



Best Practices

FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

BIRTH – 3 YEARS | 3 – 5 YEARS

2008

Best Practices

BIRTH-3YEARS | 3-5YEARS

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Early Childhood Development

FROM STANDARDS TO PRACTICE

George Brown's School of Early Childhood was awarded a 5 year Association of Canadian Community Colleges project in 2003 funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Our partners on the project include; the Early Childhood Commission, Ministry of Education and Youth (MOEY), Shortwood Teachers' College, UNICEF in Jamaica as well as P.A.C.E. Canada.



Best Practices

DOCUMENTING OUR PROCESS

In 2004, principals from our partner schools — Bridgeport Infant School, Marlin Avenue Basic School, Portmore Daycare Centre, Silverstone Basic School and Sabina Basic Schools traveled to Toronto on a study tour. During the tour we began discussions along with members of the Early Childhood Commission and the Ministry of Education and Youth about the creation of a Best Practices document. In our dialogue we developed the goals for the Best Practices pilot and established a process that would allow each of our five pilot schools to create an individual school Best Practice document with a committee that was to include parents, teachers, principals, members of the Early Childhood Commission, MOEY education officers, faculty from Shortwood Teachers' College, Dudley Grant and UNICEF.

We developed workshops to demonstrate the Best Practices Approach and modeled the process with our first section: Best Practices for Interactions and Relationships. In developing this model we used the Caribbean Learning Outcomes, discussed the format of the document and how it would be incorporated into Best Practices. It was decided that identifying both appropriate and inappropriate practices with a checklist would be the most useful format for Early Childhood Practitioners (ECPs). Each section is to be accompanied by a CD incorporating photographs that would illustrate both appropriate and inappropriate practices. It was decided that the Best Practices document would have the following sections:

- **Best Practices for Working with Families**
- **Best Practices for Interactions and Relationships**
- **Best Practices for Schedule, Routines and Transitions**
- **Best Practices for Environments**
- **Best Practices for Planning for Curriculum**

The stakeholders group also decided that two documents would be developed. One for children from Birth-3 years of age and the second for Early Childhood Practitioners working with children 3-5 years of age. At each meeting, schools brought their ideas forward and the format that is included here represents the collaboration of all 5 schools and key informants.

It is hoped that this process can be replicated in other areas of the island and serves as a model for Best Practices. It can be used as a tool for discussions between practitioners, family members and principals to ensure quality experiences for children. Each practitioner who reviews this material will be involved in a process of reflective practice. This document provides standards that ensure quality and define exemplary practice. We see Best Practices as an on-going project. Responsive childcare is an active and evolving process. Changes are to be made as we recognize omissions, acquire

new knowledge and invent new program strategies.

Our document does not repeat or take the place of the Early Childhood Act, Regulations and Standards for the operation of Early Childhood Institutions in Jamaica. This document should guide all of our programs.

To quote "Start Them Right":

"The care that children receive in the first six to eight years of life will determine the adults that they will become. These are the years when the foundation for growth and development; health and nutrition; physical, social, language, creative and cognitive abilities is laid. The experiences children have and the way in which they interact with their parents, family members, other adults and caregivers influence the way they learn and behave."

>> To guide our **Best** project, a *Stakeholders* We gratefully acknowledge their commitment to early in Jamaica.

Practices *group* was established. their participation and childhood education

EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMISSION

- Dr. Maureen Samms Vaughan, Chair Early Childhood Commission
- Merris Murray, Executive Director, Early Childhood Commission
- Ann Gray, Training, Certification and Accreditation Co-ordinator, Early Childhood Commission
- Dr. Rose Davies, University of the West Indies, Joint Board of Education
- Mr. Richard Williams, Early Childhood Commission

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND YOUTH

- Frieda Thomas, MOEY, Basic School Enhancement Project
- Gloria Patterson, MOEY, Integration Project
- Norma Hayles, MOEY, Retired
- Evadne Venor, MOEY, Assistant Chief Education Officer
- Leonie Gray, MOEY, EC Unit
- Mr. Fitz Brown, MOEY, EC Unit
- Ms. Dorna Wright, MOEY, EC Unit
- Ms. Sharon Gilzene, MOEY, Resource Centre Manager
- Ms. Felicita Harris, MOEY, EC Unit

INSTITUTIONS

- Elaine Foster Allen, Principal, Shortwood Teachers' College
- Audrey Carothers, Vice Principal, Shortwood Teachers' College
- Chris Clarke, Shortwood Teachers' College
- Fay Corothers, Faculty, University of the West Indies and Shortwood Teachers' College, Joint Board of Education
- Ms. Fay Dixon, Shortwood Teachers' College

