CHATHAM DAY CARE CENTER INC.

CHATHAM DAY CARE CENTER INC. TOO

CLARK'S EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

COLLEGE HILL DAY CARE CO-OPERATIVE, LTD.

CRAFTY CORNER CHILDCARE CENTRE

DIANNA'S

FUNETIK INC.

GAGETOWN MILITARY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

GARDERIE M & M DAYCARE

GRETA BLANCHARD

HAPPY HEARTS

HIGH FIVE! EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

HOME WITH A HEART DAYCARE

JUST KIDS DAY CARE CENTER INC.

KIDS CHOICE TODDLER CENTRE

KIDS KORNER DAYCARE

LE GARDIN DES CÂLINS

L'IL CRITTERS EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

LISA'S PLAYHOUSE

LITTLE RAYS OF SUNSHINE DAY CARE

LINCOLN DAY CARE CENTRE

MILITARY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER CHILDCARE

MILLIDGE AVENUE TOT SPOT CHILDCARE

PRINCE EDWARD SQUARE YM-YWCA

ROSIE'S PLAY AND LEARN HOME DAYCARE

SALISBURY EARLY LEARNING CENTER

SAINT JOHN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE, LTD.

SIMPSON DRIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

ST. JOSEPH'S COMMUNITY AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

SOMERSET PRESCHOOL CENTRE INC.

SUNNY DAYS CHILDREN'S CENTER

TINA'S TOTS COMMUNITY DAYCARE

UNICORN CHILDREN CENTER INC.

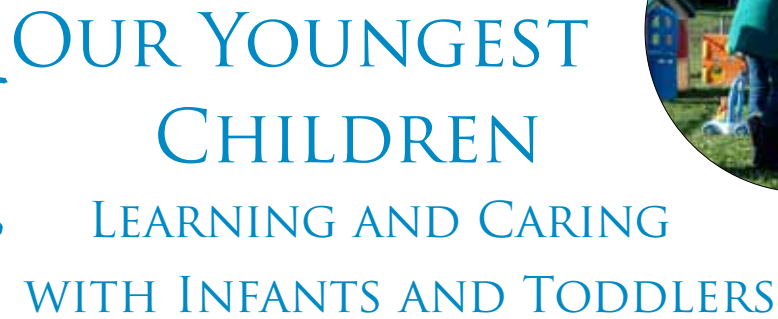
WESTMORLAND EAST PLAYSCHOOL INC.

YORK STREET CHILDREN'S CENTRE INC.

THANK YOU TO
THE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES
FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
THIS CURRICULUM DOCUMENT.



DEDICATED TO PAM NASON (1944-2010)
FOR HER INSPIRATION AND COMMITMENT
TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.



This document explores, more deeply, what the broad based goals look like in the everyday life of babies and those who care for them. The importance of relationships with families, children, and educators are celebrated throughout. Additional topics such as transitions, a pedagogy of listening, environments, and documenting learning are addressed by highlighting examples from around New Brunswick. We encourage you to draw on these contributions as springboards for thinking about and planning for care and learning in your unique settings.

I think my role is not just the care of the child but also the care of the parents.





In my work I really love watching the growth that happens. It is exciting to see this age group go from crawling to walking. Then it is exciting to watch pretend play and how it gets extended. I also am so interested in how language is growing at the same time.

~ Tammy Basque
Crafty Corner Childcare Centre



My intention is to always work in the best interest of the children by:

- *Making sure I follow the interests of the children*
- *Making sure I include the parents and families as part of the centre*
- *Making sure I create a program for my children that both matches and challenges their abilities*
- *Ensuring the safety and well-being of the children*
- *Never giving up on any child*
- *Providing the best learning environment I can for the children*
- *Guiding the children as firmly as necessary, as gently as possible and always with respect*
- *Making sure all children are respected and included in my programming.*

~ Monique Doucet
Saint John Early Learning Centre



A DISCUSSION OF TERMS



- We have used the terms baby, infant, toddler, and youngest children, interchangeably, without delineating the number of months. While these terms signify a distinct time in a person's life, it is not a definitive segment with a clear-cut beginning and ending.
- The pronouns he and she are also used indiscriminately throughout the document. This was an aesthetic choice as we wished to avoid the awkward she/he combination.
- At this point in the early childhood field, there are a number of terms used for infant and toddler educators. You may hear educator, infant/toddler caregivers, educarers (Gerber, 1979), and infant care teachers (Lally and Mangione, 2006). We have chosen to use educator, as it was the preferred term selected by New Brunswick educators through ECCENB, and also caregiver. The inclusion of caregiver allows us to highlight the notion of care. We believe that a caregiver is also concerned and cares about the learning of the infant and toddler in her care, just as a teacher is caring of the child she teaches (Noddings, 1984).

COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL • CREATIVITY AND PLAY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND



IMAGE OF THE CHILD

~ INFANTS AND TODDLERS



CONTRIBUTOR



CO-CONSTRUCTING



CREATIVE



POWERFUL

PERSISTENT

ENGAGING



COMMUNICATOR

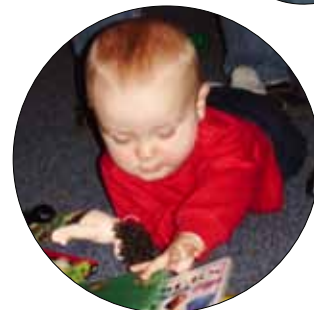


RESOURCEFUL

INQUISITIVE



EXPLORER



PROBLEM SOLVER



RESILIENT

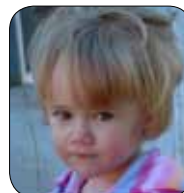


INITIATING



INVENTIVE

LOVING



CULTURAL

ANIMATED



CAPABLE

p.8  Valuing children

COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION
INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • INDIVIDUALITY
INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION
AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND
AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL
CREATIVITY AND PLAY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND



QUIET



SURPRISING



SENSITIVE

CONTEMPLATIVE



IMAGINATIVE

DESERVING

RESPONSIVE



ZESTFUL



COMPETENT

INTERDEPENDENT

PLAYFUL



MEANING MAKER

TRUSTING



CONFIDENT

SPIRITUAL

CARING



COURAGEOUS

SHY



BEING

BECOMING



FUNNY

COMPASSIONATE

COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL CREATIVITY AND PLAY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION



VALUING RELATIONSHIPS —

Relationships are key to our well-being whether we are babies or adults. Through relationships we make meaning of our world, our families, our communities, and ourselves. As educators we enter into relationships with infants, toddlers and their families that are reciprocal with energy and communication flowing back and forth. Staying aware of the layers of relationships is important for providing continuous care.



Relationships with INFANTS AND TODDLERS

Very young children's well-being depends on relationships of love and care. Being cared for and about ensures a baby's safety and security. Forming a relationship with a baby or toddler takes thoughtfulness, care, and responsible intent.

Responsible intent — we deliberately set out to form a relationship with a baby. We must do this responsibly. We respond to the infants and toddlers we care for and our ability to respond sensitively to their delights, sorrows and concerns ensures a relationship that promotes a child's well-being and sense of belonging.

Thoughtfulness — reflecting on the responses of the child with whom we are developing a relationship helps us deepen and enrich that relationship.

Care — underlying our relationship is an attitude and ethic of care. With both head and heart this work of relationship building depends on caring.

We teach children with our very presence. Being fully present to another human being is a gift. Feeling listened to and acknowledged assures children that their voice counts and matters.

Primary caregiving is a commitment to developing in-depth relationships with a baby and that baby's family. The same person generally attends to the baby during intimate times of diapering, feeding and sleeping. Imagine for yourself being sleepy, tired, hungry, wet and imagine that a person who is familiar with you and with whom you are familiar will rock you, change you, feed you. Think how comforting it is to know this familiar person will come to help you in these intimate ways. Having a familiar person change, feed and cuddle a baby promotes a deep relationship with that person. Primary caregiving takes commitment from the whole centre. Working as a team, colleagues support each other in providing this type of care.



Babies act on the world with their cries, gurgles, eye contact, and snuggles. When the baby receives consistent and warm responses he develops a sense of trust in his world. Being fed, changed, cuddled, rocked in a sensitive and timely manner can help the baby develop a sense of the world as a safe and welcoming place. Children will come to an early childhood program with a variety of experiences. Some children might have experienced a world of chaos and danger. They might have relationships that do not provide consistency or sensitivity. Providing a relationship they can depend on provides another glimpse of what the world can offer. Trusting that the world, the child begins to explore further and learn more about the environment and the people in it.

p.11



Valuing relationships



Learning takes place in relationships. If the earliest relationships are warm and loving, babies and young children have the best chance to make the most of the opportunities in their worlds. To learn best, children need people in their lives who:

- are warm and caring;
- know each baby or child very well and appreciate what is special about them;
- take time to understand the child's messages (cues) and to respond to them with encouragement, praise, comfort, and independence as needed; and
- are able to see, share and celebrate the big and small joys and achievements of the children in their care.

~ Marie Hammer and Pam Linke (2004, 3)



COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL
INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • CREATIVITY AND PLAY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • INCLUSIVENESS AND
INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • INDIVIDUALITY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND



Relationships with FAMILIES

Families with a new baby are at the beginning of their journey with that individual — a journey that continues over the years. Parents are under a great deal of pressure to be perfect parents, to raise children who are 'school ready', who are socially aware, who eat right and exercise, and much more. Finding their way through the advice and pressure must seem daunting at times.

Families, like children, have stories. These stories create layers of meaning for a family and influence their interactions with their children. When we begin to understand the stories and the meanings embedded in the stories we can appreciate the strengths that families bring to their children, their communities, and our centres.

Welcoming families into your program and learning from them what they understand about their child is the first step to working together to provide the best situation for their child. Children are part of a family network; how that network understands and children and childhood provides a foundation for your relationship with them. You are accompanying them on their journey with their children and helping them form their identity as a parent.

