



Program Statement

The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre offers a learning program that is consistent with Ministry of Education policies, pedagogy and curriculum. Some of the Ministry documents we reference in our program include the following:

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

Since we know that children learn best by pursuing their personal interests and goals, children make their own choices about materials and activities during the program time. As they pursue their choices and plans, children explore, ask and answer questions, solve problems, and interact with peers, program staff, volunteers, students on placement and other adults.

Children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential

The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre recognizes each child is a unique individual who brings his or her own abilities to the program and deserves the encouragement and space to try new things, explore new ideas and develop their own unique creativity.

We provide an environment that fosters curiosity, one that allows children to explore. We believe that every child deserves a safe and caring environment, a place where children want to be and where they feel "at home", in which to grow and develop to their maximum potential.

We understand the importance of taking children's stages of development into consideration. For each child, their stage of development is an individualized and complex interplay between developmental factors and their unique family, community and life experiences. In each case, we aim to integrate all areas of the child's development into our program in a holistic way.

Our goals for children, consistent with the Ministry of Education pedagogy, include the following:

- Every child has a sense of **belonging** when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.
- Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and **well-being**.
- Every child is an active and **engaged** learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.
- Every child is a capable communicator who **expresses** himself or herself in many ways.

Children's interests are valuable to their learning and offer a rich variety of experiences. The type of activities we offer daily include:

- drama, music, dance and visual arts
- physical literacy
- language and literacy
- nature, science and technology
- construction and design
- daily opportunities for physical literacy and active outdoor play
- opportunities for school-age children to work on their homework
- rest time for children who require it, based on their developmental needs.

Our programs are designed to:

- encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate
- foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry
- provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences
- offer opportunities to create authentic lasting relationships with others in the program

Health, safety, nutrition and well-being of children

We know that the early years set the foundation for children's health and well-being.

- The brain's architecture is shaped by a child's interactions and relationships with parents and other significant people in their lives.

- Early brain development is stimulated through experiences and interactions with responsive adults.

We understand that the first step in establishing and nurturing health, safety and well-being for children in our programs is through the connections they make with the program staff, volunteers and students on placements. Here are some other specific ways we promote well-being in our programs.

Health and safety—as a licensed child care operator, The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre meets all health and safety requirements of the Ministry of Education and local government bylaws. Information is posted outside our program rooms on our classroom bulletin boards and others are provided in the Parent Handbook. You can also speak to our program staff at any time to view our complete health and safety policies and protocols.

Nutrition—The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre collaborates with The North Bay/Parry Sound Health Unit to develop standard menus for all of our programs that are both nutritious and appealing for children. Our menus follow Canada's Food Guide and are culturally sensitive. You can view the menu on the classroom bulletin boards. We accommodate dietary or religious food requirements for children in our programs.

Rest- Children attending a full day toddler and preschool programs will rest up to two hours per day. Quiet activities will be provided to children who do not rest and as children transition from rest to the afternoon program.

Relationships among children, families, staff and community partners

It is one of our core values at The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre to foster collaborative and co-operative relationships among all of our partners.

The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre strives to promote a sense of belonging for children and their families in our programs by creating positive interactions and collaboration of families. We understand that relationships of trusts are the basis for learning and co-operation.

Every child is entitled to be given the opportunity to develop personal responsibility and social skills, to learn to problem-solve and to learn about diversity and inclusion.

The skills of conflict resolution are important to lifelong learning. As competent individuals, children are active participants in resolving conflicts. We encourage them to come up with ideas and solutions to problems that arise.

The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre is committed to working collaboratively with all of our community partners as we work together on the mutual goal of providing the best possible child care service to families.

Positive self-expression, communication and self-regulation

At The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre, our inclusive programming leads to children's sense of belonging. Positive learning environments and experiences, focused on active play-based learning, encourage children's communication, self-expression and self-regulation.

We seek to be aware of, foster, support, encourage, respond to and document the many ways in which children express themselves, the many "voices" with which they articulate their ideas, the variety of "languages" they use to communicate. We also seek to honour and reflect children's home language and culture in our programs.

In our inclusive learning environments, we welcome children of all abilities. Respect for diversity, equity and inclusion is vital for optimal development and learning. Here are some of the ways in which we create an inclusive environment in our programs:

- Recognize each child as having equal rights to participate in program activities, trips and events.
- Recognize and respect the unique qualities of each child and family, including ancestry, culture, ethnicity, race, language, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, family environment, and developmental abilities and needs.
- Create strategies that value the culture and first language of all children.
- Establish programming strategies to foster an inclusive learning environment in which every child can participate.
- View the diversity of children and families as an asset, and plan programs to reflect differences and enrich the environment.

