

3.1 (b) Program Statement

The approaches set out in Growing Together Family Resource Centre's program statement are implemented in the operation of the program. It is a "living document" and therefore will be reviewed and signed formally by administration annually prior to the Board of Director's Annual meeting or more frequently when it is deemed necessary. The record of this review will be documented and signed in the Board of Director minutes.

Growing Together shall ensure that staff and volunteers will review, sign and implement the approaches specified in the statement by setting annual room goals with support of administration and reviewing the areas of; Responsive relationships, Learning through exploration, Play and Inquiry, Educators as Co-learners, Environment as a Third Teacher, Pedagogical Documentation and Physical Well being on a regular basis at staff meetings. (Program Statement Implementation Checklist) Volunteers and Students will be monitored on an ongoing basis, recorded and addressed using the (Supervisory Site Checklist)

May 2009/April 2016)

Growing Together Family Resource Centre's Program Statement

Goals:

- Growing Together Family Resource Centre (GTFRC) offers children a safe and healthy environment where curiosity is encouraged, concepts are explored, and discovery is celebrated. We believe children to be competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential. Within both the indoor and outdoor environments, activities are planned so that children experience the power of learning together in small and large groups, while still pursuing their own individual learning pathways.
- We promote a culture of positive and responsive interactions in all areas, but also around such routines as rest, quiet time, and nutrition, which supports the overall well-being of the child and their ability to self-regulate.
- We recognize that through play children experience social, emotional, and intellectual development. We value the spontaneity, creativity, and love of learning that is generated through child-initiated and adult-supported play experiences.
- The relationships which we build with children are founded upon respect- in their thinking, their feelings, and their right to be taken seriously.
- We value the whole family and foster engagement and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.

- Growing Together values community partners and their contributions to support the children, families, and staff. We believe that learning is optimal when delivered and received from a variety of sources, and support the staff in their professional learning journey.

All staff, students, volunteers, and Board members will review the program statement prior to commencing employment or volunteering as well as when the program statement is modified.

Implementation of the Program Statement

We are committed to document and review the impact of strategies on the children, families, and staff. The program statements (a–f) will be reflected upon at monthly staff meetings, using a pedagogical approach. We will:

- Look more carefully at what they do each and every day
- Think about the why of their practice
- Understand more deeply how their actions have an impact on children and their families. (How Does Learning Happen?)

Objective: Staff meeting attendance will be documented and those not in attendance will be required to sign off with the recording Supervisor that they have read the staff meeting minutes and understand what was discussed. 80% attendance is required as per 2.22 ECE Job Description of the Policy and Procedure Manual (P&P Manual).

a) Goal: Thoughtfully planned, healthy, safe environments and activities.

Objectives:

- Each program receives 15 minutes four times per week, as well as one hour of Program Time weekly, to plan provocations for the following day based on that days observations.
- Staff will be coached by supervisors on their program plans during weekly visits to their classroom as well as receive regular email feedback on outstanding work or challenges which will be recorded for their annual performance appraisal.
- Staff will annually review and sign off on the GTFRC objectives, philosophy, and program policy (3.1 P&P Manual).
- New staff will receive a Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) document which outlines the protocol for respectful invitation and facilitating small and large groups (DAP– P&P Manual).
- Accident reports are completed when an injury occurs and will be signed by the parent, who will then receive a copy. They are reviewed by the supervisor and staff to determine how the situation could have been prevented (3.10 P&P Manual- Injuries in a child care setting).

- Hand washing is enforced as a preventative measure for the spread of illness through signage, verbal reminders, and regular routines.
- Educators document and follow up in communication binders regarding any child health concerns. Administration completes illness tracking forms for children's files and health unit reporting requirements. Daily health checks are completed and documented upon children's arrival (3.11 P&P Manual- Medication and Illness).

b) Goal: Create a culture of calm and wellness.

Objectives:

- Staff are supported in their challenge to balance work and home life through such options as a flexible work arrangement (2.11 P&P Manual).
- New staff are provided with 2 ½ days of orientation. This is followed up with the pairing of the new staff with a volunteer peer coach.
- The staff will follow the protocol established by the policy on infant sleep routines (3.27 P&P Manual).
- Self-regulation for the child with complex needs is supported through various means, such as utilizing the Individual Behavioural Support Plan form with educators, administration, and the family (3.3 P&P Manual).
- The six core values of GTFRC are displayed at each site on a plaque. Each new staff and family are provided with a copy, and it is discussed upon employment and enrolment as well. The core values are also available on the GTFRC website.
- School age educators receive premium pay to work a regularly scheduled split shift, so there is a consistent professional to build relationships with the children, parents, and community.
- Using DAP as a guide, staff set up a calm space, using nature and authentic items, as well as being aware of the effects of light and sound as stimulants. There are seven areas which are covered in the DAP document (found in GTFRC Policy and Procedure appendices) that is provided to all new staff and is also provided to senior staff as a refresher with their annual performance review.

1. Classroom postings
2. Product vs. Process
3. Small group
4. Large group
5. Non- napping in DAP
6. Meal times & DAP
7. Conflict and learning

The DAP document supports and teaches educators to value learning environments and programming, which allow for large uninterrupted periods of open educational opportunities. These optimize the children's ability to learn.

c) Goal: Observation, understanding child development, and providing invitation and provocations.

