

Center de la Petite Enfance Concordia

Educational Program

January 2014

Educational Philosophy

Our educational program is based in the-belief that children learn through play. Through their play experiences young children develop and enhance their physical, emotional, social, cognitive and creative skills. Adult child interactions are a key factor in enriching and extending the young child's ability to construct knowledge during play periods, daily routines and transition periods. To better foster the young child's exploration during play the physical environment is set-up to facilitate the needs, interests, styles and abilities of each individual child within a group setting.

This philosophy is implemented in a child-centred, as opposed to a teacher-directed, manner; thus children are provided with extended periods of time for concrete, hands-on free play activities, interspersed with teacher-guided activities (e.g.: circle time). The program includes a reasonable balance of quiet and more active times in the children's day, along with both indoor and outdoor play times and activities which encompass whole group, small group and the individual. We view the healthy development of the whole child and use play experience to promote all areas of a child's development. Each child is recognized as an individual who grows and develops at his/her own pace and in his/her unique way, thus programming is age and developmentally appropriate. Programming also includes the opportunity for children to participate in mixed age group activities. Building positive relationships between parents, children and child care staff is stressed. Finally, the centre strives to provide a warm, secure, nurturing and fun environment for both children and teachers and a sense of security for parents.

In terms of social development, the centre believes that children should develop positive self-concepts, strong sense of autonomy and independence, willingness to experiment (e.g.: new experiences of people) and the ability to express themselves both verbally and nonverbally. Furthermore, it believes that children should develop appropriate social skills (e.g.: sharing, cooperation and respect for others as individuals). Finally, the belief that children should develop an awareness of the community and an understanding of the multicultural heritage of their peers is promoted and in this way develop respect for diversity among peoples (e.g.: race, sex, age, special needs).

In the area of emotional development, the Centre provides a supportive environment where young children feel free to express their feelings (e.g.: affection, delight, fear, sense of humour). We support the child in attempts to manage their feelings and encourage them in verbally expressing those feelings. We help them identify their feelings and encourage the children to consider the feelings of others. This is when we promote caring attitudes and "caring for others".

In terms of cognitive development, the Centre promotes active, hands-on learning through child-directed, teacher-guided activities and learning centre activities. A variety of activities are provided to encourage children to encounter and master developmentally appropriate early math, science, problem solving, pre-reading and pre-writing concepts. Children are provided with extended periods of time for free self-exploration of the environment: for this purpose, a variety of materials and activities are routinely provided such as books, blocks, puzzles and cognitive toys, sand and water, and a housekeeping or dramatic corner. The development of receptive expressive language skills (e.g.: listening and speaking) is important. All children are exposed to the French language and follow a bilingual program to facilitate the learning of French.

In the area of physical development, the Centre provides activities that develop the general physical well-being of the children (e.g.: good eating habits, proper hygiene and safety). Opportunities for gross motor (e.g.: running, climbing, sliding) and fine motor (e.g.: painting, drawing, puzzles) development are provided on a daily basis.

In terms of creative development, the Centre encourages the development of children's creativity, imagination and provides opportunities for children to develop an aesthetic appreciation for music, art and drama.

Integration

The transition from the summer program to the fall program is an important one for the childcare centre and is approached with care.

All the new children are encouraged to have two scheduled visits to the childcare centre before the fall programme begins. These visits will introduce the child to his or her classroom and educator(s). It is hoped that through this gradual integration, these children will be prepared to attend on a full-time basis once the new session begins.

Routine Activities

These are activities that fulfil the basic needs of the children. Activities such as snack time, lunch, rest time and hygiene are as important to the development and well-being of a child as any other. The child is learning new and exciting skills with regard to healthy eating habits, manners, toileting and self-help skills. Time has been allocated within the schedule of daily activities to permit such activities to take place at the children's pace. Hand washing is practised as a way of significantly preventing any contamination.

Snack

Snacks are given twice a day (morning and afternoon). Snack time takes place in a relaxed, calm atmosphere that allows for verbal interaction between educators and individual children. The goal of snack time is to serve healthy snacks and teach children about good nutrition. These times will serve to teach the children to be autonomous as they will be eating unassisted. The children, on occasion, make their own snacks as a cooking activity.

REMINDER: no peanuts and nuts of any kind are permitted in the centre

Rest Time

All children in the Centre rest on cots after lunch. For afternoon rest time, the childcare centre provides a fitted cotton sheet for the child's individual cot. A soft toy may also be brought to the childcare centre and will only be used during the rest period. Rest times are as follows:

- Toddlers 2 hours
- 2 year olds 1.5 hours
- 3-4 year olds 1 hour

Group Activities

Group activities serve to introduce new games, new songs, etc. Activities in a group setting allow learning and development of new and diversified skills: gross motor, cognitive and social skills. This is achieved by offering activities such as: painting, music, drama, arts and crafts and games.

Weekly, bi-weekly and/or monthly themes are used in order to give direction to the variety of activities that are planned. These themes call upon the organisational and animating skills of the educators who must maintain the interest of all the children while encouraging each child to finish what s/he has started.

Indoor play will replace outside activities in the case of rain or extremely cold temperatures (-10°C or less). The wind factor is also considered when deciding if it is too cold to go out. Otherwise all the children are expected to go out twice daily without exception. If your child is too sick to go outdoors to play, he/she is too sick to be at the childcare centre and should remain at home. In addition, removing a teacher from the playground to stay with a child indoors reduces the adult/child ratio outside.

