

Standards for School-Age Child Care Programs



Department of Health and Community Services

2009

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OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS FOR CHILD CARE PRACTITIONERS

Reflect on one's own knowledge, attitudes and skills and take appropriate action.

Develop and maintain a warm, caring and responsive relationship with each child and with the group of children.

Protect and promote the psychological and physical safety, health and well-being of each child.

Establish and maintain an open, cooperative relationship with each child's family.

Establish and maintain supportive, collaborative relationships with others working in the child care setting.

Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with other community service providers working with the child.

Use observations to assess children's skills, abilities, interests and needs.

Recognize signs and symptoms of emotional or developmental delays or challenges and take appropriate action.

Plan and provide daily experiences that support and promote each child's physical, emotional, social, communication, cognitive, ethical and creative development.

INTRODUCTION

This manual provides the required standards for developing and implementing centre-based child care programs for school-age children in Newfoundland and Labrador. The information contained in this document will assist school age staff with their program planning and, when combined with their knowledge, skills and experience, this manual will serve as a useful tool in the development of high quality school age programs.

All school age care is designed to provide care for school-age children outside of school hours and, as such, it comes in a variety of forms and offers diverse experiences, based on the age of the participants and the nature of the program. School age programs may be school based, they may be ‘stand alone’ school age programs; or they could be separate rooms in a larger child care centre. School age children might also be divided into several age groupings, e.g., younger or older school age children, or they could be included as part of a multi-age grouping. This manual will be relevant for all of these variations of school age programs, addressing the commonalities of these various forms of school age care as well as speaking to the unique needs of these individual programs.

Like its companion document, *Standards for Early Childhood Programs in Centre-Based Child Care*, this manual uses developmentally appropriate practice as its foundation. When school age programs follow developmentally appropriate practice (or DAP), they apply knowledge of the basic principles of child development along with an understanding of the strengths, needs and interests of each individual child in a particular group. These programs would also incorporate an understanding of the social and cultural contexts of each child, including an awareness of the school experience of each child within the program. It isn’t until the staff of a school age program make an effort to discover individual children’s personalities, interests, commonalities, differences, likes, dislikes, wants and needs that they can begin to build a program that highlights the unique needs and characteristics of middle childhood while at the same time, supporting the healthy development of each child.

This document, like *Standards for Early Childhood Programs in Centre-Based Child Care*, will use the Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners, published by the Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF) in 2003, as a framework. These standards define the skills and abilities necessary to provide high quality child care, and although they are not written specifically for school age programs, are applicable when defining the role of anyone who works with children in a school age program.

SECTION I: DEVELOPING A PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

STANDARD:

Reflect on one's own knowledge, attitudes and skills and take appropriate action

A program philosophy for a school age child care program is the guide for how the program will work. It is the set of principles that provide the framework for the program and reflects the belief system of the staff in the particular school age program. Every child care setting that includes school-age children must have a philosophy statement that speaks specifically to the school-age child, recognizing and reflecting the unique needs of this particular age group. Ideally, the statement of philosophy is developed by someone with, minimally, a Level II Child Care Services certification in school age care in consultation with staff, and, if applicable, the board of directors of a program.

A philosophy is developed based on one's beliefs about children and how they learn and what they need in order to grow to meet their full potential. These beliefs are generally a result of one's knowledge, education and life's experiences and must reflect current and valid research regarding how children learn and develop. The statement of philosophy will:

- guide the practice, decision making and actions of all of the staff.
- notify parents about the values and beliefs of the particular program so that they can make an informed choice when choosing care for their school-age child.

Some questions to reflect upon when developing a program philosophy for a school age child care program include:

- What do we believe school-age children need in order to be happy, healthy and productive?
- What do we believe about the individual needs of school-age children?
- What do we believe about the role that families and the community play in our program?
- What role do we, as the staff, play in a school age child care program?

SECTION II: BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

STANDARD:

Develop and maintain a warm, caring and responsive relationship with each child and with the group of children.

Note: for the purposes of this document, the term 'parent' refers to the parent or legal guardian or the adult who assumes the parental role in the care of the child.

This section will examine relationships that school-age children form now that they are becoming increasingly more independent from the families and more involved with their friends and peers.

Relationships among school age program staff and children

Adults working in a school age program will develop warm and nurturing relationships with school age children, just as they do when working with younger children in any type of child care setting. The major differences with relationships in the school age group are the roles played by friends and peer groups. School age children seem to pay more attention to what their peers think, say and do than they do to anyone else (especially adults!) It is essential that the adults working in school age programs are sensitive to these dynamics and that they encourage and support school-age children in their interactions with peers. Adults need to provide opportunities for children to choose their friends and spend time alone with them. Children in the middle childhood years of 6-8 tend to have a growing desire to be liked and accepted by their friends. Those in the upper end of middle childhood, 9-12 years, form stronger, more complex friendships and peer relationships, especially with those of the same gender. This is also the age group that experiences more peer pressure. Peer groups exert a tremendous amount of influence on the school age child's development as a person.

Despite the need for increased independence and the importance of the peer group, school age children still need the safe and secure infrastructure provided by adults in the school age program. Although they may not be able to articulate it, children still need to know that there is a grown-up who is looking after their well-being and who is available for them, whenever they need guidance, support and encouragement. Adults working in a school age child care program can develop warm, supportive and caring environments for children by:

- Recognizing and being sensitive to the stress that children may be experiencing as a result of being in a school environment all day.

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- Providing activities, materials and experiences that engage and challenge children, based on the children's skills, abilities, needs and interests.
- Modeling positive, responsible behaviour at all times.
- Encouraging independence and autonomy by:
 - ensuring that materials are easily accessible by the children
 - encouraging children to take an active part in planning their activities, based on their topics or areas of interest.
- Providing opportunities to engage in activities or projects that extend over a prolonged period of time.
- Providing plenty of choice in activities and materials.
- Recognizing and respecting individual differences, e.g., knowing that some children need time to be alone after being in school all day while some children need to be active and involved with a group of children.

Basic Principles of Effective Guidance

STANDARD:

Protect and promote the psychological and physical safety, health and well-being of each child.

As stated in the *Standards for Early Childhood Programs in Centre-Based Child Care*, guiding children's behaviour refers to how the child is supported as they learn about how caring, respectful relationships with others can be developed and maintained. The behaviour of school age children, like that of their younger peers can be affected by:

- The physical environment
- The age of the child
- The quality of interactions between the child and others,
- The child's sense of self
- The child's past experiences with others, especially in terms of how the child has learned to have his or her needs met.

The main goals in guiding children's behaviour are:

1. to strengthen the child's self concept and self esteem,
2. to help children develop caring, respectful relationships with others; and
3. to strengthen the child's self control.

Good guidance techniques focus on building relationships and anticipating (and, where possible, eliminating) whatever may be causing children to behave inappropriately, rather than waiting until inappropriate behaviour is displayed and then trying to deal with it. Adults working with school-age children can help prevent inappropriate behaviours by ensuring that children feel secure, are self confident, have a stimulating, age-appropriate program, are well nourished, have consistency in their routine, and have meaningful, responsive interactions with others.

Preventing Inappropriate or Problem Behaviours

1. **Create a climate of respect.** It is important that adults working in a school age program recognize that friends and friendship are very important to school age children, and that the special friendships that are made in the school age program need to be recognized and respected. It is for this reason that children must not be made to feel that they must be “friends” with everyone in the group; however, it must be emphasized that everyone in the group, children and adults alike must be treated with respect. This climate of respect will extend to the physical environment as well – play materials, furnishings, etc. Adults in the room must model respect for themselves and each other and to the children and must insist on a consistent climate of acceptance and respect in the school age program at all times. Ways to show respect include:
 - a. **Listening to children when they are talking.**
 - b. **Using children’s names when talking with them.**
 - c. **Talking respectfully to children (ensuring that there is no patronizing, unwanted teasing, shouting across the room, etc.)**
 - d. **Encouraging co-operation and collaboration with children and other adults.**
 - e. **Allowing children to express their feelings (both positive and negative) in age-appropriate ways.**
 - f. **Using non-punitive behaviour management strategies, e.g., reinforcing positive behaviours, redirecting, and problem solving. For more information on positive behaviour management strategies, refer to *Standards for Early Childhood Programs in Centre-based Child Care*.**
 - g. **Providing age appropriate furnishings and equipment.**
2. **Supervise children appropriately.** One of the most effective means of addressing problems is making an effort to ensure that they don’t happen in the first place. Adequate and appropriate supervision is one of the ways that school age program staff can minimize conflict and misbehaviour and keep children safe. Program staff are to keep the following pointers in mind when supervising school age children.
 - a. Know where children are and what they are doing at all times.
 - b. Closely supervise any high-risk activities, e.g., woodworking.
 - c. Supervise children appropriately, according to children’s ages, abilities and needs. *Note: For more information on appropriate levels of supervision, refer to Child Care Services Regulations Policy Manual 9.1(h).*

3. **Encourage responsibility.** School-age children are ready and eager to take on responsibility for themselves and their programs. Having the opportunity to feel responsible is essential for children to develop a sense of social competence. Children in a school age program should be given responsibility for doing simple jobs and tasks on a regular basis such as preparing paint for the art area, preparing snacks, tidying the room, making play dough, taking care of plants, changing bulletin board displays, and so on.
4. **Provide a flexible yet predictable program.** Children should be actively involved in designing the school age program. This will encourage them to develop a sense of ownership and belonging, which helps to prevent inappropriate or negative behaviours and interactions. When working with the children to design the program, the school age program staff must ensure that the program is a developmentally appropriate one that provides interesting and challenging opportunities for all of the children. The schedule needs to be flexible enough to meet individual and group needs while at the same time providing a routine that is predictable enough for children to know what is expected of them and when. If the children or staff find that there are some challenges with the program then they can, together, review and revise the design accordingly, recognizing that the program design can evolve as children's experiences change and new interests and needs emerge.
5. **Use the physical space in effective ways.** Designing an appropriate physical layout means incorporating the needs of the school-age child in all areas of the room. School age children need time alone, so the space must be able to accommodate this. They need time to work in small groups, time to be active, time to rest; time to be imaginative and creative. The physical space must be able to meet all of these needs. Adults must be able to supervise the area in a non-intrusive way. Children can play a role in helping to design the space which will, once again, encourage a sense of ownership and belonging. Points to keep in mind when assessing how well the physical environment contributes to positive social behaviour include;
 - a. **Checking to ensure that play spaces are not too small or crowded.** Conflict is more likely in crowded, small play spaces.
 - b. **Ensuring that materials are easily accessed by the children.** When children can access materials without being dependent on an adult, conflicts and problems, e.g., climbing up on a shelf to get at materials, are less likely to occur.
 - c. **Ensuring that there is adequate storage for materials that are not in use.** Clutter can lead to chaos so it is important to keep in mind that when clutter is reduced, positive collaborative and constructive behaviours among the children are more likely.
 - d. **Ensuring that there is space to store ongoing projects** – Children should be allowed to revisit their works-in-progress so that they can make adjustments as new ideas come to them.

- e. **Assessing traffic flow patterns in the room.** Wide paths lead to running and possible collisions, paths that are not clear can lead to conflict when children's private spaces are interrupted or their creative play is being intruded upon due to poorly placed pathways.
 - f. **Ensuring that there are spaces appropriate for private time (1-2 children) as well as group activities.** Having smaller areas where children can get away can help to de-escalate tension and conflict. Well designed group activity areas can promote collaborative and co-operative activities such as dramatic play, group games, and musical or movement activities.
 - g. **Reducing over-stimulation.** Experience the room from a child's perspective – are the walls cluttered with too many colours and displays? Is it too noisy? Are there too many activities happening at once? Look for ways to minimize or reduce visual clutter and auditory clutter.
6. **Interact in ways that will encourage positive relationships and behaviours.** The important role of the staff in a school age program cannot be overemphasized. Adults in a school age program can help to prevent inappropriate or problem behaviours by:
- a. Encouraging children to express their own feelings and identify, or empathize, with the feelings of others.
 - b. Showing a genuine interest in each child by recognizing their strengths, talents and unique qualities.
 - c. Capitalizing on teachable moments to model appropriate social skills directly.
 - d. Encouraging cooperation and collaboration, rather than encouraging competition.

Establishing Rules

In addition to ensuring that the physical design, the program, the schedule and the interactions among and between children and adults help to promote a positive environment, other measures can be taken to encourage positive social behaviours. One of these is the establishment of rules. Rules let the children know what is expected of them and why. Rules must be fair, appropriate and agreed upon by all parties in order to be effective. Children should always play an active role in developing the rules and defining the behavioural expectations for a school age program. The following guidelines are based on the article *Building a Caring and Supportive Community: Setting the Stage for Positive Social Behaviours* by Deborah Stone-Zukowski (CCCF, 2007). These guidelines are meant to help adults and children in school age programs define rules that are fair and reasonable.

Guidelines for Establishing Rules

1. Identify a **few** necessary rules; realistic rules that are easy to follow.
2. State rules positively; clearly explaining the expected behaviour.
3. Discuss what the rules mean and what respect means.
4. Discuss the reasons for rules
5. Involve the children in the process of making rules
6. Reinforce rules consistently

It is important to remember that too many rules will create a restrictive and punitive atmosphere, even if the rules are created by the children. Rules should reinforce such basic principles as making sure that nobody gets hurt and that the physical environment, including play materials and equipment, is well maintained. (Note: with school age children, “hurt” can mean either physical or emotional) By introducing these main principles to the children prior to generating rules, and by reviewing the guidelines described above with the children, the rule-setting discussion is bound to be a lively and productive one.

Logical and Natural Consequences

When there are rules, it is important that the consequences for not following the rules are also clearly explained and understood. Logical or natural consequences are the most effective consequences as they are directly related to the misdeed and are less likely to feel arbitrary or “unfair”. They also allow the child to learn the consequences of their actions and, wherever and whenever appropriate, will provide the child with the opportunity to fix the problem that resulted from their actions. Natural consequences are consequences that flow naturally from a behaviour, for example, if materials are wasted then there won’t be enough materials to complete a project. Logical consequences are consequences that are directly related to the misbehaviour and in some cases, allow the child to make “restitution” or the ability to “make things right.” Sometimes, the logical consequence is apparent (see examples below). Other times, it may not be clear what the logical consequence should be. In cases such as these, the school age program staff may ask the children involved (both the victim and/or the offender) “What would it take to fix this situation?” and then ensure that the agreed upon actions are taken.

