

Inclusion Measures Document



May 2008

**Developed by the Quality Assurance and Accessibility Sub-Committee
Child Care Committee of York Region**

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& Accessibility Subcommittee

A Sub-Committee of the
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The purpose of this document is to provide both existing and new child care programs a resource on how to develop and embed inclusion guidelines within an early learning and care program.

This guide will help new programs to develop new policies and for existing programs to review and maintain existing policies and practices that will support both administrative and child care staff to ensure that your program is inclusive to all children and families.

- ❖ *Inclusion is...* An ongoing, flexible process in which all families and children regardless of age, gender, economical status, race, religion, family lifestyles and individual abilities are accepted and have meaningful participation in quality community child care programs.
- ❖ *Quality...* Early Learning and Child Care supports individual children's healthy development and learning. It is inclusive of and responsive to the needs of children and families with differing abilities that respect and reflect diversity.

Legal Obligations and Government Policy

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 23. Specifically this addresses the human rights of children with a disability by promoting dignity and self reliance and by facilitating the active participation of children with disabilities in their communities.

The Canadian Charter of Human rights and Freedoms – All individuals must be treated equally, regardless of their race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Canadian Human Rights Act – Employers and service providers are required to accommodate special needs, including those people with disabilities, short of undue hardship.

Why a Quality and Inclusion Policy?

Developing a policy is important for providing a quality child care program which is inclusive and responsive to the needs of children and families with differing abilities that respect and reflect diversity. Your policy should be one that:

- Is unique to your centre
- Defines roles and expectations for staff, parents, board members, support agencies and community
- Is consistent and supportive of government legislation
- Clearly outlines core quality and inclusion principles
- Is responsive to and accountable to the children and families served
- Adheres to and is respectful of confidentiality laws
- Is responsive to the changing needs of the community

Together with your parent handbook, and other policies, your policy should describe the culture of your program.

Policy Development

Determine your core quality and inclusion principles that will become your guiding practices. Examples of principles are:

We believe:

- Inclusive programs are quality programs
- Every child is unique
- The child comes before the special need
- Everyone has the right to privacy and dignity
- Our programming is reflective of the differing needs of our children
- Quality programming requires dedicated staff who are flexible in their approach and are provided with training opportunities
- Our child care centre should be accountable and the program should be reviewed regularly
- All children are welcome and add value to the program
- Children should be supported through collaboration
- Parents are essential to the successful of the child care experience
- We must be responsive to the needs of our community

These principles will become the foundation of your policy.

Policy Format

The following areas are important when developing a comprehensive policy.

Section 1: The Policy Statement should include the following themes: welcoming, flexibility, partnerships, fairness, dignity and quality.

Examples:

- all children are welcome
- all children have the ability to reach their full potential
- every child is unique
- the program ensures inclusion is supported
- the program supports staff training needs
- the program reduces physical barriers
- modifications are made to promote full participation of all children
- we are committed to working with community partnership to enhance our ability to support all children
- In partnership with families we are committed to meeting the developmental and educational needs of all children

Section 2: The policy statement must be supported by procedures.

- Human resources
- Training
- Programming
- Confidentiality
- Partnerships
- Admission/Registration
- Transitions
- Withdrawal

