

	Program Statement		
	Originated: October 2016	Review Date: February 27, 2017	Approval Date: February 27, 2017
	Approved by: Board of Directors	Last Revision: October 2016	Application: All Employees, students, volunteers and visitors

Program Statement

Dandy Lion Daycare Centre (“the Centre”) aims to provide a stimulating environment which enables the child to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively and physically.

The Centre’s Program Statement reflects children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. In accordance with this Statement, the Centre’s *Guidance Principles* as well as other applicable policies, management and employees will foster children’s growth and development by incorporating the following:

1. Promoting the health, safety, nutrition and wellbeing of all enrolled children

One of the goals of the Centre is to provide an environment that safeguards the children while promoting safe and healthy practices in order to contribute to each child’s wellbeing.

A major contributing factor in this area is a menu that meets the nutritional needs of every child. Children are offered meals in proportion to their time in the programs. Our carefully planned menus offer children fresh fruit and vegetables daily, replacement meals to adhere to any food or beverage restrictions and extra servings daily. A licenced dietician reviews the menus annually to ensure all hot lunches and snacks meeting the criteria outlined in the *Canada Health Food Guide*.

The physical environment is maintained to ensure children are free to partake in activities within a setting that is free of clutter, hazards or barriers.

The Centre supports ongoing professional development for all of its employees in areas of health and safety that include but are not limited to areas such as mental health, age-appropriate activities for indoor and outdoor environments, child pedagogy, CPR and First Aid.

Policies and procedures are continuously updated, reviewed and executed within all areas of the programs to promote the health and safety of each and every enrolled child.

2. Supporting positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, Centre employees, students and volunteers

Supporting interactions that promote positive and responsive communication is vital in all of the Centre’s relationships. Our employees communicate with parents/guardians on a frequent basis sharing observations, documentation and reflections through regular conversations.

We strive to promote a sense of belonging for children and their families in our programs by creating positive interactions and collaboration with our families. We understand that strong relationships are the foundation for learning and continued development. Parental/guardian involvement is encouraged

within all programs as it heightens the experience for the individual child, creates lasting memories of time shared while engaging in activities together and enriches each participant's day.

As outlined in the Centre's *Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy*, core principles that are embedded in the Centre's programs that aid in the development and support positive and responsive interactions include:

- Every child is unique whose individuality will be respected and encouraged
- Every child and their family has the right to privacy and dignity
- All children bring value to the Centre's programs
- Children are supported best through collaboration
- Children learn best when they are able to participate with others who have different goals and abilities
- Parents/guardians are integral to a successful inclusion process
- Strong working relationships between the Centre and families will assist in the growth of children's developmental needs
- Children and their families will be supported by the Centre through working with community partners offering specialized services, if needed
- Program delivery is reflective of changing and varying needs of children and their families
- Programs are delivered by Centre employees that demonstrate flexibility in their approach
- The Centre is supportive of ongoing professional development for all employees

3. Encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate

Encouragement for positive interactions and communications are modeled by the Centre employees in areas of the program throughout each day. Demonstrating appropriate forms of communication allows each child to learn methods that will allow them to express themselves positively.

Employees, students and volunteers are expected to demonstrate positive communication techniques by exploring options daily such as:

- Using a calm tone of voice
- Meeting a child at their eye level
- Using one's own body language to reflect positive tones and voice level
- Articulating feelings through discussion and asking for assistance when required
- Using resources and/or tools to assist with message delivery (i.e., pictorial reference)

Promotion of self-regulation stems from a clear understanding of the individual child's strengths, abilities and communication style. Recognizing a child's specific triggers and de-escalators will allow Centre employees to carefully guide and redirect children as they self-regulate in a safe and trusting environment.

Through daily observation and input from parents/guardians, Centre employees are able to support children in developing and mastering this important skill that is both positive and respectful.