Examples of logical and natural consequences:

Kieran and Shayne are “play-fighting” and accidentally knock over a pitcher of water. The logical consequence is that they must mop up the mess and replace the pitcher of water.

Sue loses her patience while she is working on an art project with Emily. She tears up the paper that they are working on together. The logical consequence is that Sue has to try to repair the art project and, if that is not possible, work with Emily to try to figure out how to replace the art work. (The natural consequence that may result from this is that Emily may not want to work with Sue on another art project, unless Sue is able to make the situation better.)

Jake refuses to clean up his locker. The natural consequence occurs when he can't find his completed homework assignment and has to do it all over again.

Dealing with conflict

Despite the best efforts of program staff, there will be inevitable conflicts occurring in a school age program. These conflicts can be seen as “teachable moments” as they help children learn how to deal with conflict situations in general, giving them the tools that they will need throughout their childhood and beyond. When conflict occurs, the adult can use this opportunity to encourage the children to resolve the conflict themselves or with her help. Here are the basic steps involved in a conflict mediation process (B. Evans, 2002)

Process of Conflict Mediation

When dealing with conflict, here are the steps that an adult would follow:

1. **Approach the situation calmly**, stopping any hurtful actions.
2. **Acknowledge children’s feelings** – making simple statements that show your concern, e.g. “Evan and Dawson – you both sound very frustrated.”
3. **Gather information** - asking children what they think has happened or what they want to have happen.
4. **Restate the problem** – repeating the information that children have shared in a neutral, calm way, e.g., “Looks like you have a disagreement about how to construct the kite.”
5. **Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together** – asking a question like “What can we do to solve this problem?” and, once the solution is decided upon, checking with each child by asking “So the solution is...Is that OK with you?”
6. **Be prepared to give follow-up support** – first by encouraging children, e.g., “You solved the problem!” and then observing (unobtrusively) to ensure that the situation is truly resolved.

When Behaviour Escalates

When children do exhibit negative, hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, it is the adult's responsibility to deal with this behaviour in an appropriate, respectful manner. The emphasis should be on teaching the child what to do next time rather than on punishing him or her for their actions. There are very specific steps that can be taken to deal with misbehaviour. These include;

- Stop the misbehaviour immediately in a calm but firm manner.
- If necessary, move with the child to an area where he or she can regain control and become calm (note: this is not “time out” – this is a “time away” from the situation accompanied by an adult.)
- Talk with the child about their behaviour:
 - Identify the behaviour (*e.g., “I want to talk with you about pushing Chris and Liam”*)
 - Identify the effect that the behaviour has on others (*e.g., “Chris and Liam both got hurt when they fell after you pushed them.”*)
- Help put feelings into words. (*e.g. “I know that you were very angry with Chris and Liam. You felt like it wasn't fair that they weren't giving you a turn with the hose.”*)
- Problem solve and help the child identify alternative acceptable behaviours that will allow the child's needs to be met. (*e.g., If you were angry at Chris and Liam, then you can tell them that.*)
- Develop more effective strategies for next time. (*e.g., If you think you are too angry to talk with them then you can walk away until you calm down. If you need help talking with them then you can come and get me and we can do it together.*)

When Children are Bullied

Bullying occurs whenever an individual uses power and aggression with the specific intent of hurting another person over and over again. Bullying behaviours such as teasing, hitting and isolation from the group are known to happen in school age child care programs. It is the role of the adults in the program to create an environment where children feel safe. They should be able to quickly identify bullying and respond appropriately so that the behaviour is discontinued. For more information on bullying, see **Appendix 1**.

When More Help is Needed

Regional Child Care Services staff are available to provide consultation to operators of school age programs if more help is needed regarding general behaviour management issues in the program. The duration and intensity of the consultative process will vary, depending on circumstances and need, but the consultation may include basic advice

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regarding overall behaviour management. If a program is having difficulty dealing with the specific behavioural issues of a particular child, then it is necessary to have a discussion with the parents about possible next steps. The guiding principle that both program staff and parents must always take into account is the safety of all of the children in the program. For more information on behaviour management issues, refer to the *Standards for Inclusion in Child Care* Manual which can be obtained by contacting the Regional Child Care Services staff.

WORKING WITH FAMILIES, THE CHILD CARE TEAM AND THE COMMUNITY

The school age child's world is much bigger than that of most preschoolers and this is reflected in school age programs. School age children are becoming more involved in their communities; they are making new friends in school and are being introduced to the families of their friends as well. In addition to new friendships, school age children are becoming involved in extra curricular activities such as music, arts programs, recreational programs, youth organizations, etc. In order to help children become the best they can be, all those concerned for their health and well-being need to work in partnership.

STANDARD:

Establish and maintain an open, cooperative relationship with each child's family.

Because there are many models of school age child care programs – school based; family child care; centre-based; multi-age, and community based programs, there are just as many challenges in how the adults working in these programs can connect with parents and families. In some cases, children arrive at the program by either a school bus, taxi or by transportation provided by the program, and therefore, staff are not able to connect with parents as children are being dropped off. During departure times, parents are often rushed, and are not always able to take the time to converse with the program staff regarding the child's day. It is for these reasons that school age program staff need to make an extra effort to connect with the children's families in inventive and effective ways.

Communicating with Parents

Staff must, at all times, adhere to a policy of confidentiality when dealing with parents and children, meaning that confidential information about parents, families or children in the program is to be kept confidential. It is recommended that staff of school age child care programs keep the following points in mind when communicating with parents:

- Families are recognized, acknowledged and respected as being the primary influence in their children's lives.
- Every parent should be spoken to or acknowledged during arrival and departure time, despite the fact that everyone may be in a hurry. Even if it is just some eye contact and a simple greeting, it is essential that contact be made.

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- Every effort should be made to communicate with family members in their own language. Learning and using only a few words of the family's language demonstrates respect.
- How the program staff conduct themselves during interactions with parents will set the tone for the relationship, therefore, interactions with parents are to be friendly and professional in nature.
- Program staff demonstrate acceptance and respect for each family's composition, ethnicity, and culture.
- Daily, open communication should be encouraged and welcomed. Parent phone calls, emails and, when possible, visits, are all effective in building the relationship between the program and the child's family. Provision must be made for two-way communication, meaning that parents can leave messages for staff (e.g., email, voice mail) and staff can contact parents to inform them of any events, issues, or information about the program or their child.
- Newsletters can be produced regularly (with help from the children) and sent home so that parents can be kept up to date on what is happening in the school age program.
- Documentation of children's learning experiences in the form of bulletin board displays, photo albums, videos, display boards, etc., help to keep parents informed. Documentation can be done by the program staff and by the children.
- Providing a parent handbook to every parent upon registration helps to keep parents informed about the program, policies and procedures. This handbook can be reviewed at the parent orientation session.
- A Parent information board should be kept up to date so that parents are motivated to check to see what is new with the program. A section of the bulletin board can also be used by parents, to encourage communication among parents, e.g., information about clothing or sports equipment exchanges, etc.
- Parents can be given the option to provide their email addresses so that the school age program staff can develop an email mailing list that can be used to send out important information about the program, e.g., upcoming events, reminders, notices, etc.
- Parent feedback about the program can be provided through parent surveys or parent focus groups. Gathering feedback from parents about their child care needs for their school age children can be of great value when making changes to the school age program.

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- Regularly scheduled parent conferences provide parents and program staff with the opportunity to discuss their child’s progress as well as any concerns that the parents or staff may have.
- Regularly scheduled social events, e.g., potluck suppers, guest speakers, family picnics, are a very effective way to involve parents in the program.
- Including a parent representative or several parent representatives on the program’s board of directors allows parents to be active in a decision making capacity and can also strengthen parental support for the program staff at a board level.
- Provide parents with the opportunity to share their talents, skills or hobbies with the children in the program, e.g., playing a musical instrument, cooking a special dish, talking on an amateur “ham” radio and using Morse code, using a telescope, sharing a special collection.
- An **orientation session** should be provided for parents upon registering for the program. The orientation session provides practical information to parents about fees, policies, hours of operation and general program philosophy. In addition to providing this information, an orientation session allows parents to:
 - Become familiar with the program staff.
 - Review the parent handbook.
 - Understand how the program will be delivered.
 - Meet some of the other parents.
 - Understand the reasons for various policies and procedures.
 - Ask questions of and discuss concerns with the program staff

STANDARD:

Establish and maintain supportive, collaborative relationships with others working in the child care setting.

The Child Care Team

It is essential that school age program staff work as a team. Working as a team means that each member of the team feels supported and valued and that each member has a clear understanding of their own role and their responsibilities. According to the Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners, (Doherty, Canadian Child Care Federation, 2003), child care practitioners need to have the following skills and abilities in order to establish and maintain supportive, collaborative relationships in a child care setting:

- The ability to define clearly their own role and responsibilities and those of others working in the setting;

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- The ability to communicate information to others clearly and concisely;
- The ability to share relevant information about children and families with colleagues working in the child care setting in a way that respects the child's and family's dignity and privacy;
- The ability to work as part of a team and share responsibility with others for program planning, implementation and assessment; and
- The ability to discuss issues arising from diverse perspectives and experiences or differences of opinion in an open, frank and respectful manner.

The ability to be a good team player, however, is more than an individual's ability to demonstrate the skills described above. Individuals must also be supported by the administration of a program in order to be able to function as a fully participating member of a team.

A school age child care program team can be supported by:

- Providing regular program planning time.
- Conducting regularly scheduled staff meetings.
- Clearly communicating the roles, responsibilities and expectations of each member of the team. This should be done during staff orientation and under any circumstances where roles and responsibilities may change.
- Providing on-going staff development opportunities.
- Conducting annual staff evaluations with feedback on each team member's performance being provided on a regular basis.

School age program staff need to have specific training and experience which can be supported through the regular provision of professional development opportunities. In addition to their specific training and experience, adults working in a school age child care program also need to possess certain characteristics and skills that help them to understand the unique developmental needs of middle childhood. Once a good fit has been found between staff and children, a plan to retain the staff should be in place. Positive feedback and ongoing, genuine encouragement combined with sound human resource policies that demonstrate good employment practices can all contribute to a strong staff team.

Working in a Shared Space

School age programs are sometimes co-located in a school or in a shared space with another community organization. In situations such as these, it is very important that an open, respectful, communicative and collaborative relationship be developed between the school age child care program staff and representatives of the organization with whom the space is shared. Some suggestions for building this relationship include:

- Arrange a meeting between the school age program staff and the key administrative people representing the shared space. For a school, this may mean the principal. For a community group, it may be the chairperson of the board of directors and the executive director.

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- Discuss and define what the expectations are for each group. Matters that will need to be clarified during this meeting include:
 - Cleaning and maintenance (indoors and outdoors)
 - Security issues
 - Safety issues
 - Storage of materials, files, equipment, etc., including secure storage for confidential files.
 - Shared use of equipment, furniture and materials, e.g., audio visual equipment, computers, sound systems (what's off limits and what can be shared)
 - Room arrangement (e.g., what can be moved and what can't be moved)
 - What areas of the building can be accessed and what is off limits
 - Any legal issues, e.g. insurance, liability.
 - Transportation issues
 - Arranging care for full day sessions (e.g., when school is closed for professional development days)
 - Possibilities for collaboration and working together (e.g. community projects, shared interests, special events).
- Build an on-going relationship with a representative of the co-located group, preferably somebody that can be reached on a fairly regular basis. This may be a principal, a member of the school administrative support staff or a maintenance person. Keep this person informed of any day to day issues that may arise that they may need to know about, e.g., changes in your schedule due to upcoming field trips or invited guest speakers.
- Designate one (or two) school age program staff to be the main contact for communication between the program and the co-located group.
- Ask to be included on the co-located group's mailing list so that the school age program can receive newsletters, notices, etc. This will ensure that the school age program staff are aware of any special events, etc., that may have an impact on the use of the shared space. As well, there may be opportunities for the school age program to contribute to the newsletter – it doesn't hurt to ask.
- Regularly check the co-located group's website. This is another way to stay informed of any issue that may affect the regular programming of the school age child care program. Also, there may be a possibility for the school age program to have a link on this website and, as mentioned above, there is no harm in asking.
- If the co-located group has a board of directors or a parent council, request that the school age program have a seat on this board, or, conversely, if the school age program has a board of directors, invite a representative from the co-located group to sit on the board. This is another effective way to build a strong system of communication between the two co-located groups.
- Invite a representative of the administration of the co-located group to a staff meeting (perhaps they could have a standing invitation and, therefore, can attend when it is necessary, appropriate or convenient to do so)
- Request the opportunity for a representative of the school age program to attend a staff meeting of the co-located group.

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- Provide a copy of this document (*Program Standards Manual for School Age Child Care*) to the co-located group so that they can have a better understanding of the standards in place for school age child care programs.
- It is important as well to build a positive relationship with the staff with whom the specific space is being shared. For example, if sharing space in a school with a Kindergarten teacher or an art teacher, the program staff should make every effort to work in collaboration with that particular individual.

Collaborating with Community Service Providers

STANDARD:

Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with other community service providers working with the child.

Like any other child care setting, a school age program will include children who require the service of other professionals who may work directly or indirectly with a child or children enrolled at the centre, providing them with services that help to meet a particular need. School age child care program staff are important members of any team of service providers working with a particular child and must be able to do their part in establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships among the team of professionals. According to *Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners* (Doherty, Canadian Child Care Federation, 2003), there are certain skills and abilities that are essential when doing this. These include:

- the ability to explore respective roles and responsibilities with other service providers involved with the child while adhering to the parameters of the family's informed consent;
- the ability to seek information from other service providers, including classroom teachers, that might help meet the child's needs within the program while adhering to the parameters of the family's informed consent;
- the ability to share relevant information about a child with other service providers that might assist them in working with the child while adhering to the parameters of the family's informed consent and in keeping with the law or with court requirements;
- the ability to function with other community service providers as part of a service-provision team, i.e., an ISSP team; and
- the ability to provide accurate information about the school age child care program to other community service providers.