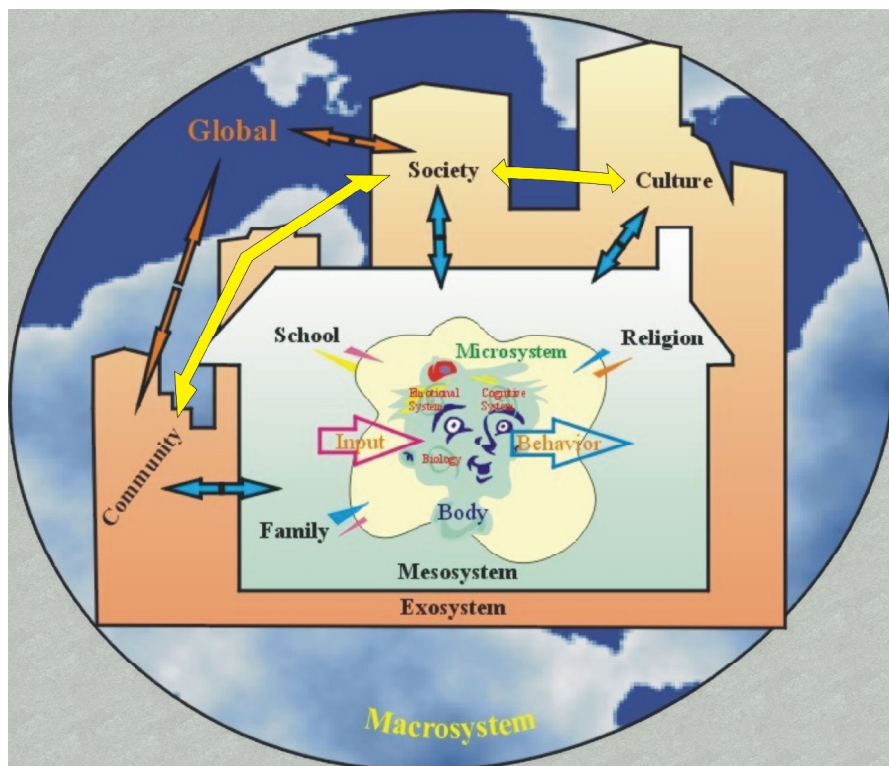
Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

There are often practical problems and barriers when we are seeking to include young children with various challenges. Such barriers may prevent inclusion from occurring, or may affect the quality of the experience for all children.

Guided by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model, inclusion policies will identify barriers at multiple systems levels and design strategies for overcoming such barriers and examine the effects of these strategies.

This theory views the child's development within the context of the system of relationships that form his or her environment. Bronfenbrenner defines complex "layers" of environment, each having an effect on a child's development. The interaction between factors in the child's maturing biology, his immediate family/community environment, and the societal landscape fuels and steers his development.

Changes or conflict in any one layer will ripple throughout other layers. To support a child's development then, we must look not only at the child and her immediate environment, but also at the interaction of the larger environment as a whole.



Implementing Your Policy

Once a policy is developed, the next step is the implementation. The process as to how policies are implemented and communicated to parents and staff is critical. Training, partnerships and understanding the broad system of supports for children with special needs are key components for successful implementation. Once established, policies must be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant, effective and appropriate. It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors/Operators to complete this review. Policies should be reviewed and signed annually by all staff.

Training

Training for staff and Board Members/Operators on policy ensures:

- Communication of policy and procedure components
- Individual roles and expectations
- Importance of inclusive practices
- Successful placement for children with special needs.
- Staff's ability to advocate for inclusion with all parents.

Partnerships

All licensed child care programs in York Region have access to Early Intervention Services (EIS) and 0-6 Children's Mental Health (CMH)

EIS services include:

- Screen and assess children
- Provide intervention programs
- Assist parents and caregivers to teach children new skills
- Provide occupational and/or physiotherapy consultation
- Offer play groups for children with special needs
- Promote and support children's participation in a community child care program
- Consult with and support child care providers
- Connect parents with community resources
- Offer workshops for parents and caregivers of children with special needs
- Educate the community about developmental delays
- Work closely with school board staff to facilitate a smooth transition to elementary school

Support programs through Child Care Visits to:

- Provide support to child care provider and/or teacher
- On-going assessment of child's developmental strengths, needs and goals established
- Assessment and intervention suggestions in the child care setting
- On-going service planning using an Individual Program Support Plan
- Assist teacher/caregiver to integrate the child into routine activities and to plan learning activities in which the child will be successful
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CMH services for child care include:

- Provide support to child care provider and/or teacher
- On-going assessment of child's social, emotional and behavioural strengths, needs and goals established
- Assessment and intervention suggestions in the child care setting
- On-going service planning using an Individual Program Support Plan and through accessing the support of the 0-6 multi-disciplinary team
- Assist teacher/caregiver to integrate the child into routine activities and to plan learning activities in which the child will be successful
- Support both the staff and the parent in assisting them to meet the social, emotional and behavioural needs of the child
- Connect staff and parents with community resources
- Offer workshops for staff, parents and caregivers of children with mental health concerns
- Work closely with school board staff to facilitate a smooth transition to elementary school

Enhanced Funding:

Enhanced Funding supports licensed child care providers to include children with exceptional and significant special needs. Licensed child care providers can apply for funding to hire additional staff, thereby supporting child care staff in the inclusion of children with special needs.

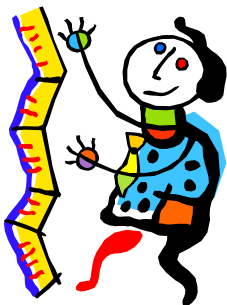
What child care programs are eligible for enhanced funding?

- Programs licensed under the Day Nurseries Act and located in York Region.
- Programs which have a Child Care/Special Needs Enhancement Funding Agreement with the Regional Municipality of York.
- Programs with child (ren) with exceptional special needs whose parents/guardians require child care to support their employment and/or educational activities.
- Programs that are unable to respond to increased demands as a result of social-emotional behavioural special needs of the combination of children in a group.
- Programs that complete an application and submit required supporting documents.

For more information, please call 905-830-4444, ext. 2279 or 1-877-464-9675, ext. 2279

By developing an Inclusion Policy you have taken a positive first step toward making your program more inclusive. Your efforts will reap positive rewards for you, your staff and all the children and families in your program.

Your Inclusion Policy is not simply a document to be left on a shelf but should be used to support inclusive programming and interactions. Your policy is one that will evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of your community and broader society.



Guide to Resources

How does your program measure up?

Quality	Supports	Contact
<p>Physical Environments</p>	<p>ECERS/ITERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale & Infant, Toddler Environment Rating Scale) FDCRS/SACERS (Family Day Care Rating Scale & School Age Rating Scale) Toronto Operating Criteria DNA licensing checklist Resource teacher network</p>	<p>www.fpg.unc.edu/~eurs/ www.fpg.unc.edu/~eurs/ www.fpg.unc.edu/~eurs/ www.york.ca ecrtho.ca</p>
<p>Staff</p>	<p>AECEO Code of Ethics (Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario) ECE Vocational Standards Occupational Standards Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care Federation</p>	<p>www.cfc-efc.ca/aeceo/ www.cfc-efc.ca/aeceo/ www.childcareontario.org</p>
<p>Healthy Child Development</p>	<p>Nipissing – District Developmental Tool Early Identification - Red Flags HELP – Hawaii Early Learning Profile Humanics National Assessment Brigance Health Service Preschool Speech and Language Healthy Babies Healthy Children Children’s Mental Health Triple P – Positive Parent Program Come Grow with Us Health Connection</p>	<p>www.ndds.ca www.york.ca www.vort.com/products/help_overview.html www.humanicslearning.com www.curriculumassociates.com www.york.ca www.york.ca www.york.ca Kinark Child and Family Services 905-713-0700 www.kinark.on.ca Blue Hills Child and Family Centre 905-773-4323 The York Centre for Children and Families 905-887-5896 www.theyorkcentre.ca www.triplep.net www.york.ca</p>
<p>Inclusion of Special Needs</p>	<p>SpecialLink Early Intervention Services Toronto Operating Criteria Early Identification Red Flags Region of York ~ Enhanced Funding</p>	<p>www.specialinkcanada.org www.york.ca www.cityoftoronto.ca www.york.ca www.york.ca</p>
<p>Community Awareness</p>	<p>Purple Pages Parent Resource Guides Kids Help Line York Link Region of York School Readiness</p>	<p>www.purplepages.ca www.resourceguideforparents.com 1-800-668-6868 www.yorklink.org www.york.ca www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca</p>

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