



PLAY, LEARN, GROW ACADEMY

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Play, Learn, Grow Academy respect and appreciate the trust you have placed in us to care for your child. We provide a loving, safe and educational environment for children 18 months to 7 years of age to grow.

PROGRAM STATEMENT

The program offered by Play, Learn, Grow Academy is a reflection of research, theory and practice and is consistent with the Ministry of Education's policies, pedagogy and curriculum.

OUR VIEW OF THE CHILD

Consistent with the Ministry of Education's policy, our educators view children at all ages to be capable, competent, curious and rich in potential.

- We believe that children are capable of informed risk-taking and increasing independence within appropriate environments.
- We know that children are competent and able to question, examine, and investigate a wide variety of topics and areas of interest.
- We value children's curiosity and sense of wonder and know that children learn valuable skills through play.
- We believe that children come with lived experience and knowledge; that they are co-learners in our program. Our educators recognize and provide individualized support for each child as they grow and develop at their own pace-supporting each child to reach their full potential.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Play, Learn, Grow Academy is committed to providing quality programs that are consistent with Ministry of Education policies and pedagogy, as outlined in the following documents:

- How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy in the Early Years
- Early Learning for Every Child Today
- Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research About Young Children

Through focusing on the four foundations of learning - well-being, engagement, belonging and expression – our programs promote physical, social and emotional health, and foster communities of learners made up of our children, families and educators.

With these priorities in mind, we have defined a set of goals and approaches, in compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014; that guide our daily practices.

PROGRAM FOUNDATION

We know that through play-based learning and a culture of inquiry, children develop a strong foundation for learning in all areas. This includes:

1. **Belonging** refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual's experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, and the natural world.
2. **Well-being** addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation skills.
3. **Engagement** suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are full engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.
4. **Expression or communication** suggests that through their bodies, words, and use of materials; children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials to support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills which are the foundations for literacy.

GOALS AND APPROACHES

The following outline's Play, Learn, Grow Academy's program goals across key indicators of quality as defined in the Child Care and Early Years Act. The approaches speak to the strategies that educators use in implementing care activities and curriculum to achieve stated goals. Essentially the approaches speak to how the program will take place to achieve goals.

HEALTH, SAFETY, NUTRITION & WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN

- Educators welcome families and children with a personal greeting; seeking information about their child's health, mood, or special events—supporting the child and family in transition.
- Educators track attendance noting the time each child arrived and picked up.
- At the end of each day, educators make eye contact with parents who are picking up a child. If someone unfamiliar is picking up, educators ask that individual for photo ID and confirm that they are authorized to pick the child up.
- On regular basis, educators communicate with parents and provide update on their child's learning and activities.
- Educators discuss safety with the children—help the children to identify safety rules for various activities and support the children to make good choices.

- Children who are sick are closely monitored, with hand—washing encouraged regularly. If a child has a fever of 100.4 F, an early pick up is requested. When an infectious illness is confirmed in the centre, a sign is posted to inform families and provide facts about the illness.
- When medication is brought into the centre, educators will ask you to complete some forms. Educators will check the information you provided to match the instructions on the medication to ensure and line with Play, Learn, Grow Academy policies.
- Toys and equipment are regularly sanitized to minimize the spread of germs.
- Educators conduct daily health checks, which are reviewed monthly as per our sanitary practices policy.
- All staff are trained in Standard First Aid/CPR and the use of Epi-Pens. Allergy lists, including individual emergency plans are posted and reviewed regularly.
- Play, Learn, Grow Academy has developed a wide array of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with legislation, including fire, health & safety, accessibility, childcare and more. Educators review all policies annually. Additional training is also provided to staff like AODA customer service, WHIMS, Safety First, etc. Safety practices are also reviewed with children monthly such as lock down, tornado and fire drills.
- Administrator reviews annual inspections (ie: health and safety, ministry licensing, fire, etc) to look for areas of improvement.
- Educators attend numerous workshops/seminars aimed towards the whole child's well being.
- Menus are posted at the centre and online for families. Any changes are noted on the posted copy at the centre. The menus include diversity in food served.
- Food will be catered and delivered by a licensed catering facility. Staff will check to make sure that proper food temperature requirement is maintained according to the Simcoe Muskoka Public Health Unit.
- Educators provide a free flow snack in the morning and afternoon, encouraging children to come to the table when they are ready. An educator sits with the children but encourages them to be independent using their self- help skills.
- Allergy lists are posted in the kitchen and classrooms to act as reminder for staff, volunteers, and students.
- Our website provides additional resources on healthy eating.
- STAFF SUPERVISES AND MAINTAIN RATIO AT ALL TIMES

PROHIBITED PRACTICES:

- Corporal punishment of the child.
- Physical restraint of a child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purpose of discipline or in lieu of supervision.
- Locking the exits of the childcare centre or classroom for the purpose of confining the child, or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision unless such confinement occurs during an emergency situation and is required as part of Play, Learn, Grow Academy's emergency management policies and procedures.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child's self-respect, dignity, or self-worth.