For more information on how to include children with special needs into a school age child care program, refer to the *Standards for Inclusion in Child Care* manual available at www.gov.nl.ca/health/childcare or from your regional child care staff.

Collaborating with the Community

There are many ways to incorporate and integrate the school age program into the community. These include:

- Inviting members of the community into the program to share their talents, skills, knowledge and areas of expertise with the children.
- Becoming familiar with what community resources are available to the children and their families and provide parents with this information.
- Making use of nearby community facilities such as libraries, parks and community centres.
- Providing opportunities for local community groups or businesses to assist the program, either through donation of supplies (e.g. art supplies, carpet or textile samples, etc.) or donation of volunteer time.
- Encouraging the children in the school-age program to get involved in community service projects, e.g., local clean up events, fund raising activities (be sure to consult with parents prior to involving children in community service projects.)

SECTION III: PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

In order to provide the best possible environment for children in their middle childhood years, it is important to understand where the children are developmentally. For information on the development of school age children, refer to **Appendix 2**.

OBSERVATION

STANDARD:

Use observations to assess children's skills, abilities, interests and needs.

Observation is the key to understanding and respecting behaviours exhibited by school age children and is also an instrumental tool in identifying areas of interest to assist in program planning. It is through observations that adults working in a school age program learn about each child's abilities, skills, interests and needs and are able, then, to set meaningful goals and create a curriculum that supports the learning of all of the children in the program. The following techniques (Bisback and Kopf-Johnson, 2007) can be used to gather information for planning purposes in a school age child care program:

- 1. Informal observations** or note taking can be used to identify some of the interests and skills of children. This information is necessary when planning a child-centred curriculum.
- 2. Anecdotes or anecdotal records** include more information than informal observations and can be used when trying to analyze the information later.
- 3. Checklists** are useful in helping the adult to determine what type of learning to support, such as a child having difficulty with fine motor skills, but has mastered gross motor skills.
- 4. Event sampling** can have a number of uses, varying from determining how the various areas of the room are being utilized to how many times an event occurs per hour.
- 5. Discussions** and meetings with parents and children enable adults to obtain information on the children to provide appropriate and interesting activities on an ongoing basis.
- 6. Technology** such as photos and video cameras are ways to observe and document what children are doing.

For more information on specific observation techniques, refer to *Standards for Early Childhood Programs in Centre-Based Child Care*.

Interpreting Observations

Once observational data is collected and recorded it needs to be used. In order to do this it must be interpreted. The possible meaning and reasons behind the observed behaviours needs to be identified. This interpretation can be difficult because it is often influenced by the opinions and preconceived notions of the evaluator. Therefore, the observer must always try to remain as objective as possible when interpreting observations. The following pointers should be kept in mind whenever observations are being interpreted:

- Keep observations and conclusions/interpretation separate – both on paper and in your mind.
- Always support conclusions with examples.
- Try to find other sources of support for the conclusions being drawn. Other sources can include observation by others or theories of child development.
- Avoid assumptions. For example, because Adrienne is quiet and plays well by herself, it might be assumed that she has settled well into the program, however, it is important to remember that some children who are not adjusting to a new setting may withdraw rather than act out.
- When writing the interpretation of a child’s behaviour, do not state the interpretation as fact. Use qualifying language such as “It appears...” or “It seems....”

Information that is gained from observations can be used for:

- Determining each child’s interests, abilities, and needs and then planning a program that responds to each of these.
- Determining what changes need to be made to activities or the physical environment.
- Identifying concerns about individual children or the group.
- Determining how to handle problems that arise.
- Providing information to staff and parents about children’s development

Documenting what has been observed

When observations are done for the purpose of capturing examples of children’s learning in action or to determine the needs and interests of the children, documenting these observations can help to make the children’s learning visible and can help to put their questions, interests and observations into context. Documenting children’s learning experiences is useful for children, parents and program staff. Program staff can use the

documented information to develop further plans to extend children's learning experiences. Children can use documentation to revisit past experiences and to gain inspiration for new explorations. They also see the value that is placed on their discoveries, which encourages them to explore even more. Parents use documentation to gain insight into their child's interests and skills and to see the value in the everyday play experiences happening in the program.

Documentation can be done using a variety of methods. Some of these methods include:

- **Documentation Display Panels** – panels can be constructed of large pieces of Bristol board or sturdier tri-fold display boards. They generally consist of a title, a description of the learning or event observed, photos of the child(ren) in action, and samples of the children's work (sketches, etc.)
- **Portfolios** – are a collection of an individual child's work which has been collected over time (at least during three periods in a year). Portfolios can be easily shared with parents and can help parents to see the progress made by the child over time. Work samples contained within the portfolio should be dated and should include any comments by either the adult or the child that helps to explain the work/activity.
- **Learning Stories** – learning stories describe examples of the learning or discovery of an individual child or a group of children. A learning story can be contained within a single page of description (written by adult and supplemented with a photo and/or a sample of the child (ren)'s work) or it can be written in a book-like format. It would generally focus on a single event. Adults and children can collaborate to write learning stories together. Once school age children get experienced with this form of documentation, they can begin to write their own learning stories.
- **Bulletin Board Displays** – are an effective way to make children's play and work visible to parents, staff and the children themselves. Bulletin boards displays should be designed in such a way that the children's work is the focus. They should contain a single, descriptive title, a brief description of the children's work and samples of the children's work (art, stories, photos, etc.).
- **Photo Albums** – can be used to store photos that have been used in previous documentation displays or can store new photos. Photo albums should be accessible to children and adults. By perusing the photo albums, children can visit and revisit the experiences that they've had which may lead to a renewed interest in past activities and previous discoveries.

**Helpful Hints
For
Creating a Documentation Display of Children’s Learning Experiences**

1. Remember to document the “every day” experiences of children. Documentation should not be reserved for only special events such as field trips, parties or guest speakers.
2. Involve the children in all aspects of the documentation whenever possible or appropriate. Taking the photos, making sketches, writing the descriptions and organizing the documentation can all be done by the children in collaboration with an adult.
3. When preparing a documentation display, remember that the focus of the display is the experience of the child(ren). For this reason, extra adornments such as additional graphics, fancy borders, wild colours, etc. should be kept to a minimum. These extras take the focus away from the experience being described and instead put the focus on the ‘designer’ of the documentation.
4. The documentation display should have a clear, straightforward title, e.g., “Experiences with Clay”, or “Mapmaking using a GPS” or “Creating a Tunnel of Blocks” which tells the viewer exactly what the experience is that is being documented.
5. Documentation displays may stay up for a period of time so that parents, staff, and children can have a good look at it. Some documentation might stay up for a period of months, depending on the interest; however, there should always be some examples of current documentation on display as well.

RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS OR CHALLENGES

STANDARD:

Signs and symptoms of emotional or developmental delays or challenges are recognized and appropriate action is taken.

School age child care program staff have to be aware of the many challenging needs that may exist among the children in their care. In early childhood programs (child care centres, family child care homes), early childhood educators, through their observations and interactions, are often the first professionals to notice when a child is not within the range of what is considered to be typical for the child's developmental stage. Although school-age program staff may not be the first to notice an area of concern, they still need to be able to identify possible delays or challenges because there is the possibility that some delays may not be detected until the child is of school-age and enrolled in the school age child care program.

According to the *Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners*, (2003), program staff must be able to:

- Observe children's behaviours and abilities and assess whether they are within the range of what is considered to be typical for the child's developmental stage;
- Identify signs of possible developmental delay in the physical, social, emotional, communication or cognitive domains;
- Clearly and concisely describe indications and examples of possible delays;
- Seek out and obtain informed opinions from other professionals or sources in a way that respects privacy of the child and family; and
- Bring any concerns about a possible delay or problem to the attention of the child's family in a way that seeks the family's opinion and indicates the possible need for further investigation but does not unduly alarm the family.

If, after observing a child, the adult suspects that the child is having difficulty with any particular area of development, he or she should talk with the operator of the school age child care program regarding the procedure to be followed. For more information on this and for ideas on how to support inclusion in the school age program setting, see *Standards for Inclusion in Child Care* manual. This manual can be obtained online at www.gov.nl.ca/health/childcare or by contacting the Regional Child Care Services staff. For more information on how to support children's growth and well being, see **Appendix 3**.

SUPPORTING DIVERSITY IN A SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

Children in a school age child care program, like in any other type of child care setting, will represent a diverse array of cultural and social backgrounds. Recognizing and supporting the richness of diversity in a school age program is critical for each child's sense of identity and belonging. This support will help to instill in the children a sense of pride in their own culture and background as well as promoting a climate of respect and understanding of the ethnicity, heritage and background of others in the group. Some practices that support diversity in a school age child care program include:

- Ensuring that children see themselves, their family structure, their language and their cultures reflected throughout the program in books, posters, artwork, dolls, dramatic play props, foods, photographs and environmental print.
- If the children in the school age program are predominantly of one particular cultural background, remembering that it is still important that the program materials and experiences are reflective of a variety of cultures and ethnicities, while at the same time respecting and reflecting the culture of the children in the program.
- Creating an atmosphere that enjoys and appreciates differences.
- Responding to each child in the program with respect, acceptance, and comfort, regardless of gender, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, ability, religion, or family background.
- Creating an atmosphere that does not tolerate or accept harassment or intolerance of any kind.
- Challenging stereotypes – either those expressed by the children, any adults in the program or on any media (books, magazine articles, songs, etc.) and promoting discussion among the children about these stereotypes.
- Encouraging innovation and divergent, creative thinking, thereby showing children that there are a variety of ways to address challenges or problems.
- Exposing children to a variety of experiences on a regular basis. This can include:
 - Incorporating different ethnic foods into meals and snacks on a regular basis.
 - Inviting community members in as guest speakers.
 - Encouraging parents to visit the centre and ask them to show children how to prepare a food unique to their lives or read a book that provides information about their particular heritage or demonstrate a cultural craft. Remember to include opportunities to promote the rich heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador when planning these parent visits.
- Using the internet or library to research unfamiliar cultures. Some school age programs may want to start an email “pen pal” project with a group of similarly aged children in another country.

PLANNING

The Planning Process

STANDARD:

Plan and provide daily experiences that support and promote each child's physical, emotional, social, communication, cognitive, ethical and creative development.

Even though children in school age child care programs come from a variety of backgrounds and have a wide range of interests, skills and abilities, they also have a lot in common. One of the main things shared by all children in a school age program is that they have all just spent a major portion of their day in school. It is essential that the staff of the program keep this as one of their uppermost considerations when planning a program that meets the needs of school age children. The daily schedule, the planned activities, the physical arrangement and the selection of play materials must all reflect the particular needs of the school age child, especially considering the number of hours that the children spend in the program and the experiences that the child has had prior to entering the program each day.

The Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners (2003) provides an outline of the skills and abilities that are required in order to develop and maintain an environment that supports and promotes the development of all children. These include:

- The ability to plan and provide a developmentally appropriate mix of child-initiated and adult-initiated play-based experiences;
- The ability to plan and provide active and quiet experiences, solitary and group experiences and indoor and outdoor experiences;
- The ability to promote active participation of all children by ensuring that materials and equipment are accessible to each child and by providing direct and indirect assistance in a variety of verbal and non-verbal ways;
- The ability to interpret and respond appropriately to group dynamics;
- The ability to recognize and use everyday routines and activities as learning opportunities;
- The ability to provide each child with some individual attention each day;
- The ability to arrange movement from one experience to another during the day so that transitions occur smoothly;

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- The ability to create an environment that reflects and affirms cultural, linguistic and religious diversity with the surrounding community;
- The ability to obtain and incorporate children's ideas into program planning in a way that is appropriate to their developmental level; and
- The ability to identify, access and use family and community resources to broaden children's experiences.

Planning a school age program should be a collaborative process. School age program staff will develop the major program goals based on their knowledge of child development, but the activities, materials, and physical set up are chosen and designed in collaboration with the children, using observation, conversation and exploration as the basis of all program decision making.

Steps to follow when planning using a collaborative approach

Getting Started

1. Prepare an engaging learning environment. Include novel, interesting materials that provoke curiosity and exploration among the children.
2. Observe the children while they play and interact in the environment. Listen to what they are talking about and asking about. Notice how they are using the materials. Information gained from these observations will help to determine the needs, interests, talents and skills of the children in each particular group.
3. Ask the children for ideas on what they would like to see happening in the program.
4. Identify topics of interest based on observations and conversations.
5. Brainstorm with the children for ideas on how to explore the topic or topics. Asking the children questions such as “What do you already know about... (topic)?” and then “What do you want to know about... (topic)?” will help the program staff to determine suitable activities to plan and materials to present to the children.
6. Gather the materials, equipment and resources needed to support the learning experiences (both adult and child initiated experiences).
7. Document and post the plans using either a curriculum web or planning sheets or both. Add to the plans as ideas emerge from the children, the adults and the environment.

In Progress

8. Act as a facilitator and collaborator with the children – co-exploring and co-learning about various topics of interest.
9. Observe and evaluate what is happening as the children interact with the materials and the environment.
10. Use the information gained from observations and conversations to extend the current learning experiences. Extending the learning can happen when the adults add to the play materials, ask thought-provoking questions or make comments to the children about what he or she is observing while the children are at play.
11. Continue to add to the written plans (curriculum web or daily planning sheets) as ideas emerge from the children, the adults and the environment.
12. Document children’s learning using photographs, children’s sketches and artwork and written descriptions of the learning. Display documentation where it can be seen by children, their parents and the program staff.