Miriam Rosenthal (2000, 12) writes, "Children's experiences and interactions at home and in child care are likely to be quite different." With support, children can learn to move between the two worlds of home and centre. Relationship is the key. Ronald Lally (1995, 65) says, "patterns of care should give the child a sense of connection with the home and, more importantly, communicate that where she comes from is respected and appreciated." The hope is that when caregivers and parents are working together the infant will feel the harmony, and the resulting care may be more consistent between home and child care settings.



Some things I believe are important when welcoming new families and making families comfortable are:

Listen to parents and act on observations you make - just talking to parents may not be enough. They may need more information than just our daily updates.

Provide learning stories that detail big events in a child's life. For instance, jumping with two feet is a big accomplishment but how their first day went is also very important.

Go above and beyond expectations. Don't let checklists of responsibilities distract you from nurturing your growing relationships.

Trust yourself. You will see signs that a parent is not comfortable and it is important that you address any potential issues as soon as possible. You do not need to wait for parents to approach you.

Making families feel comfortable is as crucial as making the child entering into your care feel welcomed and loved.

~ Dianna Morris Dianna's



COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • CREATIVITY AND PLAY • AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL



Relationships with CO-EDUCATORS

Collaborative relationships provide a secure environment for building and strengthening relationships with families. Having colleagues with whom to share ideas and perspectives is important.

We are most effective when we feel supported. Working in relationships means feeling powerful emotions and negotiating our own histories and understandings. A crying baby can take on a variety of meanings depending on our previous experiences. To one person a baby who does not stop crying can mean failure while to another it can mean the baby is disagreeable and to yet another it can mean continuing to be patient. Colleagues can help us sort through our feelings and see different perspectives.

Common challenges such as handling tantrums, dealing with biting, and facilitating toilet learning can be negotiated and transformed through working closely with colleagues and other professionals (and families too). These conversations can help us to develop understandings and strategies that turn these challenges into respectful, responsive relationships.



Young children need professional educators who take advantage of opportunities to stretch their own minds – who engage in critical reflection on their own practice and participate in professional learning programmes.

~ Cathy Nutbrown and Jools Page (2008, 176)

Relationships with SELF

We bring ourselves into each and every relationship. Reflecting on our reactions to situations and children can raise our self-awareness and open us to meaningful relationship building. Taking care of ourselves on physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual levels ensures that we will offer our best selves.

Relationship is at the centre of caring for infants and toddlers. Babies come with connections to their families and their communities. How caregivers handle their relationship with a baby, her family, her community has an impact on the quality of care she receives. We come to relationships with our own values, histories, communities, and connections too. We negotiate and grow together. Mary Bateson (1994, 62) says, "personhood arises from a long process of welcoming closeness and continues to grow and require nourishment over a lifetime of participation."



For Reflection

How are relationships encouraged and honoured in your centre?

What can you do to promote deeper relationships with the children and families in your care?

How do you honour the uniqueness of each child and the uniqueness of each relationship?



VALUING FRIENDSHIPS —

Our experiences with our youngest children teach us that they are building relationships — developing friendships — with each other.

Annabelle Godwin and Lorraine Schrag (1988, 13) remind us of the importance of those friendships to children's growing understanding of themselves as members of a community:

Babies develop friendships. They enjoy each other's company and benefit from it. When the same children are frequently together, they become increasingly interested in each other. The intensity of that interest varies from child to child and from one moment to another, and it generally increases with age. A few group activities, such as music time, help infants become aware, not only of each other but, gradually, of themselves and others as part of a group.



Throughout the day, there are many opportunities for us to support children's relationship building.

- During arrival time, welcome each child into the group by name. Call everybody's attention to the newest arrival by repeating the names of the children already present: "Here's Sara. Look Jordan and Michael, Sara wore her red shoes today."
- Encourage empathy for others by verbalizing feelings and suggesting interactions. You might say, "Jordan is sad this morning. He needs a hug. I wonder if you might bring him his stuffed toy Michael."
- Arrange the environment to promote relationship building. Seat children across from each other for snacks and meals. Playing with table toys also gives them the opportunity to see each other and to interact.
- Sing a song and dance together. Simple, short group times will help children become aware of others and themselves as part of a group.
- Provide materials that encourage interactions. For example, seesaws, wagons, balls and treasure baskets invite babies to play.



Friendships develop over time



COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION · INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE · COMPASSION AND CARING · LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY · AESTHETICS · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY · CREATIVITY AND PLAY · SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY · COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY





Multi-Age Friendships

Helping a younger child put on her mitts or learning how to soothe a tired baby are real contexts in which children strengthen and practice their nurturing dispositions. Multi-age groupings allow for such learning to take place. And, in turn, younger children observe and emulate the caring and learning efforts of their slightly older companions.

Lilian Katz (1995)



At first glance it may seem as though babies are playing their own games near other babies without any real interaction but when you watch babies carefully you notice that they change what they are doing and watch for responses from each other. They may:

- Reach out to touch other babies;
- Look closely at other babies' faces and gestures;
- Use these cues for what to do next; and
- Use their own social signals such as smiling and crying to communicate with the other baby.

As babies reach out to touch each other, they are learning about friendships. It is important when babies play near each other that adults are close by to support them and give help when it is needed.

Marie Hammer and Pam Linke (2004, 39)



In our documentation we include photos of all the children, mounted at eye level for them to revisit easily. They return to this particular display regularly. As the children point to each other's pictures, we say the child's name aloud. They enjoy finding and naming their friends.

~ Linda Richardson
A 2 Z Learning and Care Centre



For Reflection

How does your environment and the materials in it encourage the development of friendships?

How do you share information about friendships with families?

What opportunities are created for multi-age interactions? What else could be possible?

p.12



Fostering peer relationships

COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • CREATIVITY AND PLAY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND



VALUING CULTURES

In every community there are multiple points of view and ways of approaching life. You will find diversity of cultures, languages, religions, and abilities, and we need this diversity for rich and vibrant communities. With this in mind, we have a welcoming attitude to greet each child and family with curiosity about the strengths and gifts they can bring to our program. Staying aware that each child and family is different keeps us open to exploring and honouring a diversity of gifts.



Children ground their play, their behaviours, and their explorations in their experiences. We must be careful (full of care) that we present our early childhood community as one that values each child's background and the values of his family. It is important that children do not feel they must change to be accepted.

We first learn to read the world around us through the people that we love. Some families tell stories and jokes to explain the world, other families may teach about the world through religious understandings, and still another family may demonstrate, through action, ways to negotiate the world. To one family relationship may be central to life, to another family hard work and goals are most important. All these differences create a rich community with diverse strengths and abilities. As educators we want to challenge ourselves to stay open to and knowledgeable of these different ways of approaching the world.

Depending on our own values and experiences we often have varying comfort levels with cultural differences or children with diverse abilities. Acknowledging our own discomfort or inexperience to ourselves, to our co-workers, and to the families opens us up to learning. We can learn from each family what being a parent means to them, what hopes and fears they have: we can learn with each child what abilities she can build on, what strengths she possesses, and what challenges need strategies.

Creating community is an initial step to creating local democracy. We need spaces for everyone, spaces where we can strive for democratic ideals, places where children's voices can be heard and where people are free to speak. As Peter Moss and Gunilla Dahlberg (2006, 13) write, "all children are embarked on a course of making meaning of the world" and they have "the democratic right to be listened to and to be a recognized citizen in the community". We can provide spaces for children and families where their presence is noted, their voices heard and their differences respected. We can practice "democracy as a form of living together" where there is a democratic ethos of listening and dialogue (16).

Creating an environment that pays close attention to all the voices involved can be difficult, but listening to another's point of view and responding with respect keeps our own perspective from becoming too narrow. To do so we must continually challenge others and ourselves. Listening and dialoguing, far from offering answers, can acknowledge the complexities of life and explore possibilities of a delicate balance. Creating communities based on relationships of dialogue and listening, we come a step closer to creating local democratic early childhood programs.

COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION · INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE · COMPASSION AND CARING · LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY · AESTHETICS · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY · SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY · COMMUNICATION · CREATIVITY AND PLAY · IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY



Supporting Language Diversity

- Encourage families to maintain their child's first language in the home by sharing stories there
- Share stories in the classroom using the child's home language, if caregivers cannot speak the language, invite in people who can
- Learn and use key words in the child's home language
- Ask families to record their child's favourite songs or stories in the home language so these can be used in the program
- Have a range of books and print examples in the classroom that use children's home languages

Adapted from Jennifer Birckmayer, Anne Kennedy, and Anne Stonehouse (2008, 17)

The messages our caregivers convey in words and actions reflect their cultures, beliefs, values, and attitudes... When our culture differs from that of a colleague or child and family in our program, it may create a barrier to understanding how best to support children's learning (Orange & Horowitz 1999)... Teachers and caregivers who work together can take time to reflect on and discuss questions such as the following:

- What do I believe a child can do and not do at this particular age?
- What child behaviors do I feel are acceptable and not acceptable—why?
- Should boy babies be treated differently from girl babies? If so, in what ways?
- What do I believe about how to best care for, support, and nurture the children in our program? How are my beliefs the same as or different from yours?

Reflecting on our own cultural beliefs and practices about caring, teaching, and learning can help us recognize the cultural perspective we bring to our work. Only then can we begin to address any preconceived notions that make it difficult to accept, understand, and effectively support the children and families we serve (Willis 2000).

Janice Im, Rebecca Parlakian, and Sylvia Sánchez (2007, 66)

In our documentation we include photos of all the children, mounted at eye level for them to revisit easily. They return to this particular display regularly. As the children point to each other's pictures, we say the child's name aloud. They enjoy finding and naming their friends.

~ Linda Richardson
A 2 Z Learning and Care Centre

In our documentation we include photos of all the children, mounted at eye level for them to revisit easily. They return to this particular display regularly. As the children point to each other's pictures, we say the child's name aloud. They enjoy finding and naming their friends.