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Ceceile Minott, Project Director, Dudley Grant Memorial Trust, Resource Centre Upgrading Project
- Maisie Wint, Dudley Grant Memorial Trust
- Marjorie Gaynor, Centre Manager, Dudley Grant Early Childhood Resource Centre
- Pauline Ritchie, Transition Project, UNICEF
- Lola Ramocan, UNICEF Jamaica
- Janet Cupidon-Quallo, UNICEF Jamaica

PILOT SCHOOL PARTICIPANTS

- Ms. Pauline Fisher Robinson, Principal, Portmore Day Care Centre
- Ms. Lena Thorpe, Principal, Bridgeport Infant School
- Ms. Margaret Campbell, Principal, Marlin Avenue Basic School
- Ms. Margaret Williams, Principal, Sabina Basic School
- Ms. Ceereta McFarlane, Principal, Silverstone Basic School
- Ms. Pauline Christian, Principal, Silverstone Basic School
- Ms. Carmen Smith, Bridgeport Infant School
- Ms. Christine DeSilva Campbell, Bridgeport Infant School
- Ms. Nathalie Gilmore, Marlin Avenue Basic School
- Ms. Erica Livermore, Sabina Basic School
- Ms. Asana Downer, Silverstone Basic School

GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE

- Mr. Allan Rickards, Local Consultant
- Ms. Patricia Chorney Rubin, Chair
- Ms. Marie Goulet, Faculty
- Mr. Nelson Hillier, Manager
- Ms. Lynn Wilson, Faculty
- Ms. Nancy Sherman, Director, International Education
- Ms. Jane Bertrand, Faculty
- Ms. Colette Kane, Manager
- Ms. Erica Seaton, Teacher