Concluding the Experience

13. Reflect with the children on what they did while they were exploring a particular topic. Asking the children “What have you learned about(topic) ?” is an effective way to encourage the children to reflect on their past activities related to a certain topic.
14. Continue to document the children’s learning. Documentation can be used as an effective way of bringing a topic to a close. Documenting the learning by displaying children’s written stories, their sketches, photographs of them in action, and photos of the work they’ve created helps to make their learning visible to the children, their parents and the program staff.
15. Display documentation in places where it can be seen by both children and adults for example, bulletin boards and documentation panels. Documentation can also be displayed in photo albums or scrapbooks or home-made books that are accessible to children and parents.
16. (Optional) Arrange a culminating activity where the children can present what they have learned to the whole group or to a wider audience of parents, grandparents and invited guests (such as school teachers or principals). A culminating activity might be a dramatic play or a presentation of information. It could be held in the evening in conjunction with a pot luck social event for parents and families.

Emergent Curriculum and the Project Approach

Emergent Curriculum and the Project Approach are two examples of child-centred practice that promote an active learning environment for school age children. The Project Approach, first described by Lilian Katz and Sylvia Chard in the book *“Engaging Children’s Minds: The Project Approach”* refers to a set of strategies which enables adults to guide children through in-depth studies of real world topics. In this approach, the adult becomes a co-learner and is as engaged in the topic as the children. The projects can be based on ideas that spring from the children or may be introduced by the adult and then carried further as the children become more and more involved. For more information on the Project Approach, visit www.projectapproach.org

Emergent Curriculum is also based on children’s interests and uses project work as well. With emergent curriculum, plans are based on the real life experiences and interests that emerge from both children and adults in the program. Plans evolve as the children’s interests evolve and adults cast themselves in the role of facilitator or guide rather than teacher. There are numerous texts, books, articles and other resources written about emergent curriculum. For more information on emergent curriculum look for articles or books written by Carol Anne Wien, Susan Stacey, Margie Carter and Deb Curtis, Elizabeth Jones and John Nimmo.

Both Emergent Curriculum and the Project Approach are based on the concept that children create their own knowledge and understanding of the world and must be actively engaged in their learning to do so. By developing activities and program plans based on children’s experiences, incorporating knowledge of child development, providing stimulating play materials and supporting children’s choices, school age program staff can develop a quality school age program that is exciting and engaging for both children and adults.

Incorporating ‘Clubs’ into the School Age Program

Clubs are “regularly scheduled program offerings that bring children together to explore a specific topic during a set period of time.” (K. Martinez; S. Edwards (2006) . They are generally led by staff members although they could be led by a volunteer from the community or a parent volunteer. This can be an excellent way to involve parents in the program by providing them with the opportunity to share a particular skill or interest with the children. Clubs provide another way for school age children to learn about new topics in an interesting and in-depth way. Club topics would be based on the interests of children and usually involve the completion of a project relating to the topic. Some examples of school age clubs could be a Cooking Club, a Photography Club, a Rock and Mineral Collectors Club, a Knitters Club, a Jewelry Making Club, a Gardening Club and so on. The topics are limited only by the interests and the imaginations of the children and the program staff. Some points to keep in mind when starting a club in a school age program include (Martinez and Edwards, 2006):

- **Deciding the duration of the club** - the club may last for just a month or it may be on-going throughout the year. When determining the duration of a club, some of the factors to consider include
 - The age of the participants
 - The topic (some topics require a longer period of time than others)
 - The school age program schedule
 - The number of times during the week that the club will meet, and how long each individual session will be (most common club schedules are twice-a-week meetings with each session lasting 45minutes to an hour)
- **Membership in the club** - who belongs to the club will, to a certain extent, depend on the topic. Some programs may design clubs for older or younger children, some will allow for a more mixed-age grouping. Children in the school age program should be able to pick which club they would like to belong to, however, staff members may want to encourage children to join new clubs that the children may not have originally chosen themselves, just to broaden their interests and expose them to new ideas and activities.
- **Choosing topics for the club.** Often, children’s ideas will be the genesis for the clubs, but school age programs should also look to their staff and to the immediate community for ideas as well. Staff members might have particular hobbies, skills or interests that they can share with the children. The community may also have specific features or resources that lend themselves to a particular topic.

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- **Club activities** – staff would play an integral role in preparing and implementing club activities. The club should have a particular focus, e.g., learning to knit, and a desired outcome, a knitwear fashion show or sale, but it should also include a variety of other activities, e.g., a field trip to a craft shop, a lesson in dying wool, developing knitting patterns, knitting for a cause such as donating mittens to a community services group and so on. A club planning web can be used (similar to a curriculum web) where a brainstorm of activity ideas can be documented.

(Note; for specific requirements pertaining to volunteers, refer to the Child Care Services Act and Regulations and accompanying policies or contact Regional Child Care Services staff.)

Program Planning for a Mixed age Grouping

Including school age children in a mixed age grouping presents program staff with challenges as well as opportunities. In order to overcome the challenges and realize the opportunities, school age program staff must consider the needs of individual children as well as the needs of the group.

Opportunities include:

- Providing children with the chance to benefit from being in a group that is more reflective of a family grouping than a classroom. Groupings of this kind encourage natural and positive interactions between younger and older children in an atmosphere of mutual respect and belonging.
- Providing children with the opportunity to observe and imitate a wide range of behaviours and competencies.
- Encouraging a higher level of tolerance of both adults and children in terms of acceptable behaviours and performance levels.

Challenges include:

- Avoiding a ‘one size fits all’ approach to rule setting and guiding children’s behaviour. It is important to acknowledge that older school aged children should have greater responsibilities in the group while at the same time recognizing that they are also entitled to a certain amount of freedom that the younger children may not be ready for.
- Avoiding a “one size fits all” approach to program planning. The challenge is to design a program that considers the needs of all of the children, recognizing their unique skills, abilities, strengths, needs and developmental levels.
- Resisting the temptation to over-rely on the older children to help with the younger children. When older children volunteer to get involved with the younger ones then this initiative can be welcomed and acknowledged, however, older children should not be put in to the position where this help is expected. Adults should encourage an atmosphere of mutual respect, caring and helpfulness, where everyone is expected to pitch in to help others and to keep each other safe. This is preferable to an atmosphere where the older children feel unjustly burdened with responsibility for the younger children in the group and the younger children are made to feel less competent than the “big kids.”
- Ensuring that older children refrain from “bossing” younger children and help them to find the balance between reminding younger children of the rules and telling them what to do.

Suggestions for Mixed Age Programming:

- Offer a range of choices of activities that are related to the needs and interests of individual children.

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- Plan and implement projects where **everyone** can contribute, including younger and older children, e.g., planting a garden, investigating topics of interest of the whole group, engaging in group art activities.
- Use open-ended materials, specifically, materials that can be used in a variety of ways, depending on the level of interest and development of a child. Examples of open-ended materials include:
 - Wooden unit blocks
 - Art materials
 - Materials that encourage movement, e.g., balls, scarves, music
 - Dramatic play props
 - Sensory materials (sand and water)
 - Materials that can be sculpted, e.g., playdough, plasticine, clay
- Provide time and space where older children can be away from the younger ones so that they can become involved in their own age-appropriate activities.
- Provide materials that can only be used by the school age children, e.g., special paints or art materials, special science materials. Set up a time and space where these materials can be used without interruption from the younger children.
- Limit the number of whole group activities. Instead, place a stronger emphasis on individual activities and small group work.
- Consider the ages of children when arranging the room. Safety is the first concern, however, designing age appropriate spaces where children can come together in similar age groupings while also spending time with the mixed age group is a major consideration in a mixed age grouping as well.
- Design a room that reflects the children in it. School age children do not feel comfortable in a room that was obviously designed for younger children and vice versa. Children should feel a sense of ownership and belonging in their room and must, therefore, play a role in designing the physical space. The artwork, work samples and documentation must be representative of all of the children's work and activities. The furniture, equipment and play materials must be suitable for the children in the room and the overall aesthetic of the room must be one that respects and reflects the children who use it.

Schedules, Routines and Transitions

Schedules

When a school age child care program is a part day program and children are coming from a day at school, the schedule is very basic and consists of the following:

- Arrival
- Snack
- Free choice/play time (indoor and outdoor)
- Departure

This type of schedule creates a consistent flow to the program. Children know what to expect each day and this increases their level of comfort with the program. This level of comfort and predictability is also the overall objective for full day programs for school-

age children for those times when the children spend their full day at the centre, e.g., on holidays, professional development days and during school breaks.

When designing schedules for school age programs, keep the following considerations in mind:

- Keep the daily program flexible, being receptive to the needs of the children on any particular day.
- Find a balance between flexibility and predictability. Children need to have a certain predictability to their day, for example, knowing that they will be served snack at or around a certain time and that there will be ample time to play with friends.
- Involve children in the routines that occur throughout the program, e.g., planning and preparing snacks and meals (*Note: Regardless of whether the children are involved in the menu planning, planning menus would be done well in advance*), setting up the space, clean up, etc.
- Provide a balance of active and quiet activities, ensuring that all children who want it get some time to be alone or play quietly with one or two friends.
- Provide a time to read or do homework for those children who wish to do so. Homework time should not be a required time in a program but time and space should be offered to those children who want to complete homework assignments before they go home.
- Ensure that the schedule provides enough time for children to get involved in complex activities like long term projects.

For more information on schedules, see **Appendix 4: Sample Schedules for a Full Day School Age Program**

Routines

Arrival – arrival is a time when program staff can check in with the children to get a sense of how their day has been. It is during this time that the adult determines how each child is feeling after a day at school (in the case of a part day program) and can then respond to the children’s needs in an appropriate manner.

Snack time – Snack time provides program staff with the chance to promote nutritious food and discuss health, personal hygiene and nutritional concepts with the children. School age children can play a major role in the planning, preparation and serving of snack and can use this time to prepare and experiment with foods that they have never tried before. Snack also provides staff and children with a social time when they can form strong relationships while conversing at the table. Often the conversation at snack can become very informative and can lead to ideas for play and project experiences.

Free flow snack is ideally suited for school age children. Free-flow snack means that not all children in the homeroom eat snack at the same time. Children are not always ready to eat at the same time, for various reasons, and in situations where it can be accommodated, a free flow snack time can be an appropriate way to meet the nutritional needs of the children without interrupting their play. A free flow snack allows the

children to determine when they will eat, within a certain time frame. In this arrangement, snack is set up at one table by the adult for a limited period of time, e.g., 45 minutes, with seating for a few children at a time (6-8 children). This allows for a longer period of uninterrupted free choice play time. Children go to the snack table when they are ready and when a space is available. Snack time would continue until all children who want snack have eaten. As snack time draws to a close, children who have not yet eaten will be reminded that there are only a few minutes left to have snack. One adult in the room would have the responsibility for the snack table so that the area is always supervised and an adult is always involved with the children who are having snack. **As with any type of snack or meal time situation, the children would be seated while eating and would follow the required health and safety procedures.** Refer to *Standards and Guidelines for Health in Child Care Settings* for more information on personal hygiene including toileting and hand washing as it relates to meal times.

Departure – Departure time provides program staff with the opportunity to chat with parents or other family members. It is at this time when staff can share information with the parents on the child’s day and parents can share any relevant information with the program staff. It is important to remember that this is often a very hurried time of day for parents and for staff so if there are any issues of concern to be discussed it is better to set up a mutually convenient time to discuss them.

Small group activities are planned and can also occur spontaneously. Small group activities can occur during free play time and can be considered one of the choices available to the children during this time or they can occur as part of the program’s regular schedule. The duration of a small group time varies, depending on the topic and the age of the children involved. For younger school – aged children, small group activities may last about 15-20 minutes. This time might extend to 25-30 minutes for older school age activities. Small group activities are usually conducted with a group of 6-8 children who have a particular interest in the topic being explored and can be repeated if more children want to participate. Plans for small group activities can be based on a particular project or interest that the children have currently or they may be based on a relevant skill or topic decided upon by the adult, and based on her observations of the children. When planning a small group activity on a certain topic, the program staff should ask the following questions of the children:

1. **“What do you already know about this topic?”**
2. **“What do you want to know about this topic?”**

The answers to these two questions will help the adult plan an activity which builds on what children already know or think about a certain topic and that can lead them to discover new ideas, information and hypotheses about whatever topic is being explored. Keeping a written record of the children’s responses will help the adult keep track of what the children said and can also be used as a way to document the learning experiences. **When planning and participating in small group activities, the adult should view him or herself as a “co-learner” and not a “teacher”.** An attitude of co-learning will create an atmosphere of curiosity, discovery and respect for both children and adults alike.

Once a topic of discussion is drawing to a close, an effective way to encourage children to reflect on their activities relating to the topic is to ask the question, “**What have you learned about this topic?**” Children can be encouraged to represent their learning in a variety of ways – through diagrams, illustrations, stories, bulletin board displays (including photos) and drama. They can also organize a social event for parents where they present their explorations and findings to their parents and interested guests. This can be an effective way to draw parents into the activities of the school age program, providing them with insight into the interests and abilities of their own children and, at the same time, allowing them to see the range of activities and opportunities offered by the school age program.

Child-Initiated Play/Free Play

Effective school age program staff understand the importance of play and recognize that play is vitally important in school age programs, just as it is in early childhood settings. They know that there are different types of play, different functions of play and varying developmental levels of play. Children learn through play in all its forms and it is the role of the adult to design the program in such a way that play becomes the central focus of the child’s time in the school age program.

The Role of the Adult in Child Initiated Play/Free Play

Note: The following information comes from the Standards for Early Childhood Programs in Centre-Based Child Care. For more information on the benefits of child-initiated play, please refer to this manual. Also, the terms “free play” and “child initiated play” will be used interchangeably throughout this document.

The role of the adult in free play cannot be over-emphasized. In order for children to become fully involved in child-initiated play, school age program staff must:

- **Prepare the environment.** This role is crucial and can only be done well if the program staff know the developmental levels and interests of each child. This is discovered through observation and is the foundation of effective program planning. Participation by the adult in regularly scheduled planning meetings is essential in order to develop an effective program that provides constructive, developmentally appropriate child-initiated play.
- **Provide sufficient activities and materials** – All activity areas need to be open, well stocked with a wide variety and quantity of materials and are to be available to children during free play times.
- **Rotate materials** on a regular basis. Familiar materials allow children to experience success and try alternative ways of playing with the same play materials. New materials offer challenges and provide opportunities for problem solving. The play environment should always have a mixture of familiar and new materials. This does not mean that new materials must be purchased or made each week. It means that materials that are not in use are stored and then, whenever something new is put into the room, a material that has been in use can be put back into storage. Rotating materials in this way ensures that children remain interested in what is offered.