~ Linda Richardson
A 2 Z Learning and Care Centre

For Reflection

What experiences do you have with families of other cultures, other faiths, and other home origins? How comfortable are you with families who have adopted children, families with two dads, grandparents raising grandchildren, families of indigenous origin? How would you include the voices of all families?

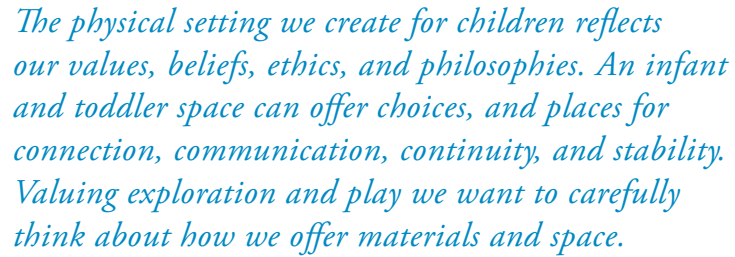
p.15



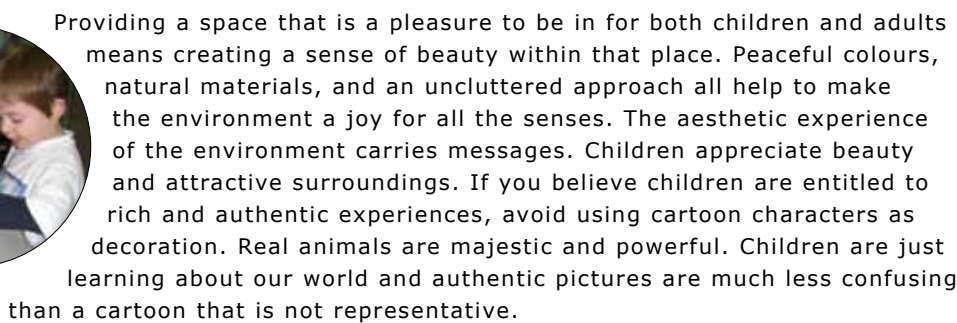
Valuing Cultures and Languages

COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • CREATIVITY AND PLAY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND





Rather than creating an environment 'do and don't list', it is more effective to ask yourself questions to challenge your thinking. Being clear about your values and goals can guide your organization of space. Valuing relationships might mean insuring the diapering area is comfortable and easy to use so that an educator can focus on the child. Valuing the competent child might mean that all the tables and chairs are clearly at a size that makes it easy for babies who can move and sit to get in and out of a seat at a table. They can then choose to come and participate. They are free to move. Keeping space simple and flexible is important. Also keeping it orderly provides predictability.



Cloth tablecloths and napkins, tables and chairs of correct height, real cutlery and glasses, create a comfortable group atmosphere for learning about food and nutrition.



Think about using pictures of children and their families; familiar images can promote a feeling of continuity with home. Children like to see pictures of themselves and their friends, around the room, in scrapbooks or framed on a shelf. Often these photos put in simple books can be a toddler's first book—a book about himself. Displaying photos or pictures can be a thoughtful process with attractive frames and at a height where children can easily see them.

A useful exercise to assess the quality of a baby room is to lie on the floor and see how it looks from a baby's eye view. It may show up the need to make some significant changes."

~ Elinor Goldschmied and Sonia Jackson (2004, 89)



The space for books should be comfortable for quiet book-looking, storytelling, and book sharing:

- Well-lit and away from noise and distraction
- Comfortable with soft pillows or a comfortable chair or couch

Books should be:

- Books displayed so children can see the covers
- Accessible on low shelves or in baskets
- Able to be transported to varied environments (cribs and cots, indoors and outdoors, block corner to dramatic area)

~ Adapted from Jennifer Birckmayer, Anne Kennedy, and Anne Stonehouse (2008, 80)

Consider:

- Who will be in this space?
- What will be happening in this space?
- What materials are needed/not needed?
- Is the space flexible enough to accommodate children's changing interests and activities?
- What choices are available to the children?
 - Is the space easy to maintain?
 - Is the space orderly?
 - Is the space safe?



- ~ Adapted from Elinor Goldschmied and Sonia Jackson (2004, 218)



Infants and toddlers do not need a large active area or fixed equipment, but they do need space because they are constantly on the move, walking unsteadily and erratically, tumbling over and bumping into things. Children in their second year love to jump off low heights, climb on and off tires and boxes, empty and fill containers, crawl through and under things. This can all be accommodated with a range of light moveable equipment such as cardboard boxes, bean bags and cubes to hide in.

- A flat space to push toys?
- A section with earth mounds or slopes?
- A shaded sand pit?
- A low climbing platform with a run-up ramp or two steps?

~ Elinor Goldschmied and Sonia Jackson
(2004, 196)

- feel safe, but not overprotected to the point where experiences are unnecessarily restricted
- feel trustful that their needs will be noticed and responded to
- feel confident that their interests will be supported and valued
- feel a sense of involvement and belonging
- can be involved in enjoyable, purposeful and creative activity
- can be listened to and communicate
- can see familiar aspects of the home environment around them that they recognise, such as comfy couches, mirrors, favourite mobiles, and pictures of themselves, their families and their homes



- move between settings, such as home and [centre], with the reassurance that there will be continuity in their experiences and that individual differences will be valued and reflected in what is provided, through the resources available, through display of photographs and through carefully planned activities
- can begin to learn how to make healthy choices that support their growth and development, such as what to have for a snack, or when to put a coat on
- can develop warm and reciprocal relationships with important adults and with other children, based upon respect and acceptance
- can join in and contribute.



~ Learning and Teaching Scotland (2005, 7)

OUTDOOR PLACES AND SPACES

Moving outdoors with children provides wonderful opportunities for babies and toddlers to experience seasonal changes and the dynamic possibilities of being in natural landscapes. The power of being in natural settings calms and engages children. Imagine a baby watching clouds drift in the sky or the leaves of a tree shift

in a breeze. The pleasure and joy of feeling the warm sun or seeing the first flurry of snow creates memories for all of us. Children love to share these moments with the adults in their lives.



There is much to learn in outdoor places and spaces. Just being outside among growing and living plants, animals, and other creatures starts to build children's love of, and appreciation for, the natural world. Outside the ceiling is endless and the walls disappear; everyone can feel a sense of possibility. Very young children appreciate hills to roll down, grass to hide in, rocks to turn over, leaves to pick up, and stumps to lean upon.

Tap into your own pleasurable experiences in natural spaces - find out about the insects and bugs that you discover under logs or rocks, or stop to enjoy a multicoloured puddle found after a rain shower — all of this enriches the experience for children and yourself.

p.14



Valuing Environments

Take a look at 2-year-old Sophia making her way across the rocks in the backyard...this is great. The rock path gives her the chance to practice her coordination and use her large muscles. ~ Karen Clark Clark's Early Learning Program



Infants in their teacher's arms or on a blanket enjoy the sights, smells, and sounds outdoors... Simple experiences with nature can be very powerful opportunities for teaching and learning with very young children. Observing and talking about the many sensory aspects of nature – the sounds and smells of wind and rain, changing colors of the seasons, the tastes of fruits, vegetables, and herbs – inspire interest and appreciation of the beauty of nature. Observing and talking about the animals, plants, and insects that live in our neighborhoods provokes curiosity and respect for living things. These are the kinds of experiences that 'prepare the soil' for children to desire knowledge of the natural world and ultimately of themselves in it.

~ Julia Torquati and Jana Barber (2005, 46)

For Reflection

How can space be created for children to connect with each other?

Do you encourage independence and interdependence in the physical environment of your program?

Can you remember some of your own childhood experiences outside?

What can that tell you about what young children might enjoy or learn from similar experiences?

Can you think of a place where you feel comfortable? How might you bring elements of that place into spaces for infants and toddlers?

COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND CREATIVITY AND PLAY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION



VALUING OBSERVATION AND DOCUMENTATION



We speak of the competent child, an agent of her own learning. Speaking of the child this way shifts the role of educator from being an all-knowing presence in a child's life to someone who nurtures each child's growth in a relationship of care and respect.

Rather than bringing a preconceived idea of what a baby is and what a baby should do, we pay attention to each child to understand that child's communicative style, interests, and strengths. In the spirit of Reggio Emilia, children use more than a hundred languages to communicate and listening to children requires that we use many languages as well. Believing in a competent child, we wonder at each child's particular path, not looking for age-related behaviours but rather seeing actions that express a child's interests and understandings. When we see the child as competent we can ask what a particular behaviour means in that child's context, for that child at that particular moment.

Observation is not just a skill but also an opportunity to:

- Plan curriculum around what you observe
 - Share information about what you observe with parents and colleagues
 - Document what you observe through words, photos, and artifacts

~Leslie Allen UNB Practitioner-in-Residence

Documentation can be a process that begins with collecting photos, narratives, and dialogues with children and families.

When we look carefully (full of care) at a child we can deepen our understanding of that child and through understanding find ways to deepen our relationship with her.

Through observation we can begin to connect with children's learning and meaning making. Careful watching and listening enables us to see a child's interests and his approach to the world. This understanding will guide us as we build relationships with children and families. This practice of observing and listening deeply will also inform our organization of space and time. As we observe we note and document what we are seeing for the purposes of revisiting our ideas and assumptions and questioning them. What beliefs about children do we have that might interfere with our ability to see potential and possibility?

Here are some possible lenses with which to examine our observations and documentation:

- Are our beliefs about gender limiting possibilities? Are we saying, "well, that is the way boys or girls are..."?
- Are we making assumptions from a developmental point of view? Have I thought, "he should be speaking more words by now"?
- Are we assuming that a family is acting this way because "that is the way those people..."?

COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • CREATIVITY AND PLAY • AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND



It is vital to realize that documentation is much more than observation. It involves reflection, connecting the observations to a knowledge base of theory, and communication. Documentation involves co-construction of an experience, and consequently, is far removed from the objectivity and implied accuracy of traditional child observation. But... observation and recording are key beginning points for documentation. ~ Sue Fraser (2002, 137)

The children in my care were often stuck to me like glue and hesitant to engage in what I planned until I did it myself. But as they grew physically and mentally I would observe them taking more initiative to try new things on their own without my direction especially outdoors. They would cautiously travel in close proximity to me but as they gained more confidence they would dash away from me playing on their own or with someone close by. When I started noticing this change I knew that they were ready to move up to the next group in our centre.

Respectfully display children's work



Document to build relationships

Posted on the display board are different songs about balls that I sing with the children. Our displays of the songs and the pictures and documentation of the children allow the parents to see what the children are doing and learning through this adventure. As the parents drop the children off each morning I discuss the activities of the previous day and show them the displays. I have noticed that the parents now come directly into the classroom each morning to hear about their child's learning experience from the previous day. I look forward to our chats.

~ Monique Doucet Saint John Early Childhood Centre

SAME IMAGE AS ON P.20



Document to record milestones: First Words or A First Day

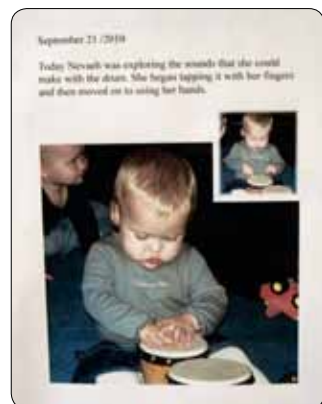
As educators hear infants say words, they document the words spoken (or attempted!), the date, their name, and a short description of the circumstances. When the infants move to the toddler room, their documentation moves with them. Before we know it the First Words sheets are full!

~ Saint John Early Childhood Centre

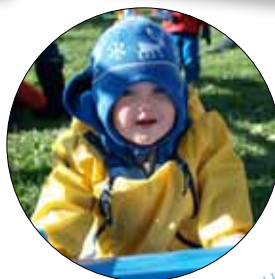
Sasha			
Date	Word	Comment	Staff
Aug 10	UP	nausea this hands	Morimand
Aug 11	Baby	Sasha pointed to a baby in a stroller	Morimand
Aug 13	Emily	he heard his mother say Emily's name & he said Emily	Shahley
Aug 15	Roll	he heard his mother say Roll & he said Roll	Morimand
Aug 16	Happy	he heard his mother say Happy & he said Happy	Morimand
Oct 10	Hot	he heard his mother say Hot & he said Hot	Morimand



Document individual and group stories



Document everyday moments of joy and laughter



COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY







WELL-BEING

WITH INFANTS AND TODDLERS



SENSE OF SELF

p.76



Liam takes initiative

p.10



Patty's sign language



SENSE OF OTHER

p.80



Sally experiences compassion



SENSE OF PLACE

p.21



Jane's community walks

COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION · INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE · COMPASSION AND CARING · LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY · AESTHETICS · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY · SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY · COMMUNICATION · CREATIVITY AND PLAY · AND INDEPENDENCE · SOCIAL INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY · IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING





RESPECTFUL AND RESPONSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

p.22  Jennifer's family blocks



PERSONAL CARE

p.30  Children participate in routines



p.38  Angela's open snack



p.40  Donna's muffin making




FOOD AND NUTRITION




BODY AND MOVEMENT



p.94  Evan takes a healthy risk



p.46  Shelby and the slide

COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION · AESTHETICS · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE · SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY · COMMUNICATION · COMPASSION AND CARING · LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY · IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY · CREATIVITY AND PLAY · AND INDEPENDENCE · SOCIAL INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY





Routines and Rituals

During the routines of the day we initiate and grow our relationships with young children. For babies, routines are the framework of the day giving shape to time. Often routines are seen as a task to be done as quickly and efficiently as possible, but we can approach them as opportunities for learning. Within routines infants learn to help and respond; toddlers learn to anticipate and participate. As the child's involvement deepens, the routine becomes a dance of caregiver and child.

If we use the word *rituals* instead of *routines* we might shift our thinking and approach these times of one-to-one connection with children in a spirit of reverence. One definition says that reverence is to regard with affectionate respect. An approach all of us would appreciate.



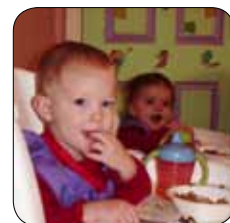
Routines are curriculum

Routines:

Ensure daily needs are met
Help establish rhythms
Provide consistency
Promote predictability
Develop memory
Build trust
Encourage familiarity
Offer playtime
Make moments for turn-taking
Give chances to communicate
Allow for engaging the senses
Inspire confidence
~ Leslie Allen
UNB Practitioner-in-Residence

Infants and toddlers have a different sense of time than the one we impose on our day. Staying aware of this makes working with very young children easier. How time is organized is arbitrary; different societies order the day differently. As we create our early childhood community we create a schedule that makes the day flow as smoothly as possible. But we can change the length of time spent outdoors or when lunch is available or when a child goes to sleep in response to the needs and desires of the children. Also, keeping long transitions to a minimum makes sense. No one likes to wait and young people see little sense in it.

Taking time to thoughtfully discuss what meaning you want routine activities or rituals to have can make you more conscious of your goals. What meaning might children make of a setting that changes everyone's diapers at the same time as opposed to a program that knew when a baby needed changing and responded? What does a child learn when someone greets his mother and him warmly, asking how their night was and if he had brought his favourite stuffy? While ensuring that we are organizing our day to make our practice flow smoothly are we thinking about what meaning the children will take from how we approach the schedule and tasks of the day?



*Children take comfort
in routines where
they can anticipate
what comes next.
This comfort
builds confidence
and encourages
children to participate
in these same routines.*

The rituals of diapering, feeding, and sleeping are times of communication and learning. Within a familiar relationship, routines are times of talking, explaining, and interacting in order to build trust, a sense of other, and cooperation. We use routines to listen to the child, to explain the process to the child, and eventually, to do the routine with the child participating and helping.

p.34



Maria's visual routine



Toileting Rituals

Learning to use the toilet (or toilet learning) has become a more popular description because it implies that the child participates in the learning process. The question then becomes not “When should I begin toilet training?” but rather, “Is this child ready to begin using the toilet?” Some other questions to consider before a child can begin to actively participate in learning to use the toilet:

- Does she stay dry for several hours at a time?
- Has he fully mastered walking?
- Is she able to sit down and get up with ease?
- Can he communicate by sign, sound or word the need to use the toilet?
- Does she indicate when her diaper needs changing?



When parent and provider agree that the time has come to begin the toilet learning process, arrange a meeting to discuss how both provider and parent can support the child in this important learning endeavor.

~ Adapted from Phyllis Lauritzen and JoEllen Tullis (1988, 17)

Develop Continuity with Home Routines:

Anna had started daycare and was settling in very nicely, playing and eating well. However, going to sleep was difficult. In talking with the parents over a few days I discovered that Anna sleeps on a special pillow at home. I asked mom to bring it in the next day. Bingo! She slept for two hours.

~ Jean Robinson Lincoln Day Care Centre



Routines and rituals reflect cultural values and beliefs. However, we must be cautious not to draw generalizations as there is much variance within cultures as well. Find out about each family's particular preferences and practices.

Brooklyn's Learning Adventures

I had no intentions of starting Brooklyn's potty sessions until summer because I thought I would only be able to truly dedicate the “all day” time then. When Brooklyn started to show interest over the Christmas break I was very excited. When we came back after the break Tammy shared that other children were showing interest too so the Potty Journey took off full force.

One weekend, Brooklyn had to go to the washroom so I took her down to my bathroom and I started looking for her potty seat. She told me “Don't need seat. I'm big girl.” I was very surprised but followed her directions and sat her on the seat. I started to hold her and she said, “Don't need help. Tammy show me.” Wow – she really did know how to hold herself up without falling down. I was so impressed. She ended with, “Mommy so happy, Daddy so happy, Tammy so happy, Sarah so happy...” Yes, we are all “SO HAPPY!”

Brooklyn also shared that her friends could do the same. The daycare experience is so rewarding because as parents we are constantly learning from our children the new adventures they have experienced as well as the new accomplishments they have achieved.

Proud Mama, Lori [mother's last name]

p.34



Communicating with parents

For Reflection

Can you look at your routines and see space for children's voices?
Are there more places where they can participate?

Thinking of our daily schedules, are there places we can simplify the day?

How are routines times for learning and building relationships? How can this be improved?





Building Bridges

Welcoming a baby or toddler in the morning and saying goodbye at the end of the day are two important rituals. These times are important transitions for a child; the move from home to the wider community and back again are delicate times. Feeling welcomed in a manner that respects the child and their family, as well as time taken to say farewell can help a child develop a sense of community. The following interview with parents David and Gillian Yeomans, director Linda Richardson, and early childhood educator Irene Copeland tells the story of how one centre facilitates smooth transitions for Austin as she begins and ends her day.

What strategies do you use to welcome families and children?

Irene: I greet Austin, David and Gillian with a smile. I welcome and talk to Austin as they enter. Austin's smile or giggle lets me and her parents know that she is comfortable. I think this makes a better workday for her parents. I take Austin into the room and our day begins.

I engage Austin in activities by providing different toys for her and showing her what the toys do. When singing a song or playing music Austin and the other children clap or dance while looking at each other.

How do you inform Gillian and David about Austin's daily experiences? At the end of the day how do you facilitate leave-taking?

Linda: Parents are always encouraged to visit the centre at any time. Our doors are always open. Parents, at pick up time, are told about their child's day. This includes eating, napping, and playtime. We provide a bright, safe, loving and nurturing atmosphere in which children are able to express their individual needs.

Irene: When Gillian or David picks Austin up at the end of the day we encourage them to observe. We let them know how she slept and if she has had a good day. We share pictures

that have been taken. We get Austin's bag and try to make sure that everything is in there for them. I wave goodbye and talk to her before she goes, always resulting in a shared smile.