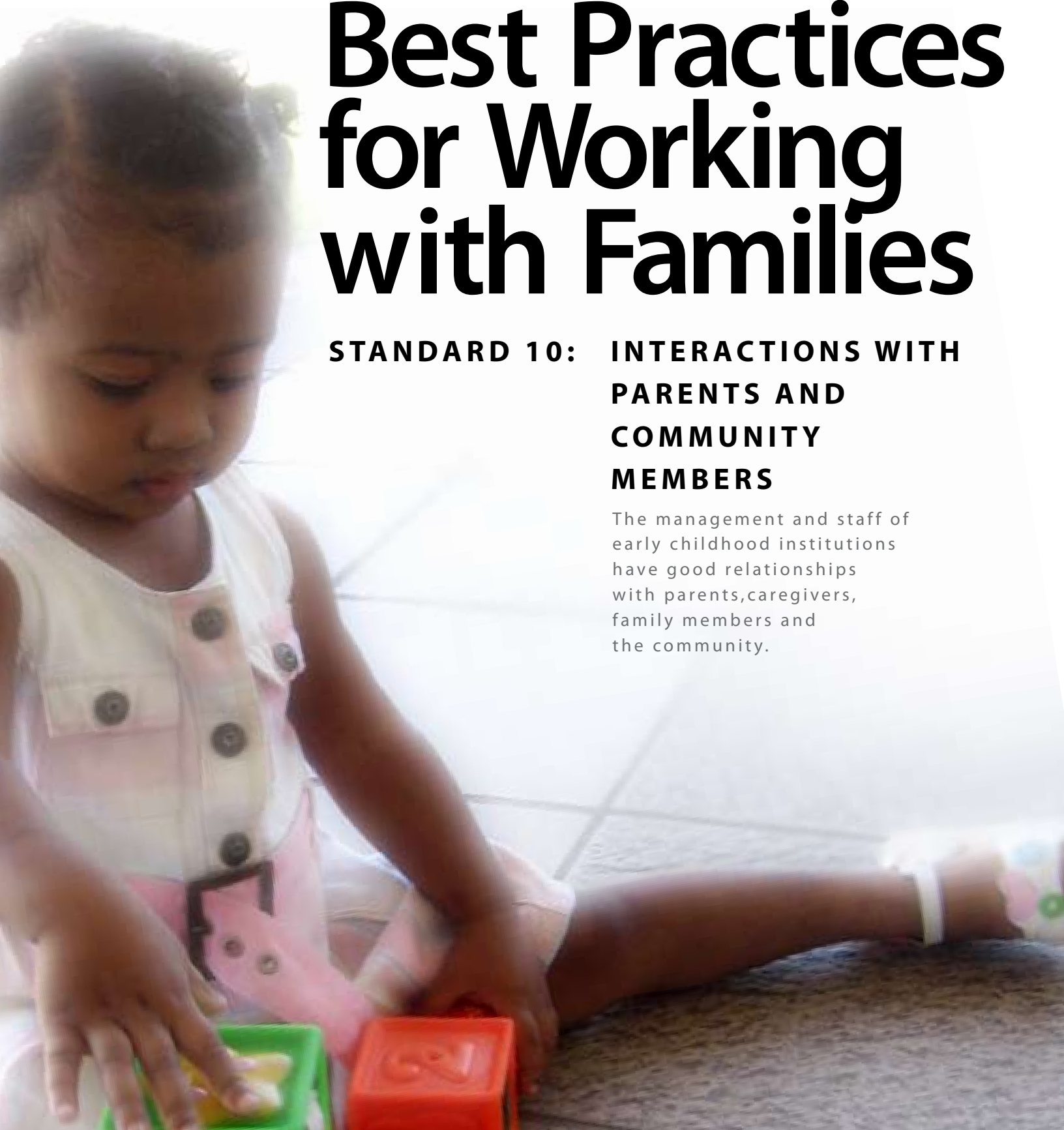


Birth to Three Year Olds

Best Practices for Working with Families

STANDARD 10: INTERACTIONS WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The management and staff of early childhood institutions have good relationships with parents, caregivers, family members and the community.



BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

1	<input type="checkbox"/> All institution practices underline the fundamental principle that the family is the child's primary source of love and care and the most powerful influence in the child's life. For example, key messages and important written and verbal communication reflect the importance of partnerships with families.	<input type="checkbox"/> Institutions do not recognize the important role families/guardians play in the lives of their children. ECPs do not communicate in a verbal and written format with families in order to strengthen the partnership.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> The institution demonstrates respect for diverse family systems and practices which include religious beliefs and practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> The institution is not respectful of all family "types". ECPs display a bias towards some family structures, cultural and religious practices.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that family and community involvement is a means of expanding the child's opportunities for learning and development.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not involve the community in the life of the school.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> The institution welcomes family participation in the Early Childhood Institution– meetings, fundraising, Board of Directors, PTA, cultural and social events and as volunteers in the Early Childhood Institution etc. An open door policy exists in the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs act as experts discouraging family involvement in the school.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> According to Standard 10, ECPs must meet once before the child starts attending the institution. Home visits allow ECPs to build strong relationships with new families. Parents are encouraged to spend time with their child in the ECI prior to their child's entry into the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not meet with families before the child starts.
6	<input type="checkbox"/> The institution collects relevant information about the child and family, for example health records, through a planned orientation process.	<input type="checkbox"/> The institution does not collect vital information on the child and the family.
7	<input type="checkbox"/> A parent orientation information booklet is provided for new families that include all of the critical and relevant information about the operation of the institution and is prepared by ECPs, principals and board members.	<input type="checkbox"/> No family booklet is provided in order for families to understand the school's expectations.
8	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs will find opportunities to recognize family contributions. A skills bank is established to record the expertise and interests of new families which can be used to enhance curriculum delivery, operations of the Early Childhood Institution etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> No skills bank is established and families expertise is not acknowledged or utilized.
9	<input type="checkbox"/> The physical environment appears welcoming, eg. signs are posted, inviting entrance ways. Families are made to feel welcome. An open door policy is in effect.	<input type="checkbox"/> The environment of the institution is not maintained and signage is not visible. Parents are not made to feel welcome at the ECI and are barred from freely entering.
10	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly curriculum is posted for families to review. A pictorial schedule is displayed to help parents and children understand the day's events.	<input type="checkbox"/> No pictorial schedule is displayed. No weekly curriculum is posted.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

11

In order to celebrate children's accomplishments ECPs communicate important messages and celebrate children's strengths and accomplishments. Inviting displays of children's work are provided.

ECPs do not communicate with families. ECPs work is displayed, not the children's.

12

ECPs are in tune with individual families demonstrating strong interpersonal communication skills that foster partnership with families particularly during a time of need. ECPs encourage families to share information that will have an impact on the child, eg. Parents are separating.

ECPs are not skilful communicators. ECPs are unaware of particular challenges individual families may be facing, for example, financial issues, sickness etc.

13

ECPs encourage father participation, eg. Father's Day, meeting for father's only, breakfast events.

ECPs speak more to mothers and do little to engage fathers in the school.

14

ECPs develop strategies for communicating with families in circumstances where children arrive at the institution by taxi, sibling or family friend, for example, if there has been little family contact, the ECP would call home.