Our programs focus on active play-based learning as the way that children naturally learn best. It is their natural response to the environment around them. When children are manipulating objects, acting out roles, or experimenting with different materials, they are engaged in learning through play. Play allows them to actively construct, challenge, and expand their own understandings through making connections to prior experiences, thereby opening the door to new learning. Intentional play-based learning enables children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems, and engage in critical thinking. Play is responsive to each child's unique learning style and capitalizes on his or her innate curiosity and creativity.

Our program also supports children's self-regulation, their ability to deal with stress and remain *calm, alert and ready to learn*. When children are calmly focused and alert, they are best able to modulate their emotions, pay attention, ignore distractions, inhibit their impulses and

understand the consequences of their actions. We are continually learning about how to create learning environments and programming that helps support children's self-regulation—to help children remain or return to a state of calm.

Parent engagement and communication

The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre aims to foster outreach, engagement and communication with families about our program and their children's learning experiences. We believe that families are experts on their children. Sharing knowledge is integral to the success of your child.

The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre aims to ensure that families have the support of available, affordable, safe, reliable, high quality licensed child care for their children, which ensures parents peace of mind while their children are in the program. Respect, care, empathy, trust and integrity are core values in all our interactions with families.

We know that our partnerships with our families help our program to best meet the needs of the children:

- Families form the foundation for a child's early development. Families know their children best, and are the first and most powerful influence on learning and development.
- The needs of each child are considered in the context of their family composition, values, culture, and language. This approach enriches relationships between early childhood settings, families, and their communities.
- We involve parents and other important adults in various events and activities at our programs. This connects them to their children's early development, and enhances the child's learning.

In addition to the daily interaction with program staff, we offer many opportunities for parent feedback and involvement—such as surveys. We use parent input to improve our programs and services.

Community partners

The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre is committed to involving local community partners and to engaging those partners in supporting our children, families and staff.

We provide learning opportunities and practical work experience, in the areas of programming and administration, to members of the community through the recruitment, placement, training and recognition of volunteers and students on placement. Volunteers and students on placement augment the high-quality care and individual attention given to the children in the programs.

We also have numerous community partners—individuals, organizations and agencies who support The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre children and families financially or through in-kind support. We collaborate with these partners and continue to create more opportunities to expand these relationships on behalf of our children and families.

Supporting staff in continuous professional learning

The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre is committed to hiring, training and fairly compensating staff. We hire staff who have a positive and sensitive attitude towards children. Our non-discriminatory hiring practices provide individuals of all backgrounds the opportunity for employment. We believe that everyone has worth and value, and all staff are entitled to be respected, supported and treated fairly.

The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre staff foster children's inquiry and creativity. Staff plan on a daily basis based on the observations that they make on children's interests. In this way, learning is extended, leading to deeper investigation with materials and the environment.

Staff plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development. Through positive adult-child interactions, staff work closely with children to extend their learning by encouraging children to build upon their existing knowledge. The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre staff develop an intentionally planned program that supports early learning.

At The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre, we believe that knowledgeable and responsive early educators:

- Recognize that responding to the unique abilities, needs, and characteristics of each child, family, and community is central to supporting learning and development.
- Engage with children as co-learners as they explore their environments.
- Provoke children's thinking, create meaningful programs, and guide interactions with children and their families.
- Use a warm and positive approach to support children's developing ability to express emotions and take other perspectives.
- Know when to stand back and observe and when to enter children's play to stimulate thinking.
- Make a commitment to build self-awareness, regularly reflect on practices and engage in new learning experiences, both individually and with colleagues.

Formal professional learning is vital, but we also know that the most central professional growth happens day-to-day, as our staff co-learn with children and each other as self-reflective professionals.

All program staff attend mandatory monthly professional learning meetings and receive training on an ongoing basis.

Documenting and reviewing the impact of The Centre's learning programs

At The North Bay Daycare and Learning Centre, we understand that pedagogical documentation is a way for our program staff to learn about how children think and learn.

Our staff make daily observations of children in the program and use this information to inform their future planning. Our intention is to move beyond reporting of children's behaviour, in order to find meaning in what children do and experience. The purpose of our documentation is also:

- 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, to other children, to their parents and other families, to the program staff
- A way to reflect on developmental growth over a period of time
- A process for program staff to co-plan with children about learning
- A dialogue with families about children's experience and an invitation for parents to add their own documentation about their children's learning

A self-reflection opportunity for program staff, as they participate in continuous professional learning.

