

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program Statement Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

The Ministry of Education requires all licensed child care programs to develop and implement a Program Statement, which guides the day-to-day beliefs, values and best practices of our program. The How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years Document (HDLH?) is to be used for the purpose of guiding our licensed child care.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program recognize that all children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program strives to support optimal development by ensuring that the Four Foundations of Learning and Development outlined within HDLH? are considered in all aspects of our programs in partnership with parents/guardians.

The Four Foundations of Learning and Development	How Niagara Region Home Child Care Program Supports the Four Foundations
Belonging	<p>We provide environments that supports the diverse needs of all children and families in the Niagara Region. We strive to be accepting of all exceptionalities and we adjust our environments to meet the needs of each unique child.</p> <p>To support inclusion, we consider each child’s capabilities rather than focusing solely on their needs.</p> <p>We value and support the families we serve and recognize them as partners in their children’s learning as we believe they are the child’s first educators. Our Educators/Home Child Care Providers are true professionals who build relationships with children and their families and connect with organizations within their community recognizing that “it takes a village to raise a child”.</p> <p>Materials, photographs, posted material and resources reflect diversity in race, family composition, abilities etc.</p>
Well-Being	<p>Niagara Region Licensed Child Care staff promote mindfulness throughout the day. Children are given opportunity to finish tasks and practice new skills. The moments spent caring for individual, physical needs are viewed as an opportunity to empower the children to be independent, to gain self-confidence and to be supported through the process with much or as little support as they need.</p>

Engagement	Planned programs are developed to reflect the children’s interests and individual development, enabling children to choose the learning experiences, materials and play partners they want to engage with. Educators/Home Child Care Providers encourage and support children to make their own decisions and solve problems. They help children to experience logical consequences and hypothesis through their play in order to support children’s feelings of engagement and value within the program and with others.
Expression	Educators/Home Child Care Providers encourage children’s self-expression through their play, art mediums, music and movement, the use of open ended questions and by providing time for children to reflect, hypothesize and share their responses.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program recognizes that each child enters into our program with their own unique history, personality and abilities. All children develop new skills at their own pace. Observations of your child and their interests are the basis for planning developmentally appropriate experiences in all the developmental domains.

We encourage our Educators/Home Child Care Providers to recognize the importance of self-reflective practice and on-going professional learning opportunities to provide nurturing, responsive learning environments.

This program statement aligns with our local Quality Child Care Niagara (QCCN) initiative which provides educators with the tools and training to ensure that all children can experience the maximum developmental benefit of all learning opportunities.

A) Approaches to promote health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children;

Your child’s health and well-being is our top priority. Our Educators/Home Child Care Providers provide safe and appropriate supervision of children based on age, development and environment.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care programs support these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Providing nutritious foods and beverages that incorporate family and cultural preferences and are in accordance with the Canada’s Food Guide.
- Being sensitive to and accommodating for children’s food restrictions and allergies.
- Creating positive eating environments with foods and portion sizes that are responsive to children’s cues of hunger and fullness.

- Ensuring that all Educators/Home Child Care Providers are trained and able to appropriately respond to health, safety and emergency situations;
- Providing opportunities for children to engage in risk at a level that is appropriate for their development.
- Supporting mental health wellness through encouraging children’s development of self-regulation, resiliency and a rich emotional vocabulary.
- Providing daily opportunities for sleep, rest or engagement in quiet activities depending on each individual child’s needs and development.
- Consulting with Niagara Region Public Health to ensure that all health and safety procedures are in accordance with research-based best practices.
- Providing at least two hours of time spent learning outside on a daily basis, weather permitting.
- Monitoring children’s engagement in activities to determine optimal periods for transitions.

B) Approaches to support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, Home Child Care Providers and staff;

Positive and responsive relationships are essential to high-quality early learning and care. Our Educators/Home Child Care Providers develop positive relationships with the children through the programs they implement. They provide a nurturing environment by providing invitations and activities that align with interests of the children and that will provide opportunities for your child to achieve their developmental milestones.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Programs supports these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Welcoming and greeting children and families at arrival.
- Providing opportunities for children to be heard and for their contributions to be appreciated within their communities.
- Honouring children’s ideas and contributions by responding to them in a respectful way and by focusing on using authentic language in our interactions with them.
- Interacting with children on their level.
- Getting to know the children on an individual basis to identify and work to proactively minimize stressors, and to help the children become self-aware.
- Actively listening to children and giving them the time and space to express themselves.
- Responding to challenging behaviours with the most appropriate and effective but least intrusive strategy.
- Reframing challenging behaviours by reflecting on why they may be occurring and what the child might be trying to express.
- Rather than saying “No” to a child, Educators/Home Child Care Providers will explain the reason why and offer appropriate or acceptable options.