Objectives:

- Successful provocations are shared at each monthly staff meeting within the staff's community of practice group.
- Educators are provided with an ELECT binder for each classroom, which contains a continuum of development and has a summary of skills and domains to link to daily observations on their program plans.
- Staff use the drop down support on HiMama which prompts observation. It is an online parent communication tool, to identify skills and domains from the ELECT document which are then shared with parents when forwarding documentation.
- Administration supports the use of recycled and repurposed materials by providing classroom budgets for staff to purchase individualized materials. Materials for provocations are provided at each staff meeting for educators.
- When a staff is not required due to child absences, consideration will be made to have the staff conduct observations and focus on short and long term goals, which have been set collaboratively with their co-worker.

d) Goal: Respect – professionalism. We view the child as competent, capable of complex thinking, curious and rich in potential. These same qualities apply to the staff and families with the addition of rich in experience.

Objectives:

- Staff are provided with Accessibility training (2.26 P&P Manual).
- Staff are provided with the opportunity to participate in “Bridges out of Poverty” training.
- Within the interview process for hiring educators, the candidate is questioned and evaluated on their philosophy for programming, nurturing personality, view of the child, and techniques for building relationships based on GTFRC's values.
- The Early Childhood Educator (ECE) job description includes the expectation of respect (2.22 P&P Manual). The ECE job description is the tool used to guide discussion during staff performance reviews.
- Learning is celebrated in joyful ways through pedagogical documentation. Monthly learning stories are posted collectively from

- each classroom. Educators have an expectation for regular documentation (3.28 P&P Manual).
- New staff are provided with Learning Story training and it is offered to all staff on an annual basis as professional development (P&P Manual forms).
 - Each new educator receives a brochure "An Introduction to How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years For Educators." Each classroom has a copy of "Early Learning for Every Child Today" (ELECT) and "How Does Learning Happen?" for the educators to reference.

e) Goal: We value the whole family.

Objectives:

- An annual family survey will be conducted and results shared with staff, the board of directors, and parents. Feedback will be used to guide new policies and set goals.
- The child will visit the centre prior to the formal parent orientation. The educator receives ½ hour out of program to meet with the family so they can begin to grow a strong, respectful, and reciprocal relationship. The educator will utilize a template to facilitate meaningful questions and discussion. This protocol supports the "warm referral" strategy to access additional supports, if required, for the child to be successful (Parent visit check list form).
- Learning experiences, parenting resources, and links to family events are shared through social media, such as on the GTFRC website, <http://www.gtfrc.org/>. Potential and current families are able to offer suggestions and ask questions publicly. Responses will be posted in a timely manner, offering information and transparency.
- The website is updated regularly so families have access to the information contained in the parent handbook, fee schedule, and current menu.
- Parent's have an option of a daily communication posting through HiMama online (<https://www.himama.com/>), which has the option for extended families to also receive the correspondence. A family of an infant or toddler may also request paper communication in lieu of HiMama.
- Staff receive regular professional development regarding "customer service" (e.g. initiating a warm response for child and parent upon arrival and departure).
- ECEs and Supervisor's participate in regular meetings with families to support children with extra needs.

- The entrances are intentionally equipped with a family's needs in mind, such as adult seating, child toys for wait times, apples for snacking, current parent information flyers, and health related information.
- Parent access to services is a priority for administration. The payment and scheduling options are an example of this. Some such examples are e-money transfers, scheduling online, and drop boxes for after hours.
- As stated in the parent handbook, "visits from parent are always welcome. "
- Literacy week combines daily educator programming with parent participation, which may culminate in a special parent/child-focused evening event.
- Families are viewed as valuable contributors to the programming and the environment and they are encouraged to share their culture, resources, and special talents with the childcare (Parent Handbook).

f) Goal: Growing Together values community partnerships and professional learning.

Objectives:

- The staff uses their community's natural resources within their programming such as rolling in open grass, exploring the neighbourhood, and water-based activities. GTFRC believes that "opportunities to engage with people, places and the natural world in the local environment help children, families, educators and communities build connections, learn and discover and make contributions to the world around them" (How does learning Happen?). The staff are curious to explore the Pedagogy of Place.
- The staff facilitates activities with the children, which contributes to the well-being of individuals or groups, such as raising funds, visits to seniors, or sending home-made cards.
- Staff initiates an annual charity project for a deserving family or organization which involves contributions from the children, families, and educators.
- Growing Together offers the Blenheim parent orientations at the hub location, so that parents can be introduced to other community services in person.
- Prospective educators are questioned about their desire and proof of personal professional development (ECE interview form).
- Staff are provided with documentation to support their College of ECE portfolio after internal professional development at staff meetings.
- Professional development opportunities are forwarded to staff via internal email and invitations are sent to join facebook groups such as CK community of practice.

- Professional development is budgeted for annually. Financial compensation is based on priorities negotiated during performance appraisals for individuals, or on community/government initiatives.
- Educators and other staff are provided the opportunities to grow as leaders, such as through participation on community committees, facilitating and or sharing information at staff meetings, and administrating a social media platform.
- Staff celebrating milestones are encouraged to share their GTFRC journey with their co-workers

(Aug.2016/ June 26/17)