

# **Stella and Tots Child Care Centre Inc.**

## **Program Statement**

Stella and Tots Child Care Inc. offers a learning program that will follow the guidelines of the CCEYA (2014) consistent with Ministry of Education policies, pedagogy and curriculum.

Some of the Ministry documents we reference in our program includes the following:

- How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years
- Ontario Early Years Framework
- Elect Document
- Child Care and Early Years Act

We believe that working hand in hand with our families and educators will create the best overall experience for our children.

### **OUR CHILDREN "including children with individualized plan":**

Children are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential. They grow up in families with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. Every child should feel that he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor to his or her surroundings, and deserves the opportunity to succeed.

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

### **OUR FAMILIES:**

Families love their children and want the best for them. Families are experts on their children. They are the first and most powerful influence on the children's learning, development, health, and well-being. Families bring diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. We want families to feel that they belong, are valuable contributors to their children's learning, and deserve to be engaged in a meaningful way.

## **OUR EDUCATORS :**

*Goal; support staff, home child care providers or others who interact with the children at a child care centre of home child care premises in relation to continuous professional learning.*

Educators are knowledgeable, caring, reflective, and resourceful professionals. They bring diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. They collaborate with others to create engaging environments and experiences to foster children's learning and development. Educators are lifelong learners. They take responsibility for their own learning and make decisions about ways to integrate knowledge from theory, research, their own experience, and their understanding of the individual children and families they work with.

In regard to professional learning for staff we will offer workshops in-house or by community partners and staff meetings with group discussions that are intended to enrich our center. We will also have a staff board with training opportunities that will be updated regularly.

Management also encourage staff to engage in their own professional development outside of their work hours.

## **HOW WE PROGRAM PLAN:**

*Goal; plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported and which is inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans.*

Our approach is PLAY BASED LEARNING.

Stella and Tots Child Care Inc. will provide activities pertaining to circle time, early literacy, math, science and social studies. Teachers will build off of the base programming in the above-mentioned areas and in addition, will create plans in art, sensory, dramatic play, outside play, gross motor and fine motor play. **All activities are based on the children's interest and needs through child observations.**

Our rooms are designed to **keep learning FUN!** Each room will have the following areas: circle area, arts and crafts, science and technology, dramatic play, construction area, sensory, manipulatives, math and table top toys.

**There are 4 foundational conditions that are considered essential to optimal learning and healthy development for children:**

BELONGING	WELL BEING
ENGAGEMENT	EXPRESSION

## **BELONGING:**

Belonging refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual's experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world.

Goal for children: Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.
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Program expectation: Early childhood programs cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.
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At Stella and Tots Child Care Inc., we strive to make each child feel comfortable and at home in our centre. To make transitions easier for new children, we provide an extra week for the child to come in and visit the centre, allowing them to meet their teachers and new friends before they officially start.

*Goal: Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff.*

Our Early Childhood Educators want each and every child in their classroom to feel like they belong. An integral part of this process is welcoming each family into the centre daily. Paying special attention to each child shows their family that they are loved and their educators want them to be a part of the classroom. As well, educators are focused on fostering meaningful friendships with the children, whether it be with an educator or with another child in the class. Helping the children to create friendships shows the children that they are a part of the classroom community.

Daily routines are a large part of our program experience. By setting specific times for each activity and meal time, children know what to expect out of the day. When children know what to expect, they are more confident in executing activities and make them feel like they are responsible in keeping the classroom safe.

With regards to supporting multiculturalism, our educators allow the children to bring in a "Show and Tell" item, where each child has an opportunity to show the class an item from their home that they feel is special. Many children bring in pictures of their families, souvenirs from a trip, or a special item from their parents. In encouraging the children to share parts of their home life with us, we are learning more and more about each family's culture. We encourage parents to send in a food item relating to different holidays that they may celebrate, and we like to do special crafts with the children, highlighting holidays and events from other nationalities.

During the year, educators observe the children in their classroom to see if there are any emerging interests. At Stella and Tots Child Care Inc., we like to provide the children with experiences that they may otherwise not be able to be a part of. For example, our toddler class had an interest in all of the trucks that were driving by their window, so we brought in a fire truck that the children could sit in! Allowing children to interact with community partners such

as firemen and policemen teaches the children about a world outside of their daycare and the people that take care of this world.

There are many ways that our facility provides an inclusive environment. We have structured our classroom so that everything is child sized and able to be accessed by the children. For example, our sinks have been lowered so that children can wash their own hands without the aid of an educator, our toys and games are all on low shelves for children to be able to take what they want, and we have pictures of numbers written on the walls so that the children know how many should be at each play centre.

Our educators provide an inclusive environment with the way they speak to the children as well. Using language that is age appropriate as well as challenging, explaining instructions that children may not understand, and breaking down instructions when necessary are all ways that children are able to be included in the environment.

### **WELL BEING:**

Well-being addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation skills.

Goals for children: Every child is developing a sense of self, health and well-being.
Program expectation: Early childhood programs nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self.

The well being of each and every child in our centre is of utmost importance. With our on-site kitchen, we are easily able to create a menu that is both healthy and child friendly. Following the Canadian Food Guide, and the requirements for children under the age of five, our chef prepares fresh meals each day to accommodate not only nutritional needs of children, but intolerances and allergies as well.