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- **Provide sufficient time** for the children to be able to explore the materials and extend their play (minimally 60-90 minutes in each of the a.m. and p.m. sessions).
- **Allow children to repeat an activity** as often as needed to consolidate and extend learning.
- **Observe children as they play** in order to understand each child's developmental level and current interests. Both are necessary for effective program planning.
- **Supervise children as they play**, recognizing that the safety of the children is always the primary concern. The adult should choose the most strategic spot in the room from which to supervise while at the same time being able to observe with and interact with the children. Conversation with other adults should be kept to a minimum.
- **Interact with the children by:**
 - **Asking questions** to extend play such as *"I wonder how you can position those ramps so that the cars can drive at different speeds?"*
 - **Being available** to answer questions. A child may be intrigued by a certain discovery, such as finding out that water colour paints react differently to different types of paper and may need to ask an adult about it. The adult can use this opportunity to encourage further discussion and discovery.
 - **Providing props and ideas** to extend play. There are times when a well timed suggestion or idea from an adult will help to deepen and extend a child's play experience. For example, if a group of children are playing in the dramatic play area and are planning a performance for the other children, the adult might come over and ask where she can buy a ticket for the performance. This can lead to making tickets, making signs, setting up a ticket selling booth, etc. The adult may then introduce a prop such as a cash register to further extend this play.
 - **Extending language** through general conversation with the children.
 - **Modeling play behaviours.** The adult's primary role during child-initiated play is that of facilitator. However, there are times when the adult can and should directly intervene in order to help maintain or extend the play by becoming a co-player. It is through knowledge and experience that the adult learns when to step into a play situation and when to step back. One of the ways that an adult may intervene in a child's play is to model play behaviours. Adults may model directly, by briefly becoming a play partner, or in a more indirect way such as playing parallel to a child.

- **Initiating spontaneous small group activities** whenever appropriate. There will be moments that arise that are ideally suited for small group activities, such as singing a song, creating an obstacle course, trying an experiment and so on. Adults need to be flexible, spontaneous and tuned into the children in such a way that they will know when to initiate these types of activities. For more information on best practices for planned and spontaneous experiences, see **Appendix 5 – Best Practices for Planned and Spontaneous Experiences**

Special Activities/Field Trips – Field trips for school age children may be planned as an extension of a learning activity or they may be intended to provide the children with a particular recreational activity. Regardless of the intent, the school age program staff will be required to put a considerable amount of thought and planning prior to the actual field trip. Logistics to consider when planning a field trip include:

1. The purpose for the trip. If it is an extension of the children’s activities or explorations then the adult must provide the children with information about the destination and how it relates to their topic of interest. The children can do some research prior to the field trip so that they can focus on particular areas of interest, being prepared with questions to explore while they are on the trip.
2. The number of children attending the field trip and the number of adults that will be needed in order to provide appropriate levels of attention and supervision.
3. The type of transportation to be used.
4. Parental permission forms.
5. Whether or not there is access to washroom facilities, drinking water, etc. at the final destination and what arrangements can be made to accommodate children’s physical needs.
6. Safety requirements: The following items must be brought along on the field trip by one of the program staff:
 - a. First aid kit
 - b. Information cards on each child, including MCP numbers, emergency contact information and any pertinent medical information, e.g., allergies.
 - c. Any life-saving medications (e.g., epi-pens, inhalers)
 - d. Wherever possible, cell phones or walkie talkies should be used if the field trip destination does not have telephone access. If telephone contact is not possible then program staff must ensure that a responsible adult is informed of their destination, their time of departure and their estimated time of return.
 - e. Sunscreen, extra water, extra clothes
7. Transportation arrangements:
 - a. Any paid transportation arrangements must adhere to the legal requirements of the *Highway Traffic Act* which can be found on-line at <http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/h03.htm>
 - b. When parent volunteer drivers (unpaid) are used, the licensee has the responsibility of ensuring that written parental permission for the particular parent to transport the child has been received in writing and that all children will be appropriately restrained. Volunteer drivers should

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be made aware that their insurance company may require that they be informed.

8. Appropriate levels of supervision:
 - a. Extra supervision may be required depending on the destination and the number of children participating.
 - b. Children must be continually monitored – regular head counts are to be conducted; adults must be positioned so that every child is seen and accounted for.
9. Expected Behaviours. It is necessary to talk with the children before the field trip occurs, informing them of the expected behaviours, e.g., staying with the group, when and if they are able to touch displays, etc.
10. Alternate arrangements for those children who are not able to attend the field trip or special activity.
11. Means to document the children's experience. Bringing along a camera to record the children's experiences and encouraging children to sketch, photograph and/or write about their discoveries is an effective way to make the children's learning visible to them, their parents and the program staff.

Involving Parents in Field Trips

Inviting parents to participate in field trips can benefit the parents, the children and the program. Parents can lend an extra set of helping hands which not only helps with the supervision of children, but also helps to provide extra attention to children who may have questions and comments about what they are seeing and experiencing on the field trip. Parents who get involved in this way tend to feel more connected with the program and the other children, while the child of the parent as well as the other children enjoy having the opportunity to share their experiences with another adult in addition to the regular program staff. It is important to remember, however, that not all parents are able to become involved in this way due to work schedules and other commitments, therefore, parents should be encouraged to participate only to the extent that their own busy lives will allow. The following points should be considered when involving parents in fieldtrip supervision:

- Remember that parents are not considered part of the required adult: child ratio, unless they are fully qualified and have all necessary documents on file with the school age program.
- Inform parents of the purpose for the field trip. Is it an extension of an activity that has been happening in the program? Is it for recreational purposes?
- Roles of parents are to be clearly stated in advance of the field trip. When describing this role, the following areas will need to be addressed:
 - Who will the parent be responsible for – only their own child or will there be others?
 - Are younger siblings allowed to accompany the parent or will the parent need to make child care arrangements to attend?
 - What behaviours are expected and accepted from the children? Who should deal with any examples of misbehaviour?
 - What behaviours are expected and accepted from the adults, e.g., no smoking, awareness of any restrictions due to allergies or sensitivities, etc.

Transitions

Transitions can be thought of as those “in-between times” which occur when children are moving from one activity or routine to the next. There are fewer transitions in a school age child care program than there would be in a full day child care program, due, mostly, to the shorter length of the program and the growing independence of the school age child who will need only minimal support and guidance when moving from one activity to the next. School age children, like younger children, need some indication or a reminder about when a transition is about to occur, e.g., “in two more minutes we’ll be getting ready to go outside”, however, they should be expected and encouraged to clean up the areas, get themselves ready and transition independently from one activity to another. As with any other age group, waiting times should be kept to a minimum recognizing that boredom quickly sets in and misbehaviour is the most likely result when children are made to wait.

DESIGNING THE INDOOR ENVIRONMENT

Room Arrangement

School age environments should be as home-like, relaxing and pleasant as possible, providing children with a break from a more structured school-like environment. When planning and arranging the physical space for a school age environment, keep the following points in mind:

- Incorporate **natural materials** throughout the room. The room should be a reflection of the children and of the environment in which they live. Making use of beach rocks, driftwood, plants, shells, natural wood furnishings, wicker baskets and other similar materials helps to create a warm, natural environment that is a reflection of both the children and their natural surroundings.
- Naturally incorporate materials, books and photos that reflect the **diversity** of backgrounds, culture, language and heritage of the children in the program. Ensure that all materials in the program are anti-bias and non-sexist, meaning they do not depict stereotypes related to ethnicity, gender or ability.
- Use furniture and materials that are **comfortable** and appropriate for school age children. Furniture needs to be big enough so that children are at ease while sitting or standing. Wherever possible, incorporate soft and cozy furnishings that encourage rest and relaxation.
- Pay attention to the **aesthetics and design** elements in the room. Soothing neutral colours provide an excellent backdrop for displaying children's work and photos. Making use of baskets and containers to keep clutter at a minimum and to provide easy storage will help to promote a neat and organized environment, which, in turn, promotes constructive play and helps to minimize chaos.
- Ensure that there are spaces where children can **work alone**, work and play in **small groups**, or be with the **larger group**.
- Provide space and opportunity for children to engage in **long-term projects**. This will mean having adequate storage (perhaps a cupboard or a shelf) for children to store or display their work which will also allow them to revisit their project over a longer period of time.
- Have space to **display documentation** relating to the children's work. This would include documentation done by the children, by the adults or done collaboratively by both children and adults.
- Encourage independence and autonomy by ensuring that materials and spaces are **accessible** to all the children.
- Build **flexibility** into the design of the room. This can be done by using movable partitions, screens, fabric, netting, etc. as room dividers. As children's interests or needs change, the room can be rearranged accordingly. The basic principles of room arrangement should be followed – quiet areas together; ample space must be provided, etc.
- Provide developmentally appropriate, open-ended, well designed **materials**. The materials should be **rotated regularly**. This rotation can be child-initiated. If a catalogue or inventory of materials is available to children, they can work with the adult to regularly select which materials are to be in use and which ones can be put back into storage.

- Include “**loose parts**” for both indoor and outdoor play. Loose parts include such things as pieces of lumber, ropes, tubing, blankets, assorted boxes and buckets – any type of open-ended (usually recycled) material that the children can use in whatever way they choose. When children interact with loose parts, they can create, experiment and manipulate the materials in endless ways, leading to complex and constructive play and exploration.

Sharing Space

Many school age programs are in a shared space. This can be a challenge when trying to design a homelike personal space for children. School-age child care in a gym or large open space requires a lot of creativity to make the environment warm and inviting, especially when everything needs to be packed up at the end of the day and put away. The program staff can sometimes feel like they are working with a program “on wheels.” Other issues that staff in a shared space often have to deal with include finding adequate and appropriate storage space; dealing with high ceilings and large open areas, using classroom or cafeteria furniture and an overabundance of fluorescent lighting. Some of the ways that this can be addressed include:

- Using wall hooks, wheeled storage units and attractive storage containers for storage. Store materials in small, clear plastic containers which are clearly labeled.
- Using portable room dividers or draped fabric, netting or tulle to define space.
- Making use of hallways or adjoining spaces (where permissible) for small group activities.
- Working with the space you have – incorporate any large tables or furniture into your room arrangement.
- Only using your own materials – do not use materials belonging to the other “tenants” (classroom teachers, recreation staff, etc.) unless you have prior permission to do so.
- And finally, remembering to... *“Never leave the space as you found it...always leave it better than you found it!” O. Sullivan, Manager – School Age Child Care, St. John’s, NL*

Activities, Materials and Equipment

Activities, materials and equipment in a school-age program should foster learning and play experiences that are developmentally appropriate and give children multiple choices that reflect individual and group interests and needs. Each child should have an opportunity to select and plan his or her own activities. Activities that are to be available to children in a school age program include:

- Art and other creative activities, e.g., woodworking, sculpture, stitchery
- Reading, Writing, Listening
- Dramatic Play
- Sensory Play
- Music and Movement
- Science Activities and exploration
- Math Games
- Block Play and other Manipulatives
- Gross Motor activities

When selecting activities and designing a space to accommodate these activities, it is helpful to think of the physical space as being divided into “zones”. Each zone would serve a certain purpose and would contain activities, equipment and materials related to that purpose. Each school age program should contain the following zones. The materials, equipment and activities found within each zone would depend on the ages and interests of the group.

Required Zones

1. Active Zone
2. Exploration/Manipulation Zone
3. Creative Zone
4. Quiet Zone
5. Common Zone

Equipping Each Zone

For a full description of required and suggested materials for each of the following zones, please see Appendix 6

Active Zone– The Active Zone would contain enough space to allow for active play. This type of play would include gross motor play, dramatic play, music and dance, and other movement activities such as obstacle courses and group games. There should be some active area space contained in both the inside and outside play areas. Some examples of materials that should be available to use in an active area include:

- Dramatic play materials (props, dress-up clothes)
- Musical instruments
- Scarves, ribbons for dance
- Equipment for playing CDs or other forms of recorded music
- Gross Motor equipment (balls, jump ropes, etc.)

Exploration/Manipulation Zone – This zone is one where children can work alone or in small groups. This is where children can explore and discover the logical, scientific and mathematical properties of sensory materials, small and large blocks, puzzles, games, materials from the natural world, mechanical tools and so on. Some examples of materials that should be available for use in the Exploration/Manipulation Zone include:

- Wooden unit blocks and props (toy people, cars and trucks, animals)
- Lego™
- Board Games (home made and commercial)
- Natural materials (rocks, shells, wood, plants, etc.)
- Puzzles and manipulatives (Meccano™, parquetry blocks, dominoes, etc.)
- Mechanical tools and equipment such as pulleys, weights, levers, wrenches, bolts, screws, nuts, pliers, screwdrivers
- Materials for scientific discovery such as magnifying glasses, tweezers, tongs, scales
- Collections for sorting (keys, buttons, shells, etc.)
- Sensory table (that can be used for either water or sand)
- Materials for use in the sand/water area including buckets, sieves, clear plastic tubing.

This zone would also need a suitable work surface, e.g., a table with enough space for 2-6 children, shelving or similar storage for the materials and a sensory table which is of a size that suits school age children. There would also need to be a clearly defined space for use of the wooden unit blocks.

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Creative Zone - In the Creative Zone, children are able to concentrate on creating using a variety of media. Some examples of materials that should be available for use in this zone include:

- Markers, crayons, coloured leads, pens, pencils, chalk, paint (tempera, acrylic), pastels, charcoal, water colour paints, paint brushes
- A variety of paper – different types, sizes and colours
- Collage materials
- Glue
- Scrap wood pieces
- Woodworking tools (hammer, nails, wood glue, sand paper, safety glasses)
- Textile art materials – a variety of fabric, thread, yarns, wool, knitting needles, crochet hooks, canvas, embroidery needles, embroidery hoops
- Sculpturing materials – playdough, clay, modeling tools
- Table with space for 2-6 children
- Storage capacity for long term projects, e.g., shelves for storage
- Storage (shelves or containers) for materials which children can easily access.