- Encouraging children to be respectful of the ideas of others and modelling this ourselves.
- Being aware of the audience when discussing the child or children with co-workers or parents/guardians.
- Home Child Care Providers get to know each child in their care, their interests, backgrounds, and current life happenings and respect each child's individual differences, thoughts, ideas and theories.
- We have a Resource Consultant(s) who is available to visit the Home Child Care Providers, offering guidance and support for children who are referred.
 - Home Child Care Advisors promote partnerships at visits and during other interactions by informing the Home Child Care Providers about available resources, for example:
 - Early Child Care Development Centre (ECCDC)
 - Resource Consultant Supports
 - Behaviour Consultant Supports through Pathstone
 - EarlyON Centres,
 - Community Connections: Niagara Children's Planning Council

C) Approaches to encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate;

Children's present and future well-being is influenced by their ability to self-regulate. (How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years)

Educators/Home Child Care Providers adjust the environment and activities to meet the needs of the children, while encouraging critical thinking and providing choices to all children.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program supports these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Modeling resiliency and problem-solving skills with children and helping them to identify their feelings, the feelings of others, and possible solutions;
- Placing importance on encouraging children to develop authentic skills for solving problems, instead of having them take part in a prescribed solution (e.g. making a child say sorry);
- Educators/Home Child Care Providers will take the time to stop and listen and be present in the moment in order to build authentic relationships with children.

D) Approaches to foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry;

Our program builds on children’s interests. Educators/Home Child Care Providers create learning environments which offer invitations based on children’s interests where children can participate, explore, discover and learn, giving them the opportunity to express themselves.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Programs supports these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Observing and engaging with children to understand their questions and inquiries and using these as a guide for programming.
- Respecting and supporting the children’s sense of curiosity and wonder.
- Viewing the environment as the “third teacher” and understanding the significant impact it has on our program.
- Organizing the learning environments in a way that makes them aesthetically appealing, uncluttered, engaging and welcoming.
- Providing interesting and complex open-ended learning materials for children to engage with and explore.
- Providing natural elements (e.g. sticks, rocks, shells, plants) to help children explore the natural world.
- Role modeling and encouraging respect for materials in the shared learning environment.
- Engaging in open-ended conversations with children and asking thought-provoking questions to help expand the children’s learning and our understanding of their explorations.
- Having an awareness of the many languages that children use to express themselves and providing opportunities for children to share their thoughts and ideas in a variety of ways.
- For the parent/guardian, Educators, and Home Child Care Providers to work together to offer an inclusive environment where children are considered competent and capable and able to show us what they are interested in learning about at their own pace.

E) Approaches to provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences;

Learning environments are offered in all aspects of our program to support children’s interests and development throughout the day. Educators/Home Child Care Providers create the learning environments through observation and discussion with the children.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Programs support these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Actively play partnering with children to expand their learning and support their social experiences.
- Knowing when to be an intentional observer in a play scenario and to support these learning experiences from afar.

- Showing flexibility in supporting children in their expansion of play and the use of play materials.
- Acting on teachable moments throughout the day during indoor and outdoor activities to expand children's interest and knowledge.
- Limiting the number of transitions throughout the day; children do not spend a lot of time lining up or waiting for activities to take place.
- Home Child Care Advisors continue to support Home Child Care Providers with the understanding that all areas of development are interconnected and to incorporate holistically.
- Home Child Care Providers follow the child's lead and allowing the child to discover new things as they happen at the child's own pace.

F) Approaches to plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported;

Our Educators/Home Child Care Providers offer learning environments which build on children's interests and are developmentally appropriate and challenging to the children who are in each group.