Goal: *Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children.*

Our policies surrounding the children and staff here at Stella and Tots Child Care Inc. are all encompassing. Staff members are to read all policies of the centre before beginning their employment, and are encouraged to read policies every year to make sure they learn about any updates. Important policies such as our anaphylaxis policy is reread and signed each time a child with a life threatening allergy joins our centre. Our parent handbook also outlines all of the important policies that prospective families need to know, and must be signed off before their child starts care with us.

With regards to safety, it is our number one priority here at Stella and Tots Child Care Inc. To ensure the total safety of each child, we maintain ministry mandated ratios at all times. Staff members are constantly monitoring all children in the room. We have safety protocols in place in case of a suspicious person, fire, or other natural disaster, and these protocols are reviewed yearly by all staff members. On all field trips outside of the centre, staff is constantly making sure that all children are accounted for.

*Goal: Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care.*

As mandated by the ministry of education, all children are required to play outside (or have gross motor play) for a period of no less than two hours per day. We have set up an inviting outdoor play environment for the children that includes many sensory activities. A sand box, riding toys, tools to collect bugs and large houses for dramatic play are just some of the amenities we provide for the children to learn and grow.

*Goal: Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff.*

As discussed above, children's interactions with community partners are very important for the mental health of children and parents. We have found in the past that asking parents to come in and share their career with the children opens up a lot of opportunities for learning about community helpers! By allowing parents to share their career with us, not only are we opening up our centre to our families, we are learning more about the community!

In both our toddler and preschool classrooms, promoting self help skills is a big part of our learning process. We like to start by promoting simple self help skills, such as cleaning up after ourselves at lunch time, where educators can model the skill. For example, educators will show the children how to scrape their plate into the garbage, and then assist the children if they need help. By modeling the behaviour repeatedly, children get into the routine of helping themselves.

*Goal: Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self regulate.*

Self regulation is an important skill for children to learn at an early age. It helps them learn how to interact appropriately with the environment, and approach new situations calmly. At Stella and Tots Child Care Inc., educators will use a combination of modeling and using calm, soothing voices to help children learn self regulation skills. For example, if a child is starting to get agitated, educators will speak calmly to the children, get down to their level, and guide the children into a calmer state of mind. Educators will model appropriate behaviour by acknowledging how the child is feeling, and asking questions about their emotions so that the child knows that they are being recognized.

Our classroom environments promote a calm flow of the day, and allow the children to access items that they may need throughout the day. Providing comfortable places for the children to sit and stuffed animals available for the children to cuddle lets the children know that they have an area to go to if they are upset. Strategically placing shelves and tables around the

room allows the children to have space to move around, as well as not triggering the children from running around the classroom. Our toys are placed in colour coordinated bins around the room, and the children learn that each colour goes on a different shelf. The children are responsible for putting each bin on the appropriate shelf, which teaches them responsibility.

### **ENGAGEMENT:**

Engagement suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.

Goal for children: Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.
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Program expectation: Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.
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Goal: *Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry.*

Our children are very involved in the programming and activities we do. Our educators will do observations on the children each week, and based on these observations, we will create programming. Because our children are observed to already have an interest in these subjects, we are building on their natural curiosity and expanding on it. By doing continuous observations on the children, educators are able to catch interests and create spontaneous activities out of them.

Our educators promote open ended play by providing open ended materials that can be used in a variety of ways. At craft, we will describe what we would like the children to make, provide them with the materials, and allow them to create whatever they envision. Our sensory bins are full of related open ended items for the children to explore. Educators will collect items such as rocks, hay and pinecones from the environment, and put them in a bin for the children to use however they want. This kind of spontaneous, open ended play exposes the children to many different kinds of materials, and teaches them how to manipulate these materials.

We use a variety of methods to make children's learning visible to families and their children. In our classrooms, we have a "Look What We Made" board, where we will put the daily crafts we make up there. It is a great visual for the children to see what they have created. Our "How Children Learn" board displays spontaneous learning pictures. For example, we had a lot of high energy children enrolled in our program one year, so we brought in a martial arts studio to teach the children self regulation skills. Charts, graphs and science experiments are always displayed on shelves so that the children can see the changes their experiments are going through each day. At the end of the school year, children will go home with a scrapbook filled with pictures and crafts that they made throughout the year, as a memento of the friendships and accomplishments they have created.

## **EXPRESSION:**

Expression or communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words, and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviors. growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy.

Goal for children: Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.
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Programs expectations: Early childhood programs foster communication and expression in all forms.
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At Stella and Tots Child Care Inc., all of our children are encouraged to express themselves in any way that they feel comfortable. As well as providing open ended materials that children can use in any way they want, through observations, educators provide toys and materials that are of known interest to the children. In doing this, the children are able to further their interest and knowledge of these materials.

*Goal: Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences.*

We provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences by observing and documenting the children's interests and expanding their knowledge surrounding what is important to them. Educators set goals for children that will be met by various developmentally appropriate lesson plans in the classroom. As well as child directed learning, other aspects of the day are also included in the child's schedule such as indoor and outdoor active play, rest and quiet time with consideration to the individual needs of the children in care.

## **COMMUNICATION AND REVIEW WITH PARENTS/FAMILY**

*Goal: Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.*

*Goal: Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses on the children and their families.*

Stella and Tots Child Care Inc. will use documentation to reflect and complete ongoing evaluations of our programs and their impact on the children and their families. Parents feedback will be used to adjust and strengthen the programs accordingly. Educators, students and volunteers will read our Program Statement before interacting with the children. Families/parents

will also be encouraged to routinely review the Program Statement in order to ensure that their child/children are receiving the most from our programs. Our educators and supervisor will work together to create meaningful goals that will ensure educators continue with their professional learning and development.