Quiet Zone - The Quiet Zone is reserved for quieter activities such as reading, writing, relaxing, daydreaming, playing quietly with one or two friends, and/or doing homework. This zone also provides children with a space to be alone when they want some time away from the rest of the group. Some examples of materials that should be available for the Quiet Area include:

- A wide variety of age-appropriate books which are appropriately displayed, stored and accessible to children.
- A comfortable place for reading (soft furnishings, cosy pillows)
- Writing materials – paper, pencils
- A table for writing and studying
- Good lighting
- A computer that can be used for research purposes and for writing

Common Zone – The Common Zone is a space where children are able to store their belongings, where notices and information are placed for children and parents to read and where children and parents are generally greeted and welcomed to the program. Depending on the layout of the room, this area may also be where children sit at tables to eat snack or socialize. Due to the physical layout of the space, it may not be possible to contain all of these elements in the same area of the room, however, somewhere in the room there must be space for the following:

- Storage facilities for children (cubbies or hooks for backpacks)
- Information Bulletin Board
- Sign In Area (register, pen)
- If the area is used for snack then there would need to be enough tables and chairs to accommodate the number of children who are eating snack.

Outdoor Environment

When planning a developmentally appropriate outdoor play space, program staff must incorporate the developmental needs of the children into the design. For more information on design principles that can help to guide the staff in planning an outdoor play environment based on children's interests and developmental needs, see **Table 3- Outdoor Play Design Principles** in Section D of the *Outdoor Play Area Standards Manual for Centre-Based Child Care* published by Department of Health and Community Services.

Designing and Equipping an Outdoor Play Space

Designing an outdoor play space requires many of the same considerations as designing an indoor play space. As with room arrangement, there are specific questions that each staff person should ask when evaluating the outdoor play space. For detailed information on designing and equipping the outdoor play space, the surfacing materials and other essential requirements, please consult the *Outdoor Play Area Standards Manual for Centre-Based Child Care*.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor space is very important to quality school-age child care. It is a place where children learn the social skills they will continue to use for the rest of their lives. The playground is a child's world and it needs to stay that way. Children are under constant adult supervision, but they have the opportunity to spread out and call a place their own and feel like they are on their own. Empowering school-age children to feel independent is important and the outdoor play area is where this can happen.

Children need outdoor play experiences of all kinds and in all kinds of weather. They need to play outdoors on a daily basis for at least 45 –60 minutes, whenever conditions permit, in each three-hour block of time. They need an outdoor play space that is safe, suitable and welcoming. In a well equipped outdoor play space children will:

- Develop positive attitudes about themselves, their physical abilities and the outdoor environment.
- Engage in games and activities that will help them in developing concepts relating to body awareness, spatial abilities (and leadership skills).
- Develop fine and gross motor skills.
- Engage in solitary and group play situations.
- Be creative, solve problems, explore and discover new things about the world around them.
- Create and involve themselves in open-ended, child-centred active play in which the adult plays no specific part.
- Develop self-confidence to try increasingly more difficult tasks such as climbing higher and exploring new ways to perform skills.
- Get fresh air!

The *Outdoor Play Area Standards Manual for Centre-Based Child Care* provides detailed information on activity areas for outdoor play, how to plan an outdoor play program, the role of the adult during outdoor play, what children can do on your playground, reaching a balance between safety and physical activity, guidelines for encouraging safe play as well as forms and checklists for daily, monthly and seasonal maintenance and repair of outdoor play areas

Age Appropriateness

The outdoor play area should accommodate the school-age children's interests by providing adequate play space where they can play games such as tag, softball, football, soccer and Frisbee[®]. Since this age group likes to create their own play zone, logs and stumps for sitting and/or materials to build with would be an asset. Asphalt walkways are a good place for riding scooters and skate boards if all the required safety equipment is worn.

Other additional features to keep in mind include:

- Ensure that all children can access all outdoor play areas
- Ensure that all children can access the storage area where the outdoor equipment and materials are kept
- Make sure that the storage containers are easy to manipulate.
- Keep the pathways open enough and clear of materials
- Have materials to challenge children who vary greatly in their cognitive abilities
- Have additional or adapted equipment and materials that make the environment more user-friendly.

In active outdoor play children must be allowed the opportunity and space to run, leap, invent characters, set situations, shout, and just be children. When planning for outdoor or active play, keep the following points in mind:

- When weather does not permit outdoor play, active indoor movement and games should be offered.
- Follow the outdoor playground safety standards to ensure adequate outdoor space is available for large motor and sports activities daily.
- Children should be able to choose from a wide variety of outdoor equipment and games for active and quiet play.
- All permanent outdoor equipment and spaces must be suitable for the sizes and abilities of all children and must be maintained appropriately.
- In order for an outdoor play area to be able to meet the needs of school-age children, the equipment and space must allow them to be independent and creative and must be suitable for a wide variety of activities.

GLOSSARY:

Clubs - Clubs are regularly scheduled program offerings that bring children together to explore a specific topic during a set period of time during the school age program.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice – is practice that incorporates knowledge of the basic principles of child development along with an understanding of the strengths, needs and interests of each individual child in a particular group. It also incorporates an understanding of the social and cultural contexts of each child within the group.

Diversity - for the purposes of this manual, refers to the wide array of ethnic, cultural, religious and social backgrounds found within any group of children in a school age program.

Documentation – means making a visual (or sometimes audio) record of observations that are done for the purpose of capturing examples of children’s learning in action or to determine the needs and interests of the children.

Emergent Curriculum – is curriculum that is based on the emerging interests, events, questions and concerns that are generated by a particular group of people (children and adults) at a particular time. This type of curriculum evolves as the children and adults become more involved in their discoveries. It develops as both adults and children make decisions about what types of activities will occur based on what is interesting to the children and what is necessary for the children’s education and development.

Learning Stories - learning stories describe examples of the learning or discovery of an individual child or a group of children. A learning story can be contained within a single page of description or it can be written in a book-like format.

Logical Consequences - Logical consequences are consequences that are directly related to the misbehaviour and in some cases, allow the child to make “restitution” or the ability to “make things right.”

Middle School-Age Child: Children in grades 3-4

Mixed Age Group – A group of children made up from more than one category of age group. See Child Care Services Regulation 15 (1) b (2005)

Natural Consequences - Natural consequences are consequences that flow naturally from a behaviour, for example, if materials are wasted then there won’t be enough materials to complete a project.

Older School-Age Child: Children in grades 5-6

School-age child – refers to any child who meets the age requirement to attend school up to 155 months.

Standard Print Model – refers to the print that would be used by adults in a child care setting when creating labels, signs, etc. Standard print model requires proper spelling, letters formed using the standard alphabetic model, print conventions would be followed, e.g., appropriate capitalization and use of upper case and lower case letters.

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Project Approach – is a set of strategies which enables adults to guide children through in-depth studies of real world topics. In this approach, the adult becomes a co-learner and is as engaged in the topic as the children.

Younger School-Age Child: Children in grades K-2

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Appendix 1: When Children Are Bullied

Based on the work of Bisback and Kopf-Johnson (2007), bullying can be described in this way:

Types of Bullying	
<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pushing, shoving, hitting, spitting, tripping or beating up another child. • Stealing or damaging another child’s property. • Physical acts which are demeaning and humiliating. <p>Verbal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling and mocking. • Teasing about appearance, clothing and language. • Verbal threats against property. <p>Cyber-bullying, computers, email, text messaging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gossiping and spreading rumours. • Excluding from the group. • Sexual innuendoes. 	<p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gossiping and spreading rumours about others. • Excluding others from the group. • Threatening others with isolation from the peer group. <p>Sexual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting rumours about sexual activities. • Passing unwanted notes or pictures of sex. • Inciting others to behave in sexist ways. • Refusal to work with, play or co-operate with children of the opposite sex. <p>Racist/Sexist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making fun of music, accent, or dress of anyone from a different culture, religious observance or dietary habits. • Singling someone out because of skin colour, cultural practices, religious background or ethnic origin. • Insulting or degrading comments. • Refusing to work with, play or co-operate with children of another race or ethnic group. • Inciting others to behave in a racist way.

It may take careful observation on several occasions before a bully’s behaviour is identified and named. Once that has been accomplished, the adult then needs to look at intervention. Some things to look for are:

1. All complaints from children and parents should be respected because even trivial incidents may represent the beginning stages of bullying.

2. Children give cues during their social interactions, especially if they are speaking negatively or shouting at someone.
3. At-risk children are often excluded from team activities and special events and become easy targets for bullying.
4. There may be a point when outside expertise will need to be sought and the parents involved.

Responding to the child who is bullying

The adult's discussion with the child who is bullying should focus on these key points:

- Talk with the child, but do not blame. Try not to get into a discussion about the "whys" of what happened.
- Find out as much as you can about the problem. A child can be a bully for a variety of reasons. Not all bullies are the product of a violent or neglectful home.
- Inform the child that bullying is not acceptable in the centre.
- Demonstrate to the child the things he/she can do if he/she is feeling frustrated or angry or aggressive.
- Encourage the child to act out the new behaviours for you.
- Ask how you can help with this. Encourage the child to seek your help if he/she sees him/herself getting into this type of situation again.
- Specify concretely the consequences if the aggression or bullying continues.
- Try to understand the child's feelings.
- Praise appropriate behaviour.

In addition to the discussion with the bully, it is important to role model the appropriate behaviour for how you treat others and how you allow others to treat you as part of the positive reinforcement.

Helping the child who is bullied

The adult will need to get the victim's side of the story as well and be very careful during the discussion to not blame anyone, including the bullying child or children. Here are some suggestions:

- Look at the child's behaviour and style of interacting.

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- Ask yourself what you know about the child's behaviour and how you can help turn the immediate situation around.
- Discuss alternatives to responding to bullies and together select the approach that best suits the child's personality.
- Encourage the child to not react in the future, to walk away and get help if pursued. Agree with the bully, saying, "You're right," and walking away.
- Suggest to the child that (s)he tell the child who is bullying to, "Stop picking on me," using an assertive voice & manner

Everyone wants our children to live in a safe, caring and non-violent environment. Pulling resources together may enable us to create a positive place for our children to learn and grow.

Appendix 2: Characteristics of School Age children and Implications for Program Planning

Characteristics of 6 – 8 Year olds	Implications for Program Planning
Easily disappointed and frustrated by self-perceived failure.	Activities should place emphasis on participation, skill development and fair play helping all children feel good about their accomplishments.
Likes to assume some responsibility	Provide opportunities to demonstrate responsibility such as setting up/taking down activities.
Curiosity arises about the differences between the sexes.	Questions should be answered truthfully but not in great detail.
Shows increased attention span by working at tasks for longer periods of time although concentration not always consistent.	Provide opportunities to carry over activities from one day to the next if possible.
Understands the concept of time and space.	Outline the time available to complete tasks to allow children the ability to plan activities to ensure they accomplish what they want to do.
Memory is increasing.	Provide opportunities for children to play games or participate in activities that involve the ability to remember several steps or directions.
Loves to talk; often non-stop and may be described as a chatterbox.	Allow many opportunities to express themselves and share their thoughts while adult listens attentively.
Abstract thinking is beginning.	Provide opportunities to create activities, games, stories that stretch their imaginations.
Verbal understanding is increasing and children can communicate their own thoughts more objectively.	Ensure that children are part of the decision making process.
Coordination is improving and their size and strength increasing.	Team activities such as recreational basketball could be provided so they can practice coordination and strength.
Physical growth is slow and steady. Active play is preferred and children will become more fatigued by sitting for longer periods than by physically moving.	Skipping, running, jumping, cycling will assist in development and practice of new skills.
Children begin to understand consequences of actions and try various solutions.	Provide activities for children that require problem solving and teamwork. Allow children time to learn skills and practice them.

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Characteristics of 9 – 12 Year Olds	Implications for Program Planning
Likes to organize games, but may modify rules while game is in progress.	Provide opportunities to lead games and encourage positive group decision.
Looked up to by younger children.	Provide opportunities for leadership.
Begins to doubt and become sensitive about self.	Provide activities which illustrate the benefits of people with different skills.
Is becoming more skilled at evaluating own ideas.	Encourage brainstorming and creative problem solving.
Grasps concepts of irony and sarcasm; has a good sense of humour and enjoys telling jokes and riddles.	Allow opportunities to entertain one another.
Becomes a thoughtful listener; detects flaws in reasoning of others, questions validity of conclusions, evaluates.	Provide time for discussion and debriefing experiences.
Much more aware of choosing words to share feelings.	Talk about the impact of such things as compliments or putdowns.
Ability to argue increases with ability to take another point of view.	Provide creative opportunities to examine other sides of an issue
Succeeds in sequencing, ordering and classifying because of improved long-term memory capacity.	Provide activities that challenge long-term memory.
Can use models, graphs and symbols to solve problems.	Encourage making written plans using maps for exploration and diagramming ideas.
Understands change, such as reasoning about adaptation to environment and interdependence of living things.	Begin to give opportunities for children to see changes and learn about natural processes.
Can conduct more complex, controlled experiments because of ability to deal with an increasing number of variables.	Make finding cause and effect a game.
Bodily changes such as the widening of hips and appearance of pubic hair are signs of approaching puberty.	Do not draw attention to physical changes, but be prepared to respond to any questions encouraging a small group discussion
Some children may be a little restless and physically active at this time.	Be sensitive to activity lengths and amount of variety in format.
Girls are 12 – 15 months ahead in development.	Be sensitive to changing peer relations as physical changes create differences; talk about natural differentiation in development.
Hand/eye coordination well developed; now children are ready for skill building.	Begin introducing activities and skills requiring more complex movements and thought patterns.

Appendix 3: Supporting Children’s Growth and Well Being

Social and Emotional Development

STANDARD:

Each child’s social and emotional well-being and growth will be supported and promoted.