- Deprivation of a child's basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS, COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

- Play, Learn, Grow Academy have an open door policy with parents.
- Parents are regularly invited to the program to attend events, read stories or share their expertise.
- Educators make an effort to get to know children and their families-respecting the parent's role as the first teacher, as well as their beliefs and values.
- Educators are respectful when sharing incidents where a child requires assistance to be successful in the program.
- Educators actively listen to children and respond in a positive way. They will support every child's need to self-regulate, and assist them as they work to develop that skill.
- Educators provide support to parents by answering questions about their child/ren's development, and goals for their children.
- Annually, a member survey is conducted to seek feedback from parents to help us better understand their values and needs. A suggestion/comments box is also available.
- Centre Activities (ie: Spring and Holiday Concert, Family Barbeque Night, etc) are planned to encourage relationship building and connections between children, families and educators.
- A monthly e-news is shared with families to provide updates on learning, reminders and links to other resources.
- University, College and High School students who are completing placement in our classrooms.
- Parents may be asked to sign a permission to exchange information form that allows Play, Learn, Grow Academy and the School/ outside resource agencies to speak about your child/ren's development and learning needs.
- Educators often invite special visitors into the program for children's further learning.
- Parents may receive a request for their child to participate in a research study conducted by the University or College on child cognition, literacy, numeracy and or other developmental areas.
- Educators may also plan walks and field trips for the children to explore their community. Parents will be asked to complete a trip permission form for each special activity.
- Request to support community campaigns (ie: Food Bank, shelters, etc.)

SENSE OF SELF

- Educators support children in documenting their own learning when possible.
- Educators are beginning to develop children's portfolios—a collection of photos and documentation that demonstrates your child's learning.

- Educators will ask parents and children over 6 years of age to sign a Behaviour Code. This document outlines expectations of children, staff, and families appropriate behaviour to develop positive relationships.
- Children are invited to help plan for and lead their own learning through inquiry-based learning, children are free to express ideas and explore their curiosity.
- The environment is set up to meet the children's individual needs and allow them explore, reflect and engage in their own learning. Provocations are introduced to engage the children and educator's in a co-learning experience where we use scaffolding based on the child's input (e.g. non-verbal cues, own experiences, and expressive ideas)
- Play, Learn, Grow Academy seeks input from the children through polls or through discussion about the activities, materials, and equipment they want in their program.
- Pedagogical documentation is used to display the children's thoughts, feelings, ideas, and views of how things around them relate and connect to their world. We provide children to revisit and share their learning with others.
- Educators record actual activities and reflect back on their observations.
- We share children's forms of self-expression in learning stories and on our Facebook page accompanied with appropriate permission forms.
- Educators talk to children about feelings, right and wrong, and other concepts towards developing self-regulation.
- Educators acknowledge children's positive efforts.
- Educators model appropriate conflict resolution skills when talking to children and co-workers.
- Educators model effective communication skills by using eye contact, talking on eye-level, etc.
- Educators support children's self- confidence by encouraging safe risk-taking and show pride in their success.
- Play, Learn, Grow Academy focuses on supporting the emotional needs of children by integrating self-regulation strategies.
- Educators use the documentation and project history boards to remind children of their learning and successes.
- Educators ensure that each child has a place to keep their belongings and are able to access them when needed.

EXPLORE, PLAY AND INQUIRE

- Our daily schedule is flexible with much time devoted to child-initiated, play-based learning. The schedule includes two hours of outdoor time (weather permitting). During inclement weather, indoor gross motor activities will be offered.
- Multiple play centres are visible in our classrooms for younger children – block and sensory area, dramatic play, arts and crafts, science and book centre, and more. These play centres will always be readily available to the children.
- Educators will engage in children activities, asking questions, hearing the children's ideas—acting as co-learners. Further learning and investigation will be supported by classroom technology.
- The use of loose parts (nuts, bolts, tubes, pompoms, etc.) natural items from home are integral parts in supplementing children's learning and are always welcome and rotated.

- Our younger children have a rest period daily. However, if a child is not tired, they will be offered quiet activities to explore while others take a nap.
- Educators take note on the details of children's activities to learn more about their interests and set out various materials for exploration, play, and inquiry.
- Educators plan experiences and activities to engage children in research based learning through critical thinking, problem solving and investigation on a specific topic of interest.
- Upon enrolment, families will be asked about their child's development milestones, like, dislikes, emotions on certain situations.
- Each classroom includes a quiet area where children can quietly explore a book or just take a break.
- Educators recognize children's unique characteristics and access the resources necessary to adapt early learning environment to suit each child.
- Play, Learn, Grow Academy developed policies, practices and environment that respect and support inclusion, meaningful participation and a sense of belonging for all children.

SUPPORT FOR STAFF

- Play, Learn, Grow Academy celebrates employees who complete 20+ hours of professional development annually; this milestone is posted in the centre.
- Each classroom is provided with a tablet that educators use to update each child's "Daily Report" on our Brightwheel app., to research and investigate topics with the children. Educators have access to a computer in the staff room for further research needed.
- Annually, the Ministry of Education program advisor visits our centre to license our program. Visits involve observation and staff coaching.
- The Administrator follows up with staff, children and parents when a concern is raised.
- Educators share new information and resources with their co-workers and or parents after returning from a workshop or conference.
- Throughout the year, staff will participate in monthly staff meetings and team building activities.
- The Administrator will produce a quarterly e-news for staff to provide ongoing dialogue, Inspire and mentoring in relation to the pedagogy.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy is licensed by the Ministry of Education under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA).

Our professionals strive to maintain the highest standards of childcare. We believe professional development provides teachers, ECE's and ECA's with new skills and information on current issues.

Our staff is equipped with:

- Record of qualifications, including proof of credentials for trained staff
- Current health assessment and immunization record
- Clear response to a current vulnerable sector screen
- Written acknowledgement of various legislated and agency specific policies
- Valid Standard First-aid certificate

- Valid CPR certificate Level C
- Ongoing professional development
- Annual policy review

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Play, Learn, Grow Academy's administration team supports educators in their mission of providing play-based early learning to support each child to realize their full potential by:

- Program Evaluation
- Performance Monitoring
- Documentation and Annual Review

The Program Statement Implementation policy sets out requirements and procedures to ensure that the approaches outlined in this Program Statement are implemented within our program and that the stated view of the child is observable in the program.

Responsibility for monitoring this policy rests with the centre supervisor and with the Administrator monitoring compliance.