

SCHOOL OF EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDIES
INCLUSION POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR:
RYERSON EARLY LEARNING CENTRE (ELC) and
GERRARD RESOURCE CENTRE (GRC)



STATEMENT

The Ryerson Early Learning Centre (ELC), Gerrard Resource Centre (GRC) and Our Lady of Lourdes extended day program (OLOL) value the inclusion of all children with identified, or additional support needs into their respective programs.

We acknowledge that:

- **Families are an integral support and decision maker for their children.** In keeping with our philosophy of equity, diversity and inclusion, we respect and acknowledge each family's culture, values and unique needs.
- **Families are the most important influence in their children's lives.** We strive to establish partnerships with families to strengthen our ability to meet their children's needs, to understand their personal contexts for learning, to enhance our program and to create an inclusive environment for all members (UNCRC, Article 14 (1,2)).
- **Each child is an individual and a member of the community.** We recognize and appreciate that children have an innate curiosity and a determination to understand the world around them; children are competent, capable, and curious beings who have a right to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people (UNCRC, Article 29 (1.d)).
- **Each child has unique ideas and perspectives, and ways of reflecting and sharing them with others.** By understanding the child, we promote the development of social, emotional, cognitive and physical growth. Children have the right to express themselves freely and we provide opportunities for children to seek, receive and impart information through a variety of mediums including print, orally, art and media (UNCRC Article 13 (1)).
- **Each child has the right to participate fully in their home, community and Early Learning program.** We promote this inclusive practice through ongoing interactions, observations and reflection, to examine the main inquiries that children are exploring about their world. As co-investigators with the children, their families and community, we collaboratively create a supportive environment to foster this participation (UNCRC, Article 23 (1)).
- **Play is the child's primary medium of learning, which promotes problem-solving, decision making, and positive interactions with others.** Children benefit from both indoor and outdoor environments where they can rest and leisure, explore cultural life, the arts, nature, and take safe risks (UNCRC, Article 31 (1)).
- **All children, family members, students, staff, and faculty should be regarded and valued as unique individuals.** In partnership with the Faculty of Community Services at Ryerson University, we offer opportunities to share these values through ongoing collaborative projects, interactions and student placements.

- **Creating responsive and positive interactions between and among adults and children promotes opportunities to practice self-regulation and socially responsible attributes.** We encourage leadership behaviour in young children by providing opportunities for social learning through modeling and peer training. Children have the capacity to develop and enhance their sense of responsibility, empathy towards others and environmental stewardship (UNCRC, Article 29 (1, e)).
- **Well-being, engagement, expression and belonging are embedded within all aspects of a high quality Early Learning Program.** These four pillars of the Ontario Ministry of Education document *How Does Learning Happen?* are interdependent and work together to offer a foundation of learning and engagement.

PROCEDURES

Prior to entering the program:

We believe that every family has the right to high quality early learning and care that meets their needs. Prior to entering the program, if a family has identified needs or concerns about their child, upon the family's request a meeting will be scheduled with the centre manager, classroom RECE, and family and paraprofessional (when applicable). Families will have the opportunity to discuss the strengths and needs of their child; highlighting the strategies that work well and what their child's preferred activities are.

During the meeting, the family will have an opportunity to learn about the supports, resources and strategies the centre can offer to ensure the child has an opportunity to engage in all aspects of the program. A plan of action will be developed to outline resource, training and strategies that need to be put in place prior to the child starting at the centre. The meeting will be documented to ensure the plan is clear, listing next steps and a date for a follow-up meeting.

Once the child is enrolled in the program:

As part of our Curriculum Framework, it is the responsibility of the RECEs to observe, reflect and document all children's responses and engagement in the program. This process guides inquiry and scaffolds developmental growth and interests.