School-age children show signs of growing independence as they:

- Play non-competitive games and set individual goals.
- Help define the rules.
- Demonstrate self-control, utilizing patience, sharing, respecting others and making good decisions
- Identify feelings in themselves and others, while taking time for individual conversations especially during problem-solving.
- Express their emotions in positive, constructive ways through drawing, painting, sculpting, creative movement or writing in a journal or story.
- Discuss their feelings through play activities or informal conversation.
- Play and explore in an environment that provides opportunities to relieve stress or teaches them skills to relieve their stress.
- Are actively involved in good communication between the program and home so that both parties are aware of emotionally upsetting factors in their environment.

Moral Development

STANDARD:

Each child's moral and ethical understanding and development will be promoted and supported.

Children's moral and ethical understanding and development is promoted as they:

- Develop the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, the ability to empathize with others and the strength to act upon their judgments.
- Practice caring for others
- Model responsible and caring behaviours
- Develop loving, caring and positive relationships

Language Development

STANDARD:

Each child's communication skill development will be promoted and supported.

During middle childhood language skills are expanding rapidly and are enhanced when children:

- Are given opportunities and are encouraged to practice reading and writing skills through activities like reading recipes for snack preparation or researching information in a magazine, book or the internet about a topic of interest.
- Are exposed to a variety of reading materials to accommodate their reading levels and interests.
- Are able to read posted information in the centre
- Apply their writing skills in meaningful ways, such as, writing notes to their friends, creating secret codes, recording useful information like the snack they had today and helping plan the program.
- Practice their verbal skills during day-to-day conversations and trying out jokes and riddles on their friends.

- Apply their conflict resolution skills by using logical-thinking and taking someone else's perspective when entering arguments.

Physical Development

STANDARD:

Each child's physical development will be promoted and supported.

Children are proud of who they are and what they can do when adults:

- Recognize the physical changes that are occurring, such as, intermittent growth spurts or "growing pains", changes in body proportions such as the head is smaller in proportion to the rest of the body, and legs and arms are longer than those of a preschooler.
- Respect the fact that there are gender differences for younger school-age children as boys tend to have greater upper arm strength and girls tend to be more flexible.
- Give appropriate support in their mastery of skills leading to proficiency in organized sports, such as, soccer, basketball, jump rope.
- Provide activities to enhance their fine motor skills such as writing, knitting, building models, woodworking, making origami objects, making intricate friendship bracelets or drawing extremely detailed pictures.
- Acknowledge that school-age children have acquired a level of finger dexterity, eye-hand-coordination and other fine motor skills that allow them to play musical instruments.

Sexual Development

A total understanding of physical development and its implications in school-age child care requires a look at sexual development. The following general characteristics are useful in determining what types of sexual behaviour to expect in school age children:

- Children may be very curious about pregnancy, birth, sex and relationships.
- Children may tell inappropriate jokes or use inappropriate slang without understanding what the jokes or words mean.
- They have a sense of privacy and modesty – they are likely to be embarrassed by nudity and know that sexual behaviours such as masturbation are done in private.
- They begin to focus more on same-sex friendships.

- Sex play may include kissing games, teasing, pretend games about “boyfriend-girlfriend” and marriage.

For the most part, the sexual education of school age children is the responsibility of parents and the teachers at school who have received specific training in sexual health matters. When school age program staff feel it is necessary to deal with matters that are sexual in nature, e.g., answering a particularly sensitive question or having to deal with examples of sex play between two children, it is important for the staff person to inform the child or children’s parents of the situation and to make sure that (s)he is not alone when dealing with the situation. The staff person should ask another adult in the program to be present whenever a sexual matter is discussed. These situations could be misinterpreted by children or by parents when the child repeats the conversation at home. As well, school age program staff need to be aware of when a child’s sexual behaviour is not appropriate and who to contact for additional help and advice. For more detailed information on this topic, consult *Standards and Guidelines for Health in Child Care Settings*.

Cognitive Development

STANDARD:

Each child’s cognitive skill development and creativity will be promoted and supported.

Adults can help children continue to develop their thinking skills by:

- Recognizing that older school-age children are more logical in their thinking and are better able to follow games and activities that have a number of rules, but younger school-age children are just entering this stage.
- Encouraging children in their collections of objects such as rocks, stickers or action figures because they are now learning to simultaneously categorize objects in a number of different ways that are needed for math skills.
- Giving them opportunities to practice concepts of time and money in real-life situations, such as helping with the program supplies budget in a very simplistic way.
- Supporting them in acquiring the skills needed (logical thinking skills, increased attention spans, improved memory skills and desire to create a product) to complete adult-like projects and products, like complex drawings and art projects.
- Helping them to think about their own behaviour and see consequences for actions, for example, they are now able to think through their actions and see why they were late for school.

Appendix 4: Sample Schedules for a Full Day School Age Program

Example 1

1. Arrival and greeting of children (all activity areas are accessible to children)
2. Free choice time*
3. Snack time** (Children help to plan, prepare and assist with snack, serving and clean-up.)
4. Special activity, field trip or outdoor play. Group walks, swimming, skating, picnics, etc.
5. Lunch (preparation, etc.)
6. Quiet activities*
7. Free choice activities* (indoors or outdoors)
8. Snack**
9. Free choice activities* (indoors or outdoors)
10. Departure

**Small group activities can occur during free choice and quiet activities time.*

***Snack can be served as “free flow” and therefore can be available for a certain period of time during free choice activities.*

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Example 2 (adapted from Eller and Mulroy, 1996)

- 7:00-8:15 a.m. Early morning program – quiet games, simple artwork, reading, an opportunity to finish breakfast
- 8:15-9:00 a.m. Supervised Free Play
- 9:00-9:30 a.m. Snack and planning for the day with the children
- 9:30- 10:15 a.m. First planned activity (in addition to supervised free play)
- 10:15-11:45 a.m. Extended activity (if required)
- 11:45-12:30 p.m. Lunch
- 12:30-1:15 p.m. Stories or quiet games (or rest if desired)
- 1:15-2:00 p.m. Third activity (in addition to supervised free play)
- 3:00 – 3:30 p.m. Snack
- 3:30-4:15 p.m. Fourth activity (in addition to supervised free play)
- 4:15-5:00 p.m. Quiet games or visiting with friends
- 5:00 p.m. Closing activity and clean-up
- 5:00-6:00 p.m. Quiet activities and pick-up

Appendix 5: Best Practices for Planned and Spontaneous Experiences in a School Age Program(from M. Ashcroft (2005), *Best Practices: Guidelines for School Age Programs*)

According to Ashcroft, the following should be consistently and readily observable in the experiences provided for children:

- Activities reflect the program mission and promote development of all the children in the program.
- Activities are aligned with the styles, abilities and interests of the individuals in the program.
- Activities are well suited for the age range of children in the program.
- Daily routine is predictable but flexible, providing stability without being rigid.
- Children meet their physical needs in a relaxed way.
- Individual children move smoothly from one activity to another, usually at their own pace.
- When necessary to move children as a group, the transition is smooth.
- Several activities that meet the needs of different groups are available daily.
- A variety of activities occur simultaneously, some planned and some spontaneous.
- Very few activities require following an example and individual expression and free choice are encouraged.
- Children may choose from a wide variety of age-appropriate games, materials and activities most of the time.
- Children may choose their own companions.
- Children are encouraged to develop and extend activities that interest them.
- Children participate in music, arts, and/or drama, as well as science and nature activities.
- Children are encouraged to use math/reasoning skills in daily activities (e.g., help prepare snack for a correct number of people, measuring recipes, and record scores for games.)
- Children and caring adults read together or children read for pleasure without an adult's involvement.
- Children are encouraged to use reading and writing in practical situations (e.g. read instructions for games, letters to friends, and making announcement signs.)
- Children go to the library to borrow books on a weekly basis and are encouraged to bring favourite books from home to share with other children.
- Staff and children work together to plan and implement suitable activities, which are consistent with the program's philosophy.
- Staff members ask children to share their ideas for planning so that activities will reflect children's interests.
- Staff members keep records of activity planning.
- Staff members help children write their own stories, poems and newsletters.
- Through intentional programming, regular opportunities are provided for the following: quiet activities; socializing; active play; individual, small group, and large group activities; and recreational and cultural community resources.
- Through intentional programming, regular opportunities and appropriate environments are provided for the following: children working on their homework

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- as an activity choice; reading for pleasure; learning new skills and completing long term projects.
- Through intentional programming, regular opportunities are provided for creative arts, dramatic play and developing drama/theatre productions, and for music or movement instruction as part of either individual or group activity.
- Music activities are available as a free choice (e.g. listening labs, tapes, CD player and dancing.)
- Staff members sit with children during snack and meal times, which are served family style.
- Eating time is planned as an activity choice, with discussion and learning time; permits small groups; encourages conversation and good table manners; and is a pleasant experience for children.
- Hand washing before and after eating is part of the daily routine.
- Amount and type of food offered is appropriate for ages and sizes of children.
- Snacks and meals are appropriately timed for children.

Appendix 6: Zones – Materials and Equipment (Required and Suggested)

The following table provides a brief description of what is required and what is optional for each of the zones found in a school age space. The optional list is not exhaustive. Adults working in a school age program will think of many activities that can take place in each of these zones that are not included on this chart.

All five zones (Active, Exploration/Manipulation, Creative, Quiet and Common) are required for licensed full-time or part-time school-age programs. The Required Activities within each zone must be planned for on a daily basis.

	Active Zone	Exploration/ Manipulation Zone	Creative Zone	Quiet Zone	Common Zone
Required Activities	Dramatic Play Gross Motor/Active Play Music	Block Area Manipulative Play Science Sensory Activities (at least two sensory activities shall be planned for each day)	Art	Books/Listening Writing and/or Computer area*	Information Bulletin Board Storage facilities for children Sign-in area (Register and a pen) Eating area (may be available in other areas of the room depending on room design)
Optional Activities			Wood working	Writing and/or computer* Homework/ Study area	

***An area for writing area must be available in the Quiet Zone – this can come in the form of a writing area or can be done with a computer. Writing, of course, is not limited to one particular zone in a school age program. School age programs are also encouraged to incorporate writing/literacy activities throughout the room and throughout the program.**

Active Zone	Requirements	Suggestions
General Requirements	Area is labeled with title using a standard print model Area is open during main program hours Space is designed so that children can be physically active Materials are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developmentally appropriate ○ Easily accessed by children ○ Presented in an organized manner (storage containers are labeled with print, picture, object or silhouette.) ○ Clean and in good condition* ○ Adequate in number so that materials can be regularly rotated and there are enough materials for the number of children present. 	Literacy is promoted throughout the area through the provision of writing materials, reference books and pictures.
Gross Motor	Materials to promote physical skills (e.g. lifting, running, kicking, jumping, climbing, dancing, throwing, aiming, catching).	Bowling ball materials, sponge balls, beach balls, bean bags and targets, scoot boards, lightweight soft paddles, bats and balls, parachute, streamer ribbons, Velcro© catch mitts and balls, hopscotch.
Music	A CD/tape player, headphones**, variety of CDs/tapes that contain various types of music, songs, sounds and rhymes; developmentally appropriate rhythm instruments of various types, adequate supply of developmentally appropriate instruments which encourage children to explore tone; materials that promote creative movement and dance.	<p>Music: Folk, classical, country, jazz, reggae, bluegrass, children’s entertainers, local artists, traditional music (Newfoundland and Labrador); world music</p> <p>Musical instruments: rhythm sticks, bells, shakers, sand blocks, tambourines, triangles, maracas, bongos, rattles, homemade instruments, instruments used around the world, tone blocks, tuning forks, xylophones, ‘boom whackers’</p> <p>Creative Movement materials: scarves, ribbons, feather dusters, feather boas, hula hoops</p>
Dramatic Play	Variety of dress-up clothes and accessories Prop boxes Open-ended props (Note: materials are to be easily accessible to children, e.g., hooks, coat trees used to organize clothes, storage shelves for other materials)	<p>Clothes that help children explore gender roles, occupations, costumes for skits, cultural outfits and so on.</p> <p>Prop boxes: baby care, house, grocery store, post office, hairdresser, doctor, pet store, restaurant, car repair, school</p> <p>Open-ended props: large pieces of fabric, cardboard boxes and tubes, odds and ends, etc.</p>

* for specific directions on how to clean toys see **Standards and Guidelines for Health in Child Care Settings**

** headphones must have washable, non-porous coverings (caution: check volume levels)

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Exploration/ Manipulation Zone	Requirements	Suggestions
General Requirements	<p>Area is labeled with title using a standard print model</p> <p>Area is open during main program hours</p> <p>Two to three tables with chairs</p> <p>Storage and open shelving units that permit children easy access to materials that are available for use.</p> <p>Materials are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developmentally appropriate ○ Presented in an organized manner (storage containers are labeled with print, picture, object or silhouette.) ○ Clean and in good condition* ○ Adequate in number so that materials can be regularly rotated and there are enough materials for the number of children present. 	<p>Literacy is promoted throughout the area through the provision of writing materials, reference books and pictures</p>
Science	<p>Collections of single topic and natural materials</p> <p>Containers for organizing and classifying materials</p> <p>Mechanical tools and equipment</p> <p>Materials and equipment that encourage exploration and discovery</p> <p>Evidence that science activities are planned and implemented</p>	<p>Collections: shells, fossils, seeds, gourds, rocks and minerals, magnets and iron filings, spinning tops, wind up toys.</p> <p>Containers: ice cube trays, tackle boxes, small baskets, small bowls.</p> <p>Mechanical tools and Equipment: pulleys, weights, levers, wrenches, bolts, screws, nuts, pliers, screwdrivers, ramps and wheels.</p> <p>Exploration and discovery: magnifying glasses, scales, tweezers, chopsticks, scoops, tongs, weigh scales, prisms, directional compass, level, measuring tapes.</p> <p>Evidence that science activities are planned and implemented: Documentation depicting children as they predict, hypothesize, observe, measure, communicate, experiment, explore, create, gather, organize and record data; clipboards and paper to encourage children to document their own discoveries.</p>
Manipulative	<p>Storage containers (where applicable)</p> <p>A variety of developmentally appropriate small building toys</p> <p>Puzzles</p> <p>Math Activities</p> <p>Board Games</p>	<p>Small building toys: Lego[®], Lincoln Logs[®], K-Nex[®], Meccano[®], Straws and Connectors[®], Kapla[®] blocks.</p> <p>Puzzles: developmentally appropriate puzzles, e.g., 48+ pieces for 8-12 year olds; floor puzzles, 3-D puzzles, framed and unframed puzzles.</p> <p>Math Activities: parquetry blocks, dominoes, collections (buttons, keys, etc.), homemade math games (path games and grid games).</p> <p>Board Games: Monopoly, Scrabble, Clue, Pictionary, checkers, chess, Operation, Boggle, Snakes and Ladders, Guess Who.</p>