4. Foster and promote children's exploration, play and inquiry

The Centre's play-based curriculum allows planning for learning based on children's interests and the interactions and experiences they share with each other and others around them. Children's external experiences and their prior knowledge base will also enhance their learning experiences in that it offers opportunities to expand on this knowledge base intellectually and socially.

Promotion of exploration stems from continued communication between the children and the Centre employees (and when applicable, students and volunteers). Open-ended questions from the Centre employees (and when applicable, students and volunteers), opportunities to introduce new materials, flexibility in programming are just a few ways children will feel that exploration, play and inquiry are natural and embraced.

Emphasis on a process-driven curriculum offers children time to inquire about all elements of the activity in hand. Exploration of each element introduced allows children participating an opportunity to question, probe, feel, manipulate and observe while being supporting and facilitated by the Centre's employees.

Process-driven concepts allow all children to be engaged and responsive in the learning process, as it will have personal meaning and appeal.

5. Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences

The Centre's curriculum focuses on child-initiated experiences that the Centre employees will support and facilitate on a daily basis. Planning around children's interests will allow children to grow, learn and explore based on their personal interests fueling their appetite for more knowledge instead of it being pre-planned for them by others.

Experiences in all areas of the curriculum will link the age-appropriate activities with specific learning objectives and outcomes. Skill sets will be further developed and honed through the child-initiated activities and will be noted daily on each program's planning chart.

The Centre employees (and when applicable, students and volunteers) are expected to support the child-initiated experiences by promoting dialogue, introducing other elements pertaining to the experience (i.e., music, food or language links to the experience) and when possible including parental/guardian feedback and participation. The latter is crucial for educators and families as it promotes a strong, positive link for the child in developing skills sets with specific objectives and outcomes.

6. Plan for and create learning environments and experiences that are positive and supportive of children's learning and development

The Centre is committed to the creation and provision of learning environments that are flexible and adaptable as required for all children. Child-initiated activities that allow for process-oriented programming versus product-oriented programming will support children's learning and development as the experiences will be rooted in their personal interests.

Age-appropriate furniture, equipment and activities for indoor and outdoor experience will enhance each child's learning experience as it caters to their individual needs while participating in a stimulating environment.

Availability and accessibility are integral in promoting a creative learning environment. Employees of the Centre take pride in ensuring that sufficient supplies for all activities are available for use by all children. Open shelves that are at a child's level allow for every child to examine closely the variety available and can easily access individual containers or baskets with their desired supplies.

Containers that are transparent, allowing clear view of contents are readily accessible and easily transported from shelves to desired areas within the program and even outdoors. Pictorial guides with wording allow all children to identify contents of each labeled container.

7. Incorporate indoor play, outdoor play, active play, rest and quiet times throughout the day and will respect and give consideration to individual needs of enrolled children

Each program's daily schedule includes a healthy balance of indoor play, outdoor play, active play, rest and quiet times for all children. The daily schedule allows for flexibility and modifications to meet the changing needs of growing children as they enter the school system, spend their non-instructional days with us or participate in day-long excursions.

Rest periods are offered to all preschool children and quiet activities are available to those preschool children transitioning out of their daily naps.

Preschool children receive a minimum of 2 hours of outdoor play daily. School age children (includes before-and-after kindergarten and school age programs) receive a minimum of 2 hours of daily outdoor play on non-instructional days and a minimum of 30 minutes of outdoor play on each instructional day.

Based on observations, a family's request and the child's needs, consideration and/or changes will be made to ensure the child is able to participate at a pace that meets their individual needs.

8. Foster the engagement of ongoing communication with the parents/guardians

Providing any child the opportunity for success begins with strong partnerships between the family and the Centre. The Centre promotes open and honest dialogue amongst its employees and its enrolled families. Sharing of information, tips and strategies provides a solid foundation of understanding of a child's needs. As a collaborative team, Centre employees and parents/guardians can advocate for and support children to set and achieve goals.