How does Austin communicate her feelings? How are you building a responsive relationship during transition times?

Irene: One way Austin communicates her feelings is through laughter. She claps and dances when you sing to her. We play music in the room and we play with the children. Austin may get fussy when she is hungry or tired. I find that changing toys works well to keep her interested in play. Cuddling her when she crawls to you is a great feeling; just to know she has trust in us makes my day.

Linda: Each child has his or her own unique communication style. Once you are familiar with the child you learn to recognize their behaviour patterns. Austin is a very happy baby. She does not cry a lot. The only time she sometimes cries is close to lunch. She loves to be cuddled and we love to cuddle her. She loves music. She has a lot of facial expressions. Sometimes just eye contact is enough for Austin. We love having her at our centre; she is always a bright light. She gets lots of hugs and kisses.

Transitions are part of everyone's life. Developing nurturing transitions also helps children begin to understand the notion of healthy goodbyes - a life skill they will take with them as they grow. ~ Emily J. Adams and Rebecca Parlakian (2010, 55)

Children at College Hill Day Care are encouraged to wave good-bye. A small step supports those who need a little boost.





What were you looking for in a centre?

Gillian and David: *We sought educators who are interactive with the children and involved with the parents. A bright, fun physical environment was also important. And steady routines - Austin likes to know what is coming next. On Austin's first day we gave a copy of our own routine to Linda as well as some notes about Austin.*

What makes you comfortable leaving Austin in the morning?

Gillian: *When she sees Linda, Irene, or Doris she gives a big smile. One morning I dropped Austin off and she went crawling straight over to another little boy - I knew she'd be fine!*

At pick up time do you feel that you get a sense of how Austin's day has been?

Gillian: *I try to watch her for a few minutes before I go in and she's usually playing with the other children or hanging out on someone's lap. I always get a rundown of her day, how she slept, played outside, etc. Austin's usually very tired after a full day of playing.*

~ Irene Copeland, Linda Richardson, and Gillian and Richard Yeomans

A 2 Z Learning and Care Centre

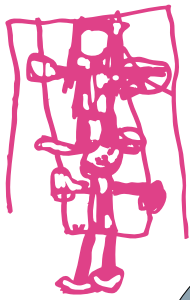


The Farewelling Flower

Our toddlers love to water and take care of our plants. They show great respect for our plants in the classroom. We had a geranium in our window that was starting to bloom and everyday Curtis, Jayden, Jessica, Cale and Brooklyn checked to see how it was growing. Counting the blooms on the geranium became a transition strategy for the children in the morning. Some days there are children in our group who have a hard time leaving their families and the flower was a diversion for them. Each morning they arrived eager to see if there were new blooms and to count them.

~ Tammy O'Neill Chatham Day Care Center





PLAY AND PLAYFULNESS WITH INFANTS AND TODDLERS



INVENT SYSTEMS
OF REPRESENTATION



USE FLEXIBLE
AND FLUID THINKING



p.7



Toddlers explore sand and water



p.106



Rachel creates patterns

EXPLORE PROPERTIES
OF OBJECTS



TEST LIMITS



COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION · INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE · COMPASSION AND CARING · LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY · AESTHETICS · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND INDEPENDENCE · SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY · COMMUNICATION · CREATIVITY AND PLAY · IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY · INDIVIDUALITY



NEGOTIATE JOINT UNDERTAKINGS



p.112



Ryan includes everyone



CREATE IMAGINARY SCENARIOS

p.14



Toddlers play dress-up



BEING ON THE EDGE



p.39



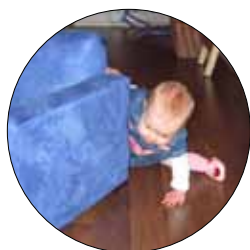
Tammy and Sarah's dizzy play

p.40



Angie's block building observations

APPROACHES TO PRACTICAL PROBLEMS



SHARING THE JOY OF LAUGHTER



p.120



Lane clowns around



COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION · INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE · INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY · COMPASSION AND CARING · LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY · AESTHETICS · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND AND INDEPENDENCE · SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY · COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND





Choosing Materials

Everything we do with children reflects our attitudes, beliefs and values. The activities we organize and materials we present also reflect our values about children. We must choose thoughtfully and carefully. We are inundated with commercial information about the best activities, toys and books for babies. Marketing towards parents is fierce, playing on their desires to do what's best for their children.

*Singing,
dancing,
talking,
clapping,
laughing,
touching,
moving,
comforting:*

*Our bodies
are powerful,
interactive
teaching and
learning
tools...*

Valuing children as active learners, engaged in making meaning of the world, we offer materials that invite exploration and imaginative play. Too many activities and toys for babies and toddlers encourage them to sit and watch passively. Think of the toy that has buttons for different sounds—press a button and the cow moos. How much more dynamic is it to sit with a child and talk about the cow and perhaps together make moo noises? A baby or toddler (even an educator!) does not understand how the button works to produce sound.

Toys should be simple. Babies' first toys are their hands and feet and the bodies of the people who care for them. After exploring



their hands they want to experience what they can do with their hands. We can provide simple objects to hold, to feel, to taste. These allow for children's imagination and creativity. Manufactured toys that do something when activated encourage passive behaviours on the part of babies; we prefer active babies to active toys. Magda Gerber (2002,101) recommends play objects that "do nothing... the best play objects are those which allow infants to be as active and competent as possible at every stage of development."

The educator's interest and presence is key to the children's explorations. We must watch carefully and observe children's explorations and their interests. Deciding how to build on the children's skills and pleasure directs subsequent presentations. Joining the baby or toddler, whether in conversation or just as an interested quiet observer, provides the child with an available companion.

About Peek-a-boo

Suspense games, like peek-a-boo, nurture the development of object permanence — the understanding that objects still exist even when they are out of sight. Peek-a-boo games also symbolically teach that even when a special adult is not seen, that dear person will reappear.

~ Alice Sterling Honig (2010, 44)

Other games: • I'm-gonna-getcha • Tickle the tummy • Walking fingers





Treasure Baskets...

- contain a variety of objects for babies to explore, such as ribbons, balls, soap holders, and tins of different sizes, etc;
- support very young children's explorations;
- encourage babies to become comfortable alongside one another; limit the number of infants involved to 3 so they can sit close enough to easily reach into the basket.



Contents are...

- varied and expanded as children's interests are observed and noted;
- mouthed, shaken, rolled, dropped, and examined
- cleaned regularly; washable, wipeable, or disposable items are best;
- natural materials, limit the number of store bought toys or plastic items;
- selected with safety in mind.



Adults should...

- organize the objects to be presented and plan new objects to introduce;
- ensure significant time and space are available for sustained, uninterrupted explorations;
- stay close by, quietly and attentively observing.

*Choose materials that excite the Senses:
Touch, Smell, Taste, Sound, Sight.*



From bells and magnets to sponges and sandpaper, the infants found rough things, soft things, stretchy things, and shiny things. ~ Tammy O'Neill Chatham Day Care Center

For Reflection

What types of objects might be of interest to children to explore? What might you add to a treasure basket?

In choosing items for treasure baskets, how would you ensure that all families are included and represented?



p.22,23



Sound baskets and heuristic play

COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • CREATIVITY AND PLAY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND





Documenting Play

What happens when we wonder along with children? Monique Doucet shares selections from a larger series of documentation about her infants' ball project.

Intertwined with her observations are reflective pieces in which Monique repeatedly asks herself what the children are learning and what peaks their interests.

Monique's work makes visible the power of observation and documentation to guide planning and also the rich learning possibilities of play.



Initial Observations

The project that the infant group has been working on this month began when I noticed Nolan playing intently with a ball. After that, I started noticing other children exploring balls in many different ways.

Nolan was rolling a ball that made giggling noise and he began laughing as the ball made sounds. As I watched him I wondered what it was about this adventure that made him smile and laugh. Was it the movement of the ball as it rolled across the floor? Was it the sound the ball made? Was it the bright neon color of the ball that attracted him?

I also observed Nevaeh as she was rolling a textured ball across the floor. She appeared so consumed in the movement of the ball. She would roll it a little and watch as the different bumps of the ball hit the floor. I wondered what she was wondering about. Again I asked myself what might it be about balls that maintains the interests of these infants?

Learning in Play

In the gym we put out a large exercise ball. Jarvis smiled and ran over to it. He began rolling the ball through the gym. Activities like these will be great for Jarvis as he uses the large muscles in his arms and legs to roll the ball around the gym. He is also working his hand and eye coordination as he moves the ball around other objects and children in the gym. Jarvis is learning social skills too — he learns turn-taking with the other children as they share the balls.

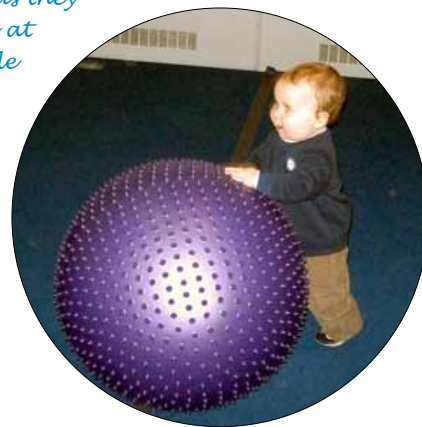
Nolan is learning to throw a ball. We encourage him to toss the ball to us and we toss it back to him. He is also discovering how to kick the ball. I have been showing him how with a soccer ball. Nolan is working on balance and coordination as he learns to kick the ball with one foot.



Extending Play

I have been looking for new ways for the children to explore their interests in balls. While the children were napping, I placed a basket full of small balls into the center of the room. Upon waking, the children found the balls quickly.

Nolan began tossing the balls out of the basket and laughing and it did not take long for Jarvis to join in. Nevaeh soon crawled over to see what they were doing. She followed the lead of the other children in tossing the balls. The social interaction between the children grew as they tossed the balls at each other while laughing.