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Exploration/ Manipulation Zone (cont'd)	Requirements	Suggestions
Block Play	<p>Clearly defined space large enough for 3 to 4 children to build in comfort. Solid, flat, sound absorbent surface for building</p> <p>Storage that is easily accessible and allows for blocks to be arranged by type, e.g., outline or photo of object placed on corresponding shelf.</p> <p>Complete set of wooden unit blocks of various types for 2-3 children to build independent structures. (minimum 360 pieces with 20 shapes for 57-155 mth olds)</p> <p>A second set of blocks for 2 to 3 children to build independent structures</p> <p>Variety of props to promote dramatic block play</p> <p>Pictures or photographs or books relating to building based on the interest of the children. This may also include documentation of children's work.</p>	<p>Second set of blocks: Hollow blocks, cardboard blocks, brick blocks, homemade blocks, foam blocks, extra large linking blocks, waffle blocks. Great examples of homemade blocks include shoeboxes, milk cartons and cereal boxes.</p> <p>Props: family sets, animals, community workers, vehicles, road signs, PVC tubes and connectors, large cardboard tubes, variety of cylindrical shapes (for rolling), small flat planks (roof boards), small furniture, buildings, e.g., farmhouse, garage, dollhouse</p> <p>Other: Clipboards, paper and markers to encourage children to sketch and document their work.</p>
Sensory Activities	<p>Provide at least two of the following sensory activities daily:</p> <p>Sensory table large enough for 4-6 children</p> <p>If water play is available, provide a variety of water play materials</p> <p>If sand play is available, provide a variety of sand play materials</p> <p>Sculpting materials and tools (<i>note: these may be present in the creative zone or the exploration/manipulation zone</i>)</p> <p>Materials that encourage the exploration of light</p> <p>Materials for clean up (small mops, whisks, dust pans)</p>	<p>Water play props: props relating to a concept such as sea creatures, boats, float and sink; funnels, colanders, containers of various sizes, whisks, egg beaters, tongs, variety of cloths and sponges, flexible plastic tubing (clear and otherwise), corks, PVC piping, a variety of connectors (Y-shaped, T-shaped), fish nets, basters, pumps</p> <p>Sand play props: small plastic animals, dinosaurs, insects, shovels, buckets, sieves, scoops, spoons, colanders, pieces of wood, funnels, plastic paint scrapers, groups spreaders, spray bottles filled with water, measuring cups and spoons, nesting cups, muffin tins, plastic flowers, flags, popsicle sticks, potato mashers, rake, rocks and pebbles, shakers with large holes, e.g., parmesan cheese shakers,</p> <p>Sculpting materials: clay, playdough, plasticine, Floam[®], wires, soapstone, antlers</p> <p>Sculpting tools: real carving tools, popsicle sticks, forks, chopsticks, toothpicks, wooden dowels of various sizes.</p> <p>Light Exploration materials: overhead projector, light table, colour prisms, flashlights, coloured jars, transparent materials, translucent materials, cut-out patterned materials, e.g., lace, paper doilies</p>

Standards for School-Age Child Care Programs

Creative Zone	Requirements	Suggestions
General Requirements	<p>Area is labeled with title using a standard print model</p> <p>Area is open during main program hours</p> <p>Space for 4-6 children</p> <p>Table and chairs for 4-6 children</p> <p>Washable flooring</p> <p>Near a sink if possible</p> <p>Area to display art (at child’s eye level)</p> <p>Area for storing work in progress</p> <p>Area for drying paintings or materials that have been painted, e.g., drying rack</p> <p>Materials are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developmentally appropriate ○ Easily accessed by children ○ Presented in an organized manner (storage containers are labeled with print, picture, object or silhouette.) ○ Clean and in good condition* ○ Adequate in number so that materials can be regularly rotated and there are enough materials for the number of children present. 	<p>Literacy is promoted throughout the area through the provision of writing materials, reference books and pictures</p>
Art	<p>Variety of developmentally appropriate drawing materials including pencils, coloured leads, fine and chubby markers, regular and chunky crayons, pastels, pens, chalk, variety of paper</p> <p>Variety of developmentally appropriate painting materials including: two different types of paint – each available in a variety of colours; chunky and fine brushes, variety of paper</p> <p>Variety of collage materials (minimum of five types of materials)</p> <p>Variety of 3-D construction materials</p> <p>Variety of textile art materials</p> <p>Good quality scissors (4-6 including blunt and pointed)</p> <p>Tape (2-4 rolls); staplers (2-4); hole punchers (2-4)</p> <p>Sculpting materials (may be present in exploration/manipulation zone)</p> <p>Smocks (4-6)</p> <p>Easels – either table top, wall mounted or floor (1-2)</p>	<p>Drawing: charcoal, tinfoil or tin, irons (for crayon melting)</p> <p>Painting: tempera paint, water colour paint, finger paint, block paint, acrylic paint, flat brushes, round brushes, roller brushes, texture brushes</p> <p>Collage: feathers, sequins, pom-poms, cotton balls, fabric pieces, beads, glitter, confetti, paper scraps (wall paper, cardstock etc.) felt, chenille sticks (pipe cleaners), buttons, bottle caps, aluminum foil, gift wrapping, corks, ribbon, yarn, string and other “found materials”; glue, glue spreaders</p> <p>3-D construction materials: all of the above (collage materials) plus cardboard boxes of various sizes, plastic containers, berry boxes, plastic tubing, jar lids, netting and other “found” materials.</p> <p>Sculpting materials (see Exploration/Manipulation zone)</p>

Standards for School-Age Child Care Programs

Creative Zone (cont'd)	Requirements	Suggestions
Woodworking (optional)		<p>Appropriate Work Surface, e.g., wooden work bench, table, logs, desk</p> <p>Child-sized safety goggles (worn while working in area)</p> <p>Adult-sized safety goggles (worn by adults while working in areas)</p> <p>Adequate storage for tools when area is closed.</p> <p>A display area for tools to hang when the areas are open, e.g., pegboard.</p> <p>A variety of working tools, e.g., hammer, hack-saw, hand drill, screwdrivers, pliers, sandpaper, C-clamps.</p> <p>Wood scraps and pieces, e.g., softwood such as fir, spruce, pine, pool noodles cut in half.</p> <p>Miscellaneous items, dowels, jar lids, bottle caps, nails, screws, nuts, bolts, washers, wire, wood glue, plastic and rubber piping.</p>

Standards for School-Age Child Care Programs

Quiet Zone	Requirements	Suggestions
General Requirements	<p>Area is labeled with title using a standard print model</p> <p>Area is open during main program hours</p> <p>Space contains an area for privacy.</p> <p>Materials are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developmentally appropriate ○ Easily accessed by children ○ Presented in an organized manner , e.g., slanted bookshelf ○ Clean and in good condition* ○ Adequate in number so that materials can be regularly rotated and there are enough materials for the number of children present (e.g. a minimum of one book for half the children in attendance) 	<p>Literacy is promoted throughout the area through the provision of writing materials, reference books and pictures</p>
Reading/ Listening	<p>Cozy and enclosed space</p> <p>Space large enough for 2-4 children</p> <p>Carpeted area (or mat or foam)</p> <p>Comfortable seating for children and adult</p> <p>Books/Posters reflecting diversity (cultural diversity, family diversity, diversity in abilities)</p> <p>Flannel Board</p> <p>Flannel Stories</p> <p>Puppets</p> <p>Manipulative word charts (can be placed throughout the room)</p> <p>Developmentally appropriate books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Predictable <input type="checkbox"/> Fairytales <input type="checkbox"/> Fantasy <input type="checkbox"/> Folktales <input type="checkbox"/> Wordless <input type="checkbox"/> Homemade <input type="checkbox"/> Song <input type="checkbox"/> Picture <input type="checkbox"/> Poetry <input type="checkbox"/> Factual <input type="checkbox"/> Concept <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter books <input type="checkbox"/> Novels for young readers 	<p>Cozy elements: Soft furnishings, pillows</p> <p>Seating options: pillows, bean bag chair, couch, rocking chair, arm chair</p> <p>Flannel story ideas: characters and props from familiar songs, rhymes or books; community helpers, family, alphabet letters, numbers, homemade stories (made by adults or children)</p> <p>Puppets: marionettes, sock puppets, commercially made puppets, homemade puppets,</p> <p>Books: see Appendix 7</p>
Writing	<p><i>This area is required if there is no computer area</i></p> <p>A writing desk or table that can comfortably accommodate 2-3 children (can be a nearby table as well such as the art table)</p> <p>Materials that encourage the exploration of writing such as paper of various types and sizes, pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, pens.</p> <p>An alphabet chart that is placed at the children’s eye level (commercially made or homemade) using Standard Print format.</p> <p>A word box containing index cards with common words that children may recognize (one word per card)</p>	<p>Writing materials: markers, stamps, stamp pads, envelopes, old but functional typewriters, hole punches, staplers, tape, notebooks, notepads</p>

Standards for School-Age Child Care Programs

Quiet Zone	Requirements	Suggestions
Computer	<p><i>This area is required if there is no writing area</i></p> <p>One to three computers, depending on resources and/or size of program</p> <p>Developmentally appropriate software (for more information on what to look for when choosing software refer to <i>Standards for Early Childhood Programs in Centre-Based Child Care</i>)</p> <p>Adequate, comfortable seating</p> <p>Accessible storage for software</p>	<p>Other: Printer, digital camera, access to Internet (for research purposes only)</p>

Appendix 7: Suggested books for School Age Children List compiled by Heather Myers, Children's Collection Librarian, Newfoundland and Labrador Public Libraries, March, 2008

FICTION FOR CHILDREN 5-9 YEARS OLD

365 Penguins. Jean-Luc Fromental.
Beauty and the Beast. Max Eilenberg.
Borrowed Black: a Labrador fantasy. Ellen Bryan Obed ; illustrated by Jan Morgenson.
Boston Box. Carmelita McGrath ; illustrated by Rochelle Baker.
Clementine. Sara Pennypacker.
Could be Worse! James Stevenson.
Diary of a Worm. Doreen Cronin; illustrated by Harry Bliss.
Dog and Bear : two friends, three stories. Laura Vaccaro Seeger.
Dogger. Shirley Hughes.
Down by Jim Long's Stage : Rhymes for Children and Young Fish. Alphonsus Pittman; illustrated by Pam Hall.
Eh to Zed? : a Canadian abecedarium. Kevin Major; illustrated by Alan Daniel.
The End. David LaRoche; illustrated by Richard Egielski.
George and Martha. James Marshall.
The Hundred Dresses. Eleanor Estes.
Hurty Feelings. Helen Lester; illustrated by Lynn Munsinger.
I Love You Like Crazy Cakes. Rose Lewis; illustrated by Jane Dyer.
Orphan Boy. Tololwa Molle; illustrated by Paul Morin.
The Real Thief. William Steig.
Rhymes for Annie Rose. Shirley Hughes.
Ruby Lu, Brave and True. Lenore Look.
Sylvester and the Magic Pebble. William Steig.
The True Story of Stellina. Matteo Pericoli.
The Very Last First Time. Jan Andrews; illustrated by Ian Wallace.
Wake Up, Henry Rooster! Margriet Ruurs.
When-I-was-a-Little-Girl. Rachna Gilmore; illustrated by Renne Benoit.
White Elephant. Sid Fleischman.
Wind in My Pocket. Ellen Bryan Obed. (Poetry)
Younguncle Comes to Town. Vandana Singh.

FICTION FOR CHILDREN 9-12 YEARS OLD

Because of Winn-Dixie. Kate DeCamillo.
Charlie Wilcox. Sharon E. McKay.
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. Marcia Williams. (Comic-strip format)
Gideon the Cutpurse. Linda Buckley-Archer.
The Hand of Robin Squires. Joan Clark.
Hatchet. Gary Paulsen.
The Higher Power of Lucky. Susan Patron.
The Invention of Hugo Cabret. Brian Selznick.
Mary Ann Alice. Brian Doyle.

Standards for School-Age Child Care Programs

Mr. Popper's Penguins. Richard Atwater.
The Neverending Story. Michael Ende.
Odd Man Out. Sarah Ellis.
Ramona the Pest. Beverly Cleary.
Ronia the Robber's Daughter. Astrid Lindgren.
Silverwing Trilogy. Kenneth Oppel.
The Thief-Lord. Cornelia Funke
Tuck Everlasting. Natalie Babbitt.

INFORMATION BOOKS

Albert Einstein : A Life of Genius. Elizabeth MacLeod.
Atlantic Puffin : Little Brother of the North. Domm, Kristin Bieber.
Ballet of the Elephants. Leda Schubert.
Canada Invents. Susan Hughes.
Extreme Animals : The Toughest Creatures on the Earth.
Oh Rats! : The Story of Rats and People. Marrin, Albert.
To Dance. Siena Cherson Siegel. Memoir/ graphic novel format.
This is My Planet : The Kids Guide to Global Warming. Jan Thornhill.
What Does Peace Feel Like? Vladimir Radunsky.
'Let's Read and Find Out' Science books. Excellent series on wide variety of topics. See
Harper Collins website: <http://www.harperchildrens.com/hch/LRFO/>

FOR SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM STAFF

Shake-it-up Tales!: Stories to Sing, Dance, Drum and Act Out. Margaret Read
Macdonald.
The Read-Aloud Handbook: Sixth edition. Jim Trelease.

Standards for School-Age Child Care Programs

Fax it to: (709) 729-6382