



PROGRAM STATEMENT FOR HARMONY CHILDCARE CENTRE

This Program Statement document captures the philosophy and goals that guide our program for our children. It describes the strategies we use to realize these goals, the plans of action to execute the strategies, and the practices to implement, monitor, and evaluate those action plans, and continually improve our performance

Our Philosophy

Harmony Childcare Centre believes that children learn through play. The aim of our program is to provide an inclusive environment where every child, regardless of abilities, may have the opportunity to experience social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth. We understand that children learn in many different ways so we offer a variety of learning opportunities during indoor / outdoor play, active play, rest and quiet times and within all programmed daily activities. Our staff is dedicated to supporting this by delivering a caring and responsive program which focuses on active learning, exploration, play and inquiry. Children are viewed as competent and capable; they are active participants in the program and, through observations, affect the programming that is being planned and implemented. Activities emphasize current skills and focus on furthering skill development. Staff encourage self-esteem, self-regulation, self-respect and respect for others with the intention that this will allow individual children and groups of children to interact in an appropriate manner.

At Harmony it is integral that we foster and nurture trusting relationships and a sense of belonging with our children and families. We will do this by honoring and respecting all beliefs, cultures, languages and experiences represented in our community. By including aspects of this in our programming, children will learn to care about others, understand other's feelings, cooperate, share, express opinions, resolve conflicts and develop self-worth.

Harmony Childcare Centre's staff endeavors to provide a stimulating program that offers services to children, families and the community within the framework of the Child Care and Early Years Act. Our program planning is based on the document "How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014) which is organized around the following 5 areas of development:

- physical (gross and fine motor)
- social (awareness, respect, ability to share and cooperate)
- communication (verbal and non-verbal)
- self-esteem (self-awareness and positive self-image)
- cognitive (comprehension, problem solving and skill acquisition)

This document also lists four foundations that are considered essential to optimal learning and healthy development for children and are represented in our programming:

- belonging – a sense of connectedness to others
- well-being – focusing on the importance of physical and mental health and wellness
- engagement – being involved and focused through exploration, play, inquiry and skill development
- expression – (or communication) to be heard, as well as listened to (bodies, words, use of materials)

Our staff are knowledgeable, empathic, skilled and caring individuals who provide an educational curriculum based on ongoing observations of the children's play and interactions. They plan and create a positive, nurturing and creative environment which fosters learning and exploration.

We believe that capturing and documenting our practice is a form of reinforcement of the learning process for educators, family and children. In this respect, portfolios are created for each child, observations are available for review and reference, newsletters are distributed monthly, photographs are taken to document children's learning and activities and program plans are posted with our guiding document for parents' reference.

Our Strategies (Goals)

The strategies used to achieve our program statement are guided by the work done on Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years ("How Does Learning Happen"). We understand that learning and development happens within the context of relationships among children, families, educators, and their environments. As stated in our Philosophy, Harmony understands that for children to grow and flourish, the four following foundational conditions need to exist:

- A sense of Belonging,
- A sense of Well-Being,
- Opportunities and support for Engagement, and
- Opportunities and support for Expression.

We will adopt the following 11 strategies to create these conditions:

- a) Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children;
- b) Support positive and responsive interactions among children, parents, child care providers and staff;
- c) Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate;
- d) Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry;
- e) Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences;
- f) Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported;
- g) Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care;
- h) Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children;
- i) Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children and their families and staff;
- j) Support staff, home child care providers or others who interact with the children at a child care centre or home child care premises in relation to continuous professional learning; and
- k) Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families.

How We Will Meet Our Goals

- a) All staff will promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children by:
 - providing a clean and safe environment
 - offering lunch and snack menus based on Canada's Food Guide and accommodating any special dietary needs
 - access to drinking water throughout the day
 - limited transitions and reducing unnecessary disruptions to play
 - eliminating any environmental issues that may cause undue stress to the child
 - eliminating hazards that may cause injury or harm
 - all staff will be familiar with all information concerning any medical conditions, exceptionalities, allergies, food restrictions, medication requirements and parental preferences in respect to diet, exercise, rest time and general care instructions

- b) All staff will support positive and responsive interactions among children, parents, child care providers and staff by fostering collaborative and cooperative relationships that are based on trust. Harmony will...
- hire qualified, responsive and well-trained staff that support families as primary care-givers and understand the needs of children as individuals
 - promote a sense of belonging by including them in our programming by modeling positive communication and developing joint partnerships in learning
 - work collaboratively with parents and our community partners with the mutual goal of providing the best possible services to families and in order for children to meet their maximum potential
- c) All staff will encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate by acknowledging that each child is competent, curious and rich in potential. Staff will....
- support self-regulation which helps children with the ability to gain control of bodily functions, manage powerful emotions and maintain focus and attention
 - provide positive learning environments and experiences that are focused on play-based learning
 - encourage, support and foster children’s communication and self-expression
 - support the child’s home language through books, signs and using familiar words to strengthen the child’s overall language skills and build a sense of self
 - model positive behaviors and provide stability and consistency throughout the daily program
- d) All staff will foster children’s exploration, play and inquiry by providing a variety of activities and an environment rich in content which:
- encourages choices
 - focuses on active play-based learning
 - provides opportunities to articulate ideas, construct, challenge and expand their understanding and learning
 - uses and experiments with a variety of materials
 - allows children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking
- e) All staff will provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences by...
- using daily observations to plan and create programming and a positive learning environment that is based on children’s interests and supported by the staff in the room
 - introducing new ideas, interests, concepts, skills and experiences to expand on children’s learning and experiences
- f) All staff will plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child’s learning and development will be supported by recognizing that the environment is considered the “third teacher” and “is valued for its power to organize, promote relationships, and educate. It mirrors the ideas, values, attitudes and cultures of those who use the space.” (HDLH? 2014 Malaguzzi, 1993)
- staff will organize the space depending on room composition / layout, make sure furnishings are appropriate and provide a variety of materials