Free play (from 7:00 to 9:00/9:30)

Time is allocated whereby the child is able to determine what s/he wishes to do. Educational materials, toys and games are available within the child's reach. Clearly defined storage areas are intended to encourage the children to tidy up after an activity.

The purpose of free-play is manifold. For the child, it allows the opportunity for free exploration of the room environment and to make choices of activities as well as of friends to share a particular activity with. At this time, the child may prefer to read or draw by him/herself or play in a small group. For the educator, it allows for time to greet parents/guardians and children at the beginning of each day, to aid in the integration of new children to the group, to give individualized attention to each child, to observe and identify progress made and to communicate daily with parents.

This multi-age grouping allows opportunity for children to engage in play experience with children of different ages. As the teacher arrives, they collect the children in their group and proceed to their classrooms for the day.

Program

Example of the daily schedule of activities:

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|------------------|--|
| 7:00 – 9:00/9:30 | Free Play/bathroom routine |
| 9:00 – 11:00 | Snack/gym or outside play (18mos & 2's) Snack/morning program - Thematic Circle/Learning Centres (3's & 4's) |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Morning Program – Thematic Circle/Learning Centres (18mos & 2's) Bathroom routine/Outside play/Gym (3's & 4's) |
| 11:30 – 14:30 | Lunch/Story time/Bathroom routine/Rest time (everyone) |
| 14:00 – 16:00 | Wake-up/Bathroom routine/snack (18mos & 2's) |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| | Outside play or gym (everyone) |
| | Snack (3's & 4's) |
| 15:45 – 17:15 | Afternoon program – thematic circle/Learning Centres (everyone) |
| 17:15 – 18:00 | Free play/quiet activities. |

The children follow a daily program that includes:

Circle Activities: are based on themes designed to encourage and develop social, language, motor and cognitive skills, and may include group activities such as discussion, games, songs, finger play, poetry, storytelling, etc.

Learning Centres: are established within the classroom and deal with various areas such as dramatics, books, science, art, blocks, math, manipulations and computers. These areas promote learning through peer interaction, cooperative learning, teacher/child interaction, individual exploration and learning through play.

Outdoor Play: is a healthy physical activity that promotes gross motor through climbing, running, skipping, hopping, ball playing, sand and water play, etc. As the children develop and master these skills, they become more confident individuals. These activities also allow the child an opportunity for fresh air and exercise.

Socialization: through organized games and activities such as imagination play, multi-age groupings, cooperation, turn taking through organized games. Pro-social skills (i.e.: sharing, turn taking and cooperation) are encouraged through small group activities (same age and multi-aged) such as imaginative play, games and clock building. In addition, whole group activities such as organized games, discussions, songs and movement activities provide the children with opportunities to develop and practice their interpersonal skills.

Outdoor Activities: This encourages the respect of nature through activities such as plantings, picnics, apple picking, bird feeders, tree decorating, observing insects, painting, and drawing.

Bilingual Program: The objective of the French program is to familiarize the child with the sounds and vocabulary of the French language as well as to enjoy learning a new language. During the circle times (French and English), the children join together to discuss the weekly theme. They sing songs, play games, and/or the teacher reads theme related books and poetry. Various learning centres are set up in the classroom to encourage learning and help to develop independence and self-confidence (i.e.: opportunities to choose, make decisions, be responsible, show initiative). Throughout the day, the children are provided with many opportunities to express themselves in French and English at their own pace.

Outings: Outings are an important part of CPE Concordia's program. The outings provide opportunities for the children to explore their surrounding community through trips to the library, parks, and walks around the neighbourhood. Longer trips provide the children with seasonal activities like apple picking and sugaring off. Also, the children enjoy trips to the theatre to see plays. The staff of CPE Concordia carefully plans these outings and they are a wonderful learning experience for the children as well as an opportunity for parents/guardians to join in and share a meaningful experience with their children and their group.

Field Trips: For trips out of walking distance, the children can travel by metro, city bus or a bus is hired to safely transport the children. An emergency bag is prepared with a first aid kit, childcare numbers and children's information. Parent/Guardians volunteers are welcome and need to follow the rules of the centre during these outings. For example, on walks, the children need to hold an adult's hand. *We realize this may be different from what they can do with their own parents/guardians, but young children can begin to understand different expectations. Because we are caring for many children, our safety policies may be stricter than those a parent/guardian has.*

Ratios: CPE Concordia maintains small group size and low teacher/child ratios to promote high quality childcare and programming at the Centre.

| <u>Children's Ages</u> | <u>Ratios</u> | <u>Group Size</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 18 months to 2.01 years | 1 to 5 | 9 |
| 2.02 to 2.08 years | 1 to 6 | 12 |
| 2.09 to 3.03 years | 1 to 7 | 13 |
| 3.04 to 3.10 years | 1 to 7 | 15 |
| 3.11 to 4.04 years | 1 to 8 | 15 |
| 4.05 to 4.11 years | 1 to 8 | 16 |

(It should be noted the MFACF ratio requirements are 1 to 8 for 18mos to 3 years and 1 to 10 for 4+ years)