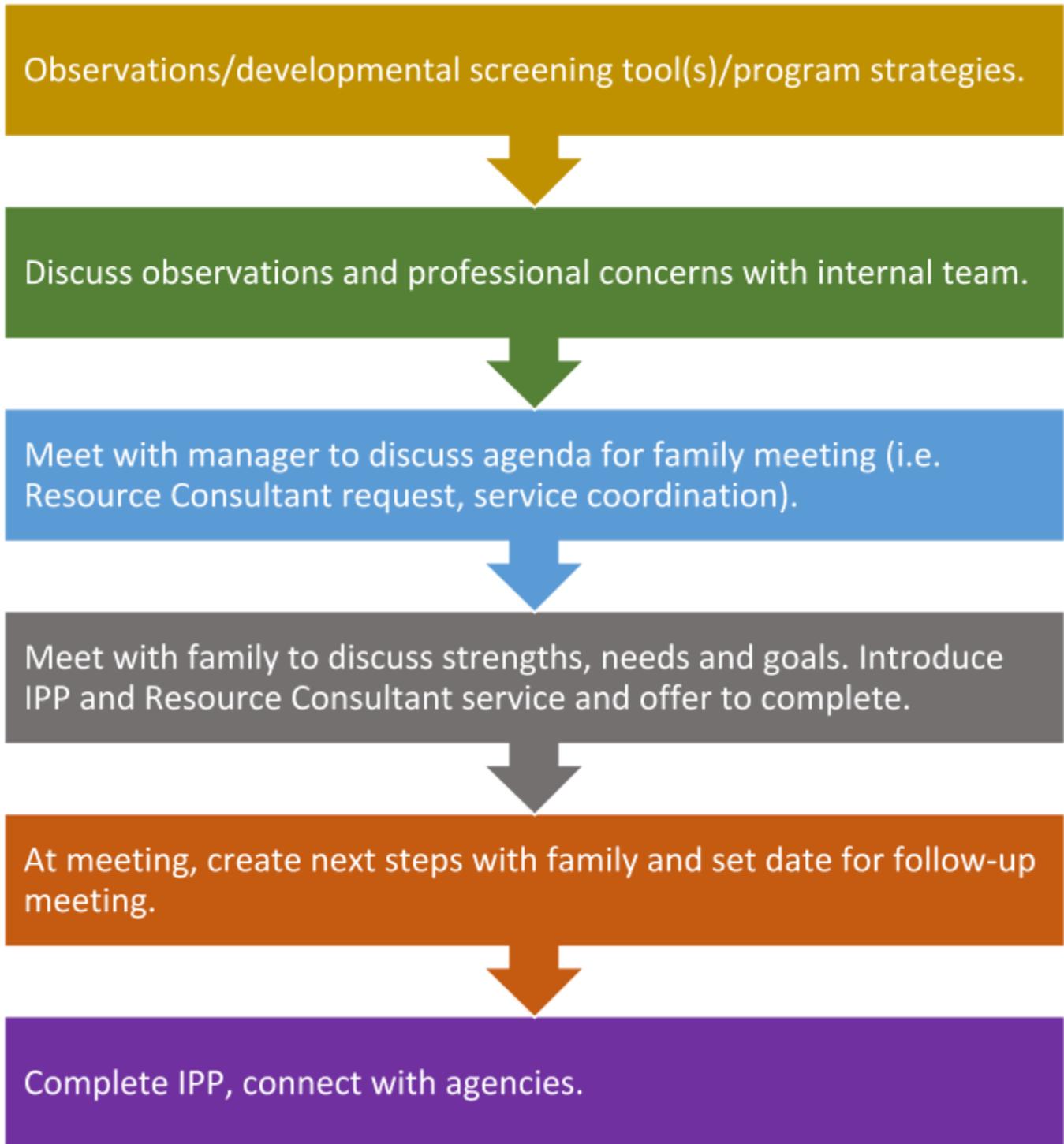
RECEs complete a Nipissing developmental screening tool with all children aged 15, 18 and 24 months old. This information is shared with families and if concerns are identified during these screens a meeting is set with the family to discuss strategies, resources and next steps.

In addition to ongoing observations, the RECEs may feel the need to capture additional developmental milestone data using general speech and language checklists, the Ages & Stages Questionnaire, Red Flags document and / or the Portage screening tool. The outcome of these tools are discussed with families in a meeting.

When specific identified needs or disabilities are presented, a meeting takes place with the manager, RECE and family to discuss services, resources and next steps. At this time, the manager may request consent to refer the family to a Resource Consultant through the City of Toronto's "Every Child Belongs" initiative. Simultaneously, the RECE and manager will introduce the process for an Individualized Program Plan (IPP) to the family. Together, the RECE, manager and family will discuss goals, strategies and resources pertaining to inclusion, and developmental growth and

relationship building. The IPP goals are strength based and embedded in your child's regular routine. External community resource professionals may be accessed in order to support the family, or the child's program, as requested by the centre or family.

Inclusion Procedures



TRAINING

Training of RECEs is integral to the success of an inclusive program. It is necessary that the RECEs are educated, knowledgeable and trained professionals in order to meet the individual needs of the family and child. The training of the RECEs is derived from a family-centred approach from which they make every decision in conjunction with the families' concerns and wishes. Studies and training of all staff can include but is not limited to specialized feeding implementations, medical conditions, physical adaptations, and extended behaviour guidance support.

REVIEW

Through ongoing assessment and observations, the RECEs log the child's progress as outlined on the IPP goals. The IPP is a working document which the RECEs review continuously. The long-term objectives and short-term objectives can be modified based on the child's progress, and in consultation with the family. The trans-disciplinary team meets every six - twelve months to discuss progress and update the goals.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

The RECE can assist families with the transition to school. Once the family has enrolled their child in a Kindergarten program, they have a variety of options for the RECE to share information with the school pertaining to their child's developmental progress. Please speak to the manager about these options. Meetings with the school team should take place between February - April to ensure appropriate supports are in place for the child prior to starting at their new school. The family is responsible for arranging these meetings and providing consent for the centre to speak with the school.

Acknowledgements

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