ECPs are rarely engaged with families. Few messages are communicated in a written format. ECPs do not follow up when children are absent for extended periods of time or does not attend institution on a regular basis.

15

Family meetings are held to discuss how the child has adjusted to institution noting the child's progress developmentally at a time that is convenient for both parties. These take place at least every 6 months and meetings are recorded and signed by both parents and staff. Meetings are also held to help families understand appropriate ways to discipline with the child without using corporal punishment.

No meetings are held. No reporting process is in place. Meetings take place but no record of the meeting is in place.

16

ECPs are responsible for educating families about quality learning environments, play based experiences. ECPs and family members learn together through workshops established in co-operation with each other.

The institution does not organize any opportunities for life long learning.

17

A resource area is established in the institution with relevant resources for families. It might also include family albums, family board, and ideas for parents to do at home with their children, resources that can be shared between institution and home, eg. Borrow A Book Program.

No resource centre is established for families.

18

A process is in place to resolve issues when they arise between families and the centre. General comments and concerns of parents are recorded in a log book and in a place that both staff and parents can easily access and read.

No conflict resolution policy is in place. No record is kept of concerns or parent's comments.

19

Parents have the right to refuse to let their children participate in ECI activities, including going on outings.

ECPs insist that children attend events and outings.

Best Practices for Interactions & Relationships

STANDARD 3: INTERACTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

Early childhood staff has the characteristics, training, knowledge, skills and attitude to promote positive behaviours and reduce difficult and challenging behaviours in children



BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs built trust and security in warm, responsive interactions with young children. They understand that positive interactions that respect the individual child are the foundation of social environments that promote the development of a positive sense of self.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not demonstrate a caring, responsive or respectful approach with the children undermining the child's sense of self. ECPs demonstrate indifference, are unsupportive of children's efforts and demonstrate an "in charge attitude."
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand brain research and its implications for optimum development in young children for life long learning, development and health. Their interactions and planning reflect this understanding.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs have limited or no understanding of the importance of the early years and the development of the brain and their role in providing optimum experiences.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs recognize that infants have individual and differing temperaments; fearful, feisty and flexible and therefore are able to respond appropriately.	<input type="checkbox"/> Little time and effort is devoted to observing infant behaviour and respecting individual's traits.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs accept children as they are (culture, economic background, language, religious beliefs and practices and gender).	<input type="checkbox"/> Preferential treatment (non verbal, verbal) is directed towards some children. Boys are handled differently and allowed to cry for longer periods of time than girls, which feeds into the stereotype that boys need to be "tough" and girls need to be handled in a more gentle way.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs positively communicate and support children using verbal and non verbal strategies such as appropriate voice tone and volume, eye contact, facial expression, body language etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Voice tone and volume is harsh and loud. Children's signals and efforts to engage the ECPs are met with a stern and unresponsive affect.
6	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs demonstrate enjoyment and affection and acknowledge children's feelings and alleviate their fears. ECPs understand the importance of shared emotions as a way for children to learn about and express emotions. ECPs respond promptly and appropriately to babies cries acknowledging the child is crying and despite being busy says, "I know you are upset I'm coming". Babies are cuddled, hugged and verbally and emotionally supported.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs demonstrate a lack of empathy for children's emotions and tend to be harsh and dismissive. ECPs leave children to cry for long periods of time with limited verbal or non-verbal cues indicating that they are not in tune with the child's distress. ECPs are unable to differentiate between the different types of children's cries. ECPs handle the babies roughly indicating their lack of patience. ECPs strategies are inappropriate such as telling a child to stop crying "there is nothing wrong with you."
7	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs acknowledge and label the child's feelings using simple and responsive language for example, "Saying good bye to dad makes you sad". ECPs celebrate children's attempts to self regulate including attention, emotion and behaviour regulation.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs disregard and/or dismiss children's feelings, for example, "You're okay, stop crying". ECPs do not celebrate children's pro-social accomplishments.
8	<input type="checkbox"/> Upon waking, babies are taken from their cribs and cots and actively engaged.	<input type="checkbox"/> Babies are left for long periods of time when awake in their cribs.
9	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are trained to record their observations of the children for reference in order to respond and plan appropriately and support developing skills.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs have had no specific training on observational techniques and have gathered no information on the children's developmental levels, preferences etc. and therefore are not able to individualize planning.
10	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs create opportunities to work with small groups and low ratios. ECPs engage in one to one interactions with babies. ECPs allow the child/ren to lead the play.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not look for opportunities to engage children in small or individual situations. ECPs do not follow the child's cues, instead ECPs direct the interaction.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