Parents/guardians are the first and most crucial influence in a child's development. Open and frequent communication regarding the child's interests, development and individual needs will assist the Centre in developing an environment that promotes the development of children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit their child's program, volunteer on excursions, provide feedback and to ask questions regarding their child's progress. Communication in its many forms (written, in person, electronically) are encouraged to respect parental/guardian schedules and requests

for their children's wellbeing. Monthly newsletters from the Centre keep all of its membership aware of the learning opportunities experienced, upcoming events and important information.

Participation at Centre-based events, volunteering for the Board of Directors or in programs enhances the Centre as a whole, contributes to frequent communication and produces shared moments for families to cherish.

9. Invite community partners to support children and their families as well as Centre employees as needed

The Centre is committed to providing flexible programming that is adaptable as required for all children. In collaboration with families and if necessary, support agencies and/or community partners, programming will be adapted to meet the needs of the children.

Support agencies, along with specialized training and development, provide the Centre employees with tools and strategies to modify or adapt the program as needed. With parental/guardian consent, individual programming and resources can be made available to assist a child in full participation. Examples of modifications include:

- Pictorial schedules designed for the child to assist him/her with daily routines
- Pictorial symbols to demonstrate an action, feelings, etc.
- Pre-written instructions for activities and routines
- Self-regulation strategies (can be in the form of pictures, portable toolkit, list of exercises, etc.)
- A wide variety of tools for all skill levels and abilities (large and small balls, broad and thin paintbrushes, printed materials in large font and small font, etc.)
- Materials and equipment are placed at children's level to allow for independent access
- Adjusted table and chair heights
- Adjustments to daily schedules, routines and transitions to encourage optimal learning opportunities for all
- Wider pathways between furniture to allow for use of assistive devices if necessary

Community partners range in the types of services they provide. The Centre works closely with our school community, local vendors, libraries and other institutions to enhance our curriculum and each child's experience. Services may be delivered in the form of an enhancement program, resources, information or support for families as needed.

10. Support employee participation in continuous professional learning

As outlined in the Centre's *Professional Training and Development Policy*, the Centre will promote career growth and continuous education among employees.

The Centre supports professional development activities, both inside and outside of the employees' regular duties. Professional development activities include, but are not strictly limited to, professional associations, committees, board of directors, webinars, seminars, and conferences, e-learning and mentoring.

Each employee must participate in standard first aid training and infant and child cardio-pulmonary resuscitation annually.

At its sole discretion, the Supervisor may approve training activities to further support career growth and continuous education to assist in sustaining our diverse workforce.

Any Centre employee that is registered and in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators (“CECE”) must adhere to the requirements of the CECE with regards to ongoing professional development.

11. Document and review impact of the above strategies on the children and their families

Daily observations and documentation is viewed as an integral part of the curriculum planning process. Documentation of children’s interactions, interests, skill set, language and other aspects of their day provides the employees an understanding of the direction that they will facilitate activities on a daily basis.

The Centre conducts an annual survey to receive valuable feedback from its membership. Many aspects of the Centre are reviewed in the survey but most importantly the curriculum is a main focus. Management and the Board of Directors review the results and work within a subcommittee to modify, enhance and improve its childcare services in an effort to reflect overall needs of the membership.

This measure of effectiveness is continuously reviewed to ensure the children receive a well-rounded curriculum while enrolled at the Centre.

The information that is documented and collected from the annual survey provides:

- A way to value children’s experiences and help them to reflect back on those experiences and what they have been learning
- An opportunity to make children’s learning and understanding of the world visible to themselves, their peers, their parents/guardians
- Reflection on developmental growth over a period of time
- A dialogue with families about children’s experience and an invitation for parents/guardians to add their perspective
- A self-reflection opportunity for the Centre employees, as they participate in continuous professional learning

The Program Statement is reviewed with employees prior to commencement of employment, with students prior to their job placement at the Centre, and with volunteers prior to volunteering and annually thereafter. Any changes to Program Statement will be reviewed with the above-named individuals.