More Learning

The children used their problem solving skills as they found a way to get the balls onto the floor quickly by dumping out the contents of the entire basket. Why – perhaps for easier access or maybe to just be able to watch them fall?

Nolan has now figured out that the ball basket is large enough to climb into. This shows that he already shows some understanding about the concept of size. The other children also wanted to climb into the basket with Nolan but obviously they could not all fit into the basket so I helped them out by emptying some other baskets of toys so that they could each have a basket to get into.

Wondering Along

The children explored with clay formed into balls. I wondered if they would treat the clay in the same manner as the other balls. Would they try to toss the balls? Would they notice the texture of the clay and the fact that they can change the shape of these balls?

Having watched the children explore the clay I think that Jarvis did in fact treat them like the other balls. He repeatedly rolled the clay balls across the table.

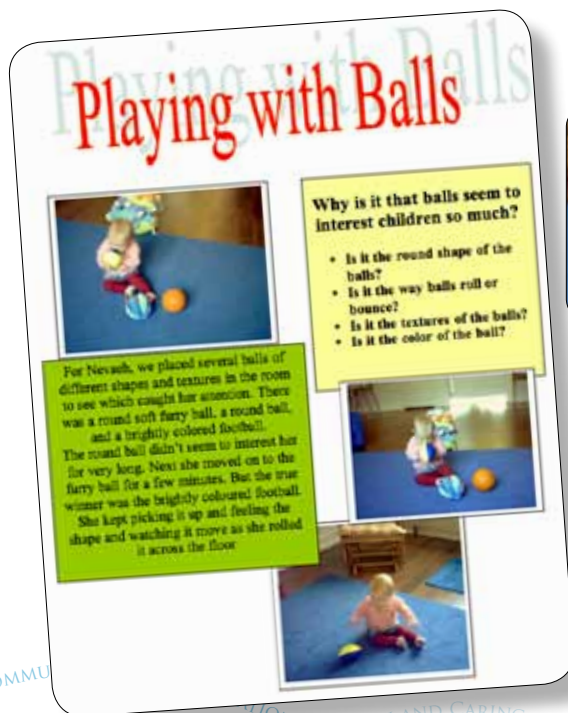
Nolan seemed to notice a difference in the texture of the clay compared to other balls he's been exploring. He squeezed the clay balls to change their shape and stacked them on top of each other.



Nevaeh treated the clay as food and was only interested in trying to eat it. Was this because she was seated at the dining table while playing with the clay? Maybe she would have reacted differently if the clay had been placed on the floor with her instead.

It has been fascinating to observe the infant's explorations of balls. What's next? I'll continue to wonder along with the children...

~ Monique Doucet Saint John Early Childhood Centre





p.124



A photograph of two young children, a girl and a boy, sitting on the floor and playing with colorful plastic toys. The girl is wearing a purple shirt and red pants, and the boy is wearing a blue shirt. They are both looking down at the toys.



p.15



EXTEND IDEAS AND TAKE ACTIONS USING LANGUAGE

p.132



p.32



ENGAGE IN MULTIMODAL MEANING MAKING



COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION, INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND



USE A VARIETY OF SIGN SYSTEMS

p.40



Children have a jam session



RE-INVENT
POPULAR CULTURE

CO-CONSTRUCT LITERATE IDENTITIES

p.148



Parents share photos from home

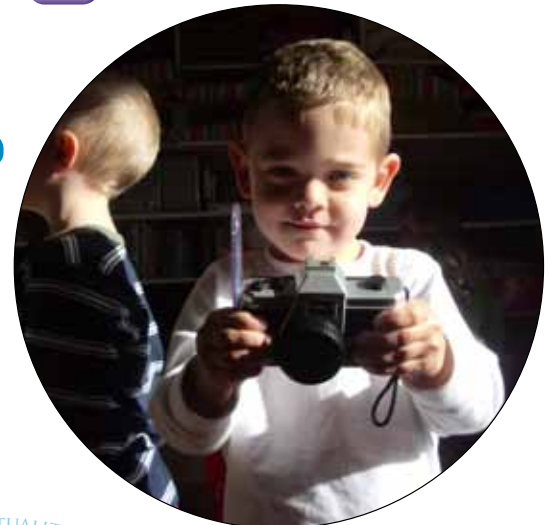


USE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

p.58



Abby plays with the keyboard



COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND





Forming Meaningful Relationships

In our early childhood programs we strive to create an inclusive, nurturing, and supportive culture. Thoughtful communication with others is key to co-constructing this culture. Our interactions with children convey meanings and values. Engaging in authentic dialogues, acknowledging what is unfolding at the time for us and for them, sends a message of respect.

Conversation that happens in an authentic and caring context is more meaningful and more engaging than talking for the sake of talking. When we speak to a baby while diapering and feeding her, explaining the actions in which we are mutually engaged, we have her attention. We share a focus together and together we can participate in learning.

Children also need to see their culture reflected in the culture of the program. Recognizing different styles of communication and different ways of interacting creates a welcoming environment that includes all families and children. We join babies in exploring their interests and collaborate with them as they learn about the world. Knowing that someone will listen and that they will listen deeply, not busy with their own thoughts or other tasks, helps grow meaningful relationships.

Entering into a relationship requires responsiveness and responsibility. Being responsible we are answerable to someone else—we are building a participatory relationship of trust and cooperation with a child. We do this by responding seriously and carefully, aware that we are always finding our way towards understanding a child. Our communication with children will be non-verbal as well as verbal. Our touch, our way of moving, our sighs, our laughs, and our expressions will tell the children a great deal about how we are responding to them.

Babies act on the world with their cries, gurgles, eye contact, and snuggles. When the baby receives consistent and warm responses he develops a sense of trust in the world. How



we respond to crying, smiling, cooing, murmuring, and gurgling can give him the sense that he is connected and safe, that his existence matters to someone. When a baby cries and someone answers her she begins to develop a sense that her communication matters. When she smiles and someone takes delight in that smile she sees herself as having an impact.

There are multiple ways to communicate, multiple literacies, multiple ways of expressing insights, and multiple ways of understanding the world. As children experience using multiple modes of expression — visual, expressive, social, emotional, artistic, musical, dramatic — they develop vocabularies and skills that will support them throughout their lives.

As educators, we can respond to infants and toddlers by listening carefully and thoughtfully and responding as sensitively and consistently as we are able. Babies make meaning of the responses of the people in their world. They develop feelings of where they belong and what it means to belong. Learning about the world through interactions with others, babies begin to define the meaning of relationships for their lives.

p.6



Form relationships



Touch

Touch is essential in all of our lives; touching connects a child to his body and pulls him into relationship. We all respond to warm and comforting touches and touch can soothe a crying baby or a distraught child. When we touch another we know the other feels a touch at the same time we feel the touch.

In our work with babies and toddlers we come into physical contact regularly. Through touch our relationships with young children grow and through touch we learn about each other. A baby falling asleep in our arms and a toddler relaxing in a hug is a good feeling. The baby or toddler trusts us enough to accept the comfort of our touch. Moments like these strengthen the relationship between educator and child.

Making sure we are responding to the infant or toddler's need for touch and not our own need is necessary. As caregivers we want to promote the child's feeling of safety and security in our care; as we promote this feeling in the child we are also strengthening our own connection to the child. In this process we must continually reflect on our own responses to a child and to a family to be sure that we are following the child's lead into a relationship.



Infants are competent communicators. Before they can speak, they use and imitate body language, including facial expressions (Barton & Brophy-Herb, 2006). Anyone working with infants and toddlers is familiar with their efforts to get their messages across, even when their language skills are not very developed: an insistent tug on the arm, a sloppy kiss, or a cry of fright are just a few of the communication strategies that we encounter and interpret when we work with very young children. Jennifer Birckmayer, Anne Kennedy, and Anne Stonehouse (2008, 15)

*And if ever I touched a life
I hope that life knows
that I know that
touching was and still is
and will always be
the true revolution.*

~ Nikki Giovanni (1972, "When I Die")

*Listening not just
with our ears, but
with all our senses...*

Listening to the hundred, the thousand languages, symbols and codes we use to express ourselves and communicate... Listening is emotion... Listening as welcoming... Listening is not easy. It requires deep awareness and at the same time a suspension of our judgements and above all our prejudices; it requires openness to change.

~ Carlina Rinaldi (2006, 65)

For Reflection

What are your styles of communication? What is your cultural background and how does it influence your communication style?

How can you learn to broaden your own understanding of the children in your program and the communication styles they are bring to relationships?





Literacy Learning in the Everyday

From stories on radio and television to pleas from politicians and schools, we often hear warnings of low literacy rates and the urgent need for school readiness. This public focus can make families (and us too) a little apprehensive about children's literacy learning. Sometimes we get asked, "Why aren't you teaching children to recognize numbers?" or told, "It's never too early to learn the alphabet". Our responses must be carefully thought out and experientially practiced. We need to reassure families that literacy practices embedded in our everyday comings and goings are teaching their children much about literacies.

Relate how the conversations, stories, rhymes, chants and songs that fill our days teach the joys of language. Share with families how on walks we point out letters on signs, count the ducks in the pond, read symbols on storefronts, and recite numbers on mailboxes. Encourage families to borrow books that we made with and for the children. Invite parents into our purposefully planned environment so that they can witness the richness of everyday literacy learning firsthand. Explain how numeracy concepts like shape, height, weight, balance, and volume are practiced as toddlers build block towers and pour water through funnels. Post song lyrics and short poems on white boards so they can be sung on the way home. Display artefacts from the children's mark-making creations around the centre. Document learning. And most importantly - listen and learn from each other.