11	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide a sensory perceptual rich environment, for example, all five senses are considered when planning for the children, to support optimum development.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide limited sensory perceptual exploration, for example, few olfactory experiences are planned. Sensory exploration focuses only on tactile experiences.
12	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide safe teacher made props, play materials etc. for the children that are developmentally appropriate and accessible at the child's level. ECPs provide safe teacher made props, play materials etc. for the children that are developmentally appropriate and accessible at the child's level.	<input type="checkbox"/> Props and materials are limited and those that are available are stored out of the reach of the children.
13	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage children's preferences for food, objects and people and understand that this supports the development of their self concept and self esteem.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs have no understanding of the children's preferences or their connection to the development of their self concept. ECPs are intrusive and disruptive during the children's activities and do not allow the child to choose.
14	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs appropriately position themselves in the room so that they are able to monitor the children and respond to their needs. They are also in a position to ensure the children's safety by being at the child's level.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs sit with their back to the children and are unaware of what is taking place in the room. They are unable to respond to a child's needs or when dangerous situations present themselves. ECPs do not sit on the floor with the infants or sit on tables role modeling inappropriate behaviour.
15	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage children to imitate language and wait for their response. They name describe events and broadcast what is happening.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs sit with their back to the children and are unaware of what is taking place in the room. They are unable to respond to a child's needs or when dangerous situations present themselves. ECPs do not sit on the floor with the infants or sit on tables role modeling inappropriate behaviour. respond etc. ECPs do not use meaningful moments to provide language expansion.
16	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand the importance of using "real" language to label body parts, articles of clothing, objects in the room and in books through imitation and expansion. ECPs simplify language and expand on the infant's vocabulary. ECPs avoid saying "good or bad girl", instead they comment on the behaviour the child is engaged in.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs use "baby talk" in their communication with the infants, for example, "din din for dinner", horsey for horse". ECPs do not use the child's real name but rather call the child "sweety", "sugar", "darling". ECPs say "good girl or bad boy" to describe behaviour instead of describing the action the child has taken.
17	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs support language acquisition by verbally cueing the child before routines and engaging in meaningful dialogue during routines and programmed activities. For example, tummies are tickled, one to one games take place etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are generally non responsive and engage in impersonal care giving, missing intimate moments with the child that are meaningful and lay the foundation of the relationship.
18	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs use respectful, firm, positive guidance based on their knowledge of young children. ECPs use positive interactions to redirect children's behaviour. At no time is any form of physical punishment, emotional abuse or neglect used.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs, contrary to Standard 3, use slapping, pinching, shaking, pushing and putting children into unusual position, emotional abuse and neglect to force children to comply with their demands.

Best Practices Transitions, Schedules, Routines



BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

SCHEDULES

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs post a written and/or pictorial schedule and a copy is available to families upon request. | <input type="checkbox"/> No written/pictorial schedule is posted in the room. There is no organization to the day. |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs adopt a self demand schedule recognizing that babies must be responded to according to their own biological schedule. ECPs respond to the infants rhythms and recognize that the schedule is the “skeleton” to the day and it may change based on children’s needs. | <input type="checkbox"/> Babies are fed and changed according to the schedule. Their individual needs are not taken into consideration. |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs ensure that the schedule is predictable but flexible enough to create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere which includes both indoor and outdoor experiences. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are insistent that the schedule be maintained creating a sense of anxiety and a feeling of rushing the children. Almost all activities happen in the indoor space. |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs plan so that the schedule is responsive to the child’s needs to be both active and quiet and periods of free play. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not respond to the children’s need for both quiet and active play, for example, children spend too much time in their cribs. ECPs do not provide for opportunities for free play or children are left on their own with no planning taking place. |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs recognize developmental differences in children’s ability to regulate attention. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not understand that toddlers can only manage very brief large group experiences and that they need lots of choice and variety during free play times. |

ROUTINES AND TRANSITIONS

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs minimize the number of transitions, in the schedule for care giving routines, grooming, eating and resting. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs enforce a rigid structure around routines and transitions and expect all children to adhere to it. Too many transitions take place. |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs ensure that children understand what to do next, explaining what will happen “I’m going to change your diaper now” etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not take the time to explain the necessary steps in the routine or transition to the children. |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that there are learning opportunities in transitions for the children to learn self help skills, independence and social interactions. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not understand how transitions and routines can be used as “teachable moments”. ECPs do not encourage children to take initiative, for example, pulling down pants when using the washroom. |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that children need lots of warning before a transition and use non verbal clues by singing songs “It’s Time To Tidy