- provide spaces (both indoor and outdoor) that invite investigation, imagination, thinking, creating, problem solving and make meaning out of experiences
 - ensure space contains interesting and open-ended materials that children can use in many ways
 - provide opportunities for periods on long, uninterrupted play with few transitions which promote a calmer environment where children become more engaged
 - provide opportunities for connections to and interactions with the natural world where children can explore, care for and interact
- g) All staff will incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care by:
- planning for two hours of outdoor play (weather permitting) daily to allow children the opportunity to run, jump, climb, take turns and participate in group activities which promote good health, social skills and the development of coordination and strength
 - planning for activities as an extension of the indoor play space by bringing indoor materials outside to enrich and extend learning
 - provide two hours sleep time (at minimum one hour rest time) with opportunities for quiet activity time as well as making accommodations if necessary / as needed based on individual needs and / or parent preferences
- h) All staff will foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children by...
- maintaining relationships that are respectful, caring, empathic and trusting
 - sharing knowledge with each other to ensure success of the child – parents / families are experts on their children, they know their children best and have influence on their learning and development
 - taking into consideration each child's needs in respect to their family composition, values, culture and language – this enriches relationships between day care, families and community
 - involving, including and inviting parents (and extended family) in various events and/or activities in our program
 - offering opportunities for parent feedback and involvement which is used to improve our program and services
 - providing monthly newsletters and sharing information / regular updates by email
 - maintaining a website with current and relevant information for quick reference
- i) All staff will involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children and their families and staff by involving and engaging local community partners in supporting children, families and staff. This will be seen in our program when...
- staff take children on community walks and visit our local pet store, bakery, fabric store, etc.
 - local dentists are invited in to speak to the children about dental care
 - staff invite our Community Police Officers to come in to speak to the children about safety
 - information on available services in the community are posted on our Parent Board
 - Resource Staff visit the centre and offer guidance and support to staff, children and families

- j) Harmony will support staff in relation to continuous professional learning by hiring qualified staff, offering competitive wages and opportunities for professional development and training through workshops, seminars, etc. We have non-discriminatory hiring practices and believe that all staff who are hired and work here are valuable and crucial to the success of our program. All staff are respected, supported and treated fairly. In turn, staff...
- foster children's inquiry and creativity
 - plan their program based on their daily observations and children's interests
 - plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences which support a child's learning and development
 - work closely with children (and parents) to extend learning by encouraging children to build upon their existing knowledge
 - recognize and support the uniqueness of every child, engage with children as co-learners during play, provoke their curiosity and guide positive interactions, support emotions in a positive way, know when to intervene and stimulate thinking

Staff will commit to regularly reflect on practices as they engage in new learning experiences, both individually and with colleagues. Staff will commit to building and maintaining a climate of trust, honesty and respect in the workplace, working collaboratively in order to provide a safe, secure, healthy and inviting environment for all children and their families, building and maintaining healthy professional relationships that encourage growth and offering support and mentorship.

Documenting and Reviewing

- k) Harmony Childcare Centre will document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families. Harmony understands that pedagogical documentation is a way for our program staff to learn about how children think and learn.
- All staff, students and volunteers will read the Program Statement and sign off on it...
 - i. Prior to employment
 - ii. Prior to interacting with children
 - iii. When the statement has been changed or modified
 - iv. On an annual basis
 - The Director, once confident that the staff, students, volunteers fully understand and are aware of their responsibilities and implementation of the Program Statement, will review all sign-offs and sign the review sheet to indicate that the process has been completed. These records will be kept for 3 years.
 - Each classroom will maintain a binder containing observations, plans and documentation to support their understanding of the program statement.
 - i. Copies of the documentation, relevant to each child, will be shared with that parent or guardian

The staff will reflect on *How Does Learning Happen?*, by...

- working through the reflection exercises in the document (p. 28 HDLH, 2014)
- reviewing their observations and engaging children in meaningful activities
- maintaining communication with parents
- building trusting relationships with the families in our centre

The Director will meet on a regular basis with each team to establish a clear understanding of the Program Statement, to support staff in their delivery of the Program Statement and to assist staff in self-reflection. The Director will view each staff as competent and able and will ensure that they are heard and respected, have time to reflect on their performance, their contributions to the environment and the growth and development of each child in their care.

The Director will observe staff in their daily interactions with the children to ensure that they align with our Program Statement and beliefs around positive adult-child interactions.

In the event that the Director, or immediate Supervisor, observes or is made aware of any practice that in contravention of our Program Statement or any of our other Policies and Procedures, the issue will be addressed with the staff member according to the strategies outlined in our Disciplinary Policy.

In addition, all Early Childhood Educators have made a commitment to abide by the standards of their profession as set out in the College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of practice. All Early Childhood Educators hold themselves accountable and will use the Code of Ethics, the Standards of Practice and the CCEYA to guide their decisions and performance.

Harmony Childcare Centre endeavors to provide a program that promotes children's growth in all areas of development and wants to ensure that they have a safe and positive learning experience while in our care.

References in this document are from:
How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years 2014
The Extended Day Program – Ministry of Education, Ontario
Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

Reviewed and Approved by Harmony's Board of Directors: September 30th, 2016

HARMONY CHILDCARE CENTRE'S

PROGRAM STATEMENT

Please sign and return once you have read and clearly understand Harmony Childcare Centre's Program Statement.

I, _____ (PRINT NAME), acknowledge that I have read, understand and will implement the Program Statement of Harmony Childcare Centre.

Staff Signature

Date

Office Use:

Date: _____

Director Signature: _____