A rainbow
By Jack



The language of rhymes, stories, and songs often includes words or phrases that people do not use in everyday conversations. This helps children build their vocabularies, and they frequently reveal in quaint and startling ways their knowledge of a word or phrase that adults might not expect them to know. Here's a classic example of unique expressions children might learn by interacting with stories:

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water.
Jack fell down and broke his crown
And Jill came tumbling after.
Up Jack got and home did trot
As fast as he could caper.
He went to bed and fixed his head
With vinegar and brown paper.

Most children today would be unfamiliar with many of this nursery rhyme's words and phrases, such as crown for head or trot for run. Still, the plot, characters, and rhythm of the story have interested many generations of children.

Jennifer Birckmayer, Anne Kennedy,
and Anne Stonehouse (2008, pg 104)



Language Play

We can play with rhythm, rhyme, sound and movement to the delight of infants and toddlers. Recite poems, rhymes, songs, chants, and stories that are imaginative, playful, and humorous. Even if infants do not understand the meaning of all words, the rhythm and tone of language and the enthusiasm of the adult who speaks it will still enchant them. New words are discovered and vocabulary learned as we use language intently throughout the day.

Games and rhymes that include gestures and touch support the development of relationships and the learning of language. Multimodal meaning making results from the combination of rhythm and rhyme with the physical experience.

*This little piggy went to market,
This little piggy stayed home,
This little piggy had roast beef,
This little piggy had none,
And this little piggy went
"Wee, wee, wee," all the way home.*

*Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's pan
Bake me a cake as fast as you can
Pat it and roll it and mark it with a "B"
Put it in the oven for baby and me.*



Sharing Stories

Reading with two or three children strengthens relationships. Physical closeness encourages interactions — children can point to pictures, talk to each other, and cuddle comfortably close to you.

Young children should be encouraged, but never forced, to listen to stories. We want to cultivate a love of reading so these early shared moments must be enjoyable. Invite babies to join in but don't worry when the whole story doesn't get finished. Children will let us know if they're interested; we've all had babies toddle off mid-story. To nourish curiosity, try strategies such as talking about the book instead of reading it word for word, asking questions about the story events, making connections to the listeners' experiences, changing stories or skipping to a favourite page, and adding funny voices and exclamatory tones. Stories with repetitive phrases for the children to repeat aloud or movements for the children to enact are especially intriguing.



The fire of literacy is created by the emotional sparks between a child, a book, and the person reading. It isn't achieved by the book alone, nor by the child alone, nor by the adult who is reading aloud — it's the relationship winding between the three, bringing them together in easy harmony. ~ Mem Fox (2001, 10)



A Favourite Poem

This is a poem we do often with the children and that they adore. We have also sent copies home with our families and a few parents in particular have really enjoyed doing this with their children.

~ Dianna Morris Dianna's

Make way
(spread arms apart)

Step aside
(take one step to the side)

Run and hide
(run on the spot then cover your face)

Here comes a jaw snapping
(slap your thigh)

Claw trapping
(move hands like claws in a climbing motion)

Mean, green crocodile!
(crouch as you say "mean" and "green" and then jump as you say "crocodile")





Book Making

Hand-made books are wonderful resources. Not only do such books help to build relationships with children and families but these narratives also support children in developing a positive sense of self and other.

Make books that

- Contain pictures of children and their families
- Story events and objects that children are experiencing
- Recount shared experiences (like the *Red Walk* book)
- Are small enough for tiny hands to hold (like the *Small* book)
- Are three dimensional (like the *What's in my Pocket* book)
- With objects to feel, hold, smell, touch...

p.32



Multimodal books



Beginning Relationships: Our Welcome Books

When children join our centre we ask families to bring in pictures so we can make their child a welcome book. In Cameron's book we included pictures of her extended family in addition to pictures of her new friends in the centre. We purposefully choose to make fabric books so the infants can chew, throw, mouth and manipulate them. No pages get torn and we can wash the books in the washing machine. ~ educators

Kids Choice Toddler Centre



What behaviours might we observe when young children interact with books?

Handling Books

Babies physically manipulate and interact with books by looking at pictures, waving books in the air, helping adults turn pages, and rotating the book to turn images.



Reading Pictures

Young children engage with pictures in books by pointing to familiar objects, laughing and smiling at favourite pictures, and repeatedly asking, "Dat?" or "What's that?"



Comprehending Stories

Infants and toddlers demonstrate their understanding of story content by making sounds and gestures, indicating story and page preferences, connecting real objects in their environment to elements of the story (goes to get a toy duck after seeing a picture of one in a book), and imitating actions mentioned in stories.



Reading Stories

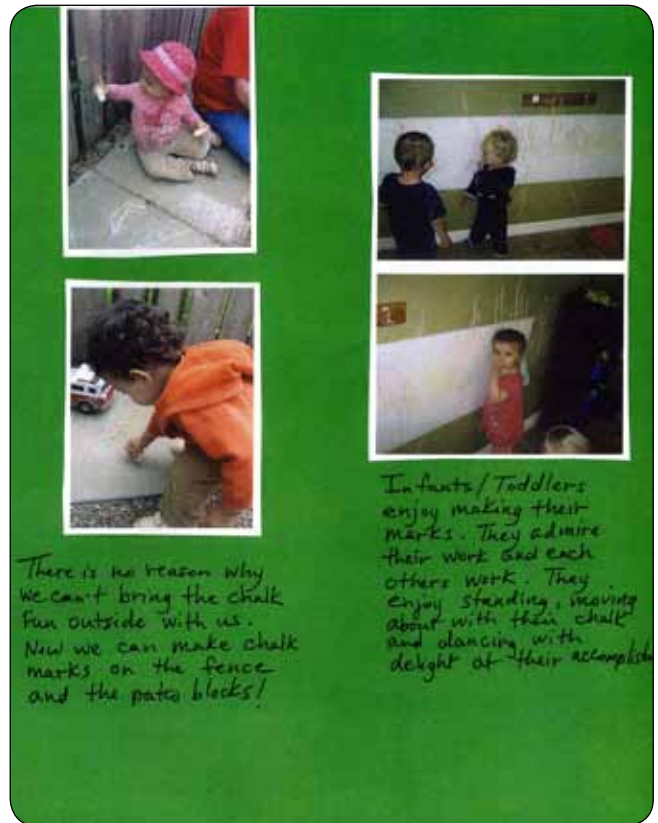
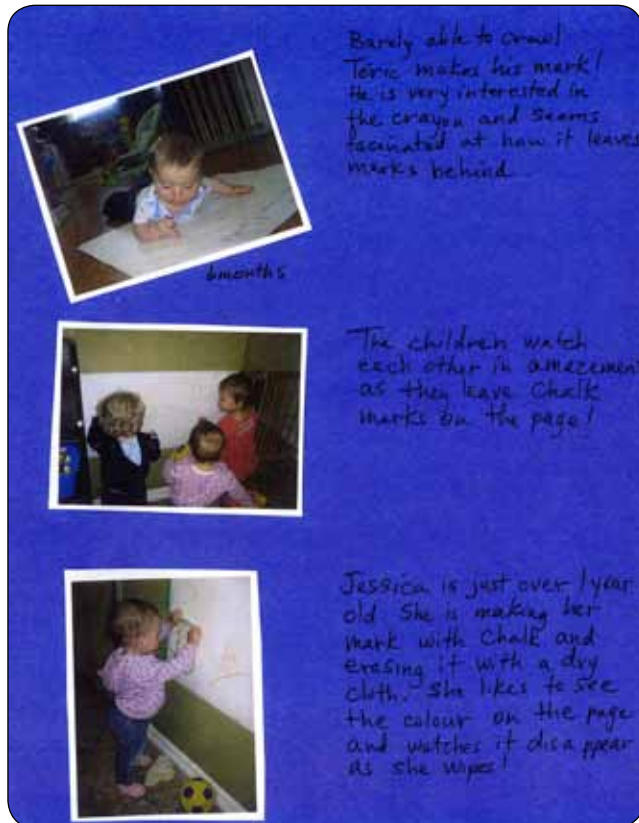
Young children show an awareness of print by pointing to letters, drawing their fingers from left to right, turning pages when reading to themselves, using book babble to read stories to their favourite stuffy, and reciting favourite phrases.

Adapted from Judith A. Schickedanz (1986, 23-27)



Mark-Making

- Provide a variety of multimodal mark-making tools
- Create a symbol rich environment (images of people, animals, buildings, signs, letters, labels, etc.)
- Engage together with babies to make marks





DEVELOP A SENSE OF WONDER

p.172



Toddler's explore the outdoors

APPRECIATE CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

p.58



Leisa and Stephanie's church project



RECOGNIZE PATTERNS IN NATURE

p.34



Sammy and the flowers



p.47



Karen, Rachel, and Elizabeth use cloth diapers

PRACTICE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



LEARN ABOUT NATURAL RESOURCES

p.43



Toddler meet Bob the Builder



COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND
INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND
INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION





Negotiating Tensions

Strong relationships and rich environments contribute to creating vibrant communities. But nothing is perfect and within a community there are tensions...there are always decisions to be made and there are uncomfortable places of disagreement. To pretend that it is an easy task to form relationships and create lovely, lively environments would be misleading. There are always judgments to be made and there are tensions to be felt, to learn from, and to dissolve. We cannot ignore tensions or uncertainties; they arise for reasons we must attend to. But in negotiating differences, there are also possibilities for great growth.

Inclusion is about working closely with parents and carers, being able to take different approaches to fit individual circumstances and valuing that everyone involved with children and families has an important contribution to make, particularly the child and the families themselves.

~ Learning and Teaching Scotland (2005, 3)

To negotiate tensions and uncertainties we need to work with a level of trust in our colleagues and gather support from them. It can be difficult to be with a fussing baby for a long time and it is reassuring to know we have a thoughtful and caring support system. We can also cultivate an attitude of welcome that sees difficult times as places for opportunity. We need to try to understand why we are feeling anger or sadness or why we are disagreeing with a colleague or a family. We can look for paths through these feelings and tensions.