Home Child Care Providers have an understanding of child development and know the development of the children in their care.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Programs support these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Home Child Care Providers will collaborate with the Home Child Care Advisors and Resource Consultants (if applicable) to provide an inclusive program for all children. Home Child Care Advisors will support developmentally rich learning environments through the use of Quality Child Care Niagara tools and best practice, so that early developmental screening, referrals and support is available for all children and their families, with their consent.
- Supporting positive learning environments through the use of Quality Child Care Niagara tools.
- Changes in interests are adapted to and adjustments are made during experiences to support children's success and learning.
- Provocations and invitations will provide opportunity for all children's developmental needs to be met.
- Ensure there are enough materials in the room to promote choice in free play.
- Facilitate positive interactions between children.

G) Approaches to incorporate indoor, and outdoor play as well as active play, rest, and quiet time into the day;

Home child care premises offer a selection of activities for the children to participate in where natural elements and nature are introduced into your child's play environment.

Niagara Region Licensed Child Care Program support these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Children are encouraged to explore the outdoor environment. Educators/Home Child Care Providers support this exploration through ensuring children are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. For example, splash pants and rubber boots for rainy day exploration.
- Provide provocations and learning invitations which encourage participation in all areas of the program.
- Monitoring children's engagement in activities to determine optimal periods for transitions
- Home Child Care Providers will offer a flexible flow of the day of learning invitations which encourage participation in indoor and outdoor activities; incorporating rest, meal and snack times and quiet play which considers each individual child's uniqueness.

H) Approaches to foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about their children and the program

'Family engagement' is not about giving families' information, but rather an opportunity to build, connect and strengthen relationships with each family and ultimately each child. We value parents/guardians as our partners and work with them through various activities and communication modes.

Niagara Region Licensed Child Care Program supports these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Communicating with families daily on an in-person basis at minimum at arrival and departure;
- Educators/Home Child Care Providers seek out opportunities to talk with parents/guardians without ignoring the needs of the children.
- Encouraging families to share their perspective on the children's learning and development through in-person sharing and electronic responses.
- Encouraging families to share pictures and stories of their child's time at home and with family;
- Incorporating aspects from a variety of cultures within the learning environment (e.g. food, music, art, photographs, artifacts);
- Inviting family participation within the daily program and encouraging them to share their varied perspectives and cultural experiences with the children;

I) Approaches to involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children;

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program works closely with the community to offer new opportunities within our programs to enrich our services. We value community partnerships within our services which will enhance the lives of children, families and staff.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program supports these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Working closely with Regional Departments, recognizing their expertise and resources that they offer. These include Public Health, Social Assistance, etc.
- Collaborating with various professional services in Niagara to support families in care. These include Speech Services Niagara, Bethesda, and Pathstone Mental Health etc.
- Mentoring and supporting peers and participants of high school, adult learning programs, and college and/or university student placements within Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program.
- Engaging with other various community partners (i.e. local libraries, EarlyON, fire departments, Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC), etc.)

J) Approaches to support staff or others who interact with the children in relation to professional learning

All Educators/Home Child Care Providers participate in continuous learning in their respective employment that is offered both internally and externally.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Program supports these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Educators/Home Child Care Providers meet together to share ideas and information.
- All staff and Home Child Care Providers participate in continuous learning, and Registered Early Childhood Educators are responsible to fulfill their Continuous Professional Learning requirements as outlined in the Early Childhood Educators Act.
- Legislative requirement that Home Child Care Provider's maintain current Standard First Aid and Infant/Child CPR certification.

K) Approaches to document and review the impact of the strategies on the children and their families set out in clauses A to J above. ;

We document, measure, review/revise our practices and policies on a regular basis, taking into consideration the direction of the Ministry of Education, *Child Care Early Years Act, 2014*, *The College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* and Public Health recommendations. We strive for continuous improvement which supports our best practices in all our services. We welcome input from our families.

Niagara Region Licensed Home Child Care Programs Supports these goals through the implementation of a variety of approaches, including;

- Team meetings and staff meetings are planned to discuss children, programming, home child care program initiatives.
- Conducting anonymous parent/guardian surveys yearly to secure feedback and suggestions regarding our program and the service we provide. We will share the results of the surveys with families.
 - We document, measure, review and revise (as necessary) and strive for continuous improvement, which supports Best Practices in all of our services.
 - We support Home Child Care Advisors and Home Child Care Providers to further develop their understanding of the Program Statement.