When we work within relationship we are not technicians or robots without feelings, without histories, without beliefs and values. Our own tightly held beliefs, our own histories, our own emotions enter into our relationships all the time. This is not bad - it makes us who we are, we cannot be perfect - but we can reflect together with our colleagues, gather support, and plan strategies.

We can understand that crying makes us uncomfortable because we were always told to stop crying or that crying was for babies or that....you can fill in the blank. Crying is meant to evoke reaction, it is a baby's way of communicating. But with life's experiences we have constructed our own meaning of crying. Our community has its own reactions to crying: "no use crying over spilt milk", "crybaby", "you'll spoil her if you pick her up."

We can create new meanings and understandings that might promote our community vision more fully and inclusively. When we are uncomfortable it is a signal to pay attention. Why are we uncomfortable? How might we look at this situation or our feelings differently?

Reflecting on our own feelings and sharing them with colleagues can help us broaden our emotional reactions. This can become research when we decide as a community to wonder together about something. Research means to look again - to re-examine. When we do this with a group we can wonder together why a baby is having a difficult time.



Georgia



Our documentation gives us a common discussion topic through which we can collect other perspectives in order to understand a broader picture. Having other caregivers to discuss concerns, tensions, or hard feelings with helps to give depth and richness to the picture. We can co-question our practices and enrich our programs.

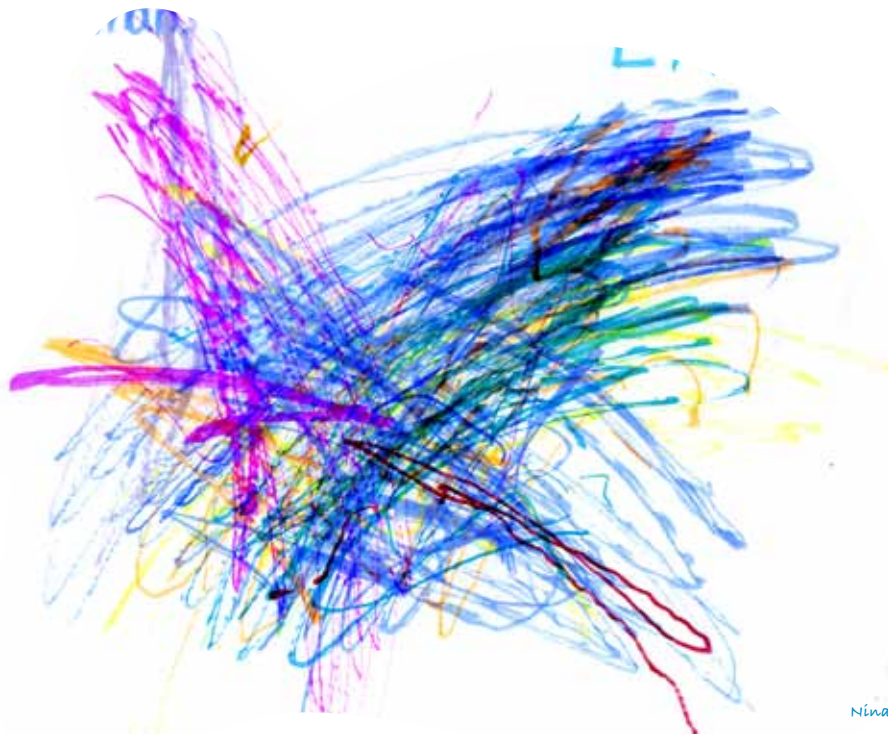
Our beliefs and values guide us. If we believe a child is capable, how then do we look at what a child is doing or saying? If we believe that growth is a process and children change, what perspective do we gain? If we believe that parents are developing their own identities as parents, how do we support their journey? If we believe in building a strong early childhood community, how do we welcome suggestions, welcome uncertainty, welcome learning, and welcome tensions?

For Reflection

Think about your own family and how you were brought up. How have your beliefs, attitudes, and values about how to care for and support infants and toddlers changed or stayed the same over the years? What brought about the changes or reinforced what you already believed?

Think about other cultures than your own. Recognize that there are differences and similarities among all cultures. When you feel yourself judging a practice that a colleague or a family prefers, or a family's request for how they want their child cared for, stop and ask yourself: Could this be a cultural bias of mine? Do I really understand what this family is asking and why? Explore your feelings and potential biases about others' practices in regard to child rearing and your own beliefs about how infants and toddlers should be cared for.

Janice Im, Rebecca Parlakian, and Sylvia Sánchez (2007, 66)



COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION • AESTHETICS • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING • INCLUSIVENESS AND
 INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE • COMPASSION AND CARING • LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY • INDIVIDUALITY • AND INDEPENDENCE • SOCIAL
 INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY • SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY • COMMUNICATION • IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY • SPIRITUALITY • ZEST FOR LIVING AND





to come...

placeholder text

COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION · COMPASSION AND CARING · LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY · INDIVIDUALITY
INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE · CREATIVITY AND PLAY · AESTHETICS · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND
INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY · SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY · COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND
AND INDEPENDENCE · SOCIAL



COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION · INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE · INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY · COMPASSION AND CARING · LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY · AESTHETICS · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND AND INDEPENDENCE · SOCIAL · IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND · CREATIVITY AND PLAY · SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY · COMMUNICATION



WORKS CITED

- Adams, Emily J., and Rebecca Parlakian. 2010. Movin' on: Supportive transitions for infants and toddlers. *Young Children* 65 (3): 54-55. <http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/201005/YCRockNRoll0510.pdf>
- Bateson, Mary C. 1994. *Peripheral Visions: Learning Along the Way*. Harper Collins: New York.
- Birckmayer, Jennifer, Anne Kennedy, and Anne Stonehouse. 2008. *From Lullabies to Literature: Stories in the Lives of Infants and Toddlers*. NAEYC: Washington, DC.
- Im, Janice, Rebecca Parlakian, and Sylvia Sánchez. 2007. Understanding the influence of culture on caregiving practices... from the inside out. *Young Children* 62 (5): 65-66.
- Fox, Mem. 2001. *Reading Magic: Why Reading Aloud to Our Children Will Change Lives Forever*. Harcourt: New York.
- Fraser, Susan. 2002. *Authentic Childhood: Exploring Reggio Emilia in the Classroom*. Delmar Thomson Learning: Albany.
- Gerber, Magda. 2002. *Dear Parent: Caring for Infants with Respect*. Resources for Infant Educators: Los Angeles.
- Gerber, Magda, ed. 1979. *Manual for Parents and Professionals*. Resources for Infant Educators: Los Angeles.
- Giovanni, Nikki. 1972. "When I Die." *My House*. Morrow: New York.
- Godwin, Annabelle, and Lorraine Schrag. 1988. *Setting up for Infant Care: Guidelines for Centers and Family Day Care Homes*. San Fernando Valley Child Care Consortium, NAEYC: Washington, D.C.
- Goldschmied, Elinor, and Sonia Jackson. 2004. *People Under Three: Young Children in Day Care*, 2nd ed. Routledge: London and New York.
- Hammer, Marie, and Pam Linke. 2004. *Everyday Learning About Friendship*. Everyday learning series 2 (3). Early Childhood Australia: Watson, A.C.T.
- Honig, Alice S. 2010. Keys to quality infant care: Nurturing every baby's life journey. *Young Children* 65 (5): 40-47.
- Katz, Lillian. 1995. *The Benefits of Mixed-Age Grouping*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education: Urbana IL.
- Lally, J. Ronald. 2003. *Caring for Infants and Toddlers in Groups: Developmentally Appropriate Practice*. Zero to Three: Washington, DC. <http://www.zerotothree.org/early-care-education/child-care/caring-for-infants-and-toddlers-in-groups.html>
- Lally, J. Ronald. 1995. The impact of child care policies and practices on infant toddler identity formation. *Young Children* 51 (1): 58-66.
- Lally, J. Ronald, and Peter Mangione. 2006. The uniqueness of infancy demands a responsive approach to care. *Young Children* 61(4): 14-20.
- Laureitzen, Phyllis, and JoEllen Tullis. 1988. Learning to use the toilet. In *Setting up for Infant Care: Guidelines for Centers and Family Day Care Homes*, eds. Annabelle Godwin and Lorraine Schrag, 17-20. San Fernando Valley Child Care Consortium, NAEYC: Washington, D.C.
- Learning and Teaching Scotland. 2005. *Birth to Three: Supporting Our Youngest Children*. Learning and Teaching Scotland: Dundee.
- Moss, Peter, and Gunilla Dahlberg. 2006. Introduction. In *Dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, Researching and Learning*, eds. Peter Moss and Gunilla Dahlberg, 1-22. Contesting early childhood series. Routledge: New York.
- Noddings, Nell. 1984. *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. University of California Press: Berkeley.
- Nutbrown, Cathy, and Jools Page. 2008. *Working with Babies and Children, From Birth to Three*. Sage: London.
- Rinaldi, Carlina. 2006. In *Dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, Researching and Learning*. Contesting early childhood series. Routledge: New York.
- Rosenthal, Miriam. 2000. Home to early childhood service: An ecological perspective. *Children's Issues* 4 (1): 7-15.
- Schickedanz, Judith A. 1986. *More Than the ABCs: The Early Stages of Reading and Writing*. NAEYC: Washington, D.C.
- Torquati, Julia, and Jana Barber. 2005. Dancing with trees: Infants and toddlers in the garden. *Young Children* 60 (3): 40-47.
- Wong, Alice C.Y. 2008. A whole new world: Documenting in the infant classroom. *Canadian Children* 31 (2): 32-37.



COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION · AESTHETICS · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND LEARNING · INCLUSIVENESS AND
INDIVIDUALITY & INDEPENDENCE · COMPASSION AND CARING · LIVING DEMOCRATICALLY · INDIVIDUALITY AND INDEPENDENCE · SOCIAL
INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY · SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY · COMMUNICATION · IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY & PLAY · SPIRITUALITY · ZEST FOR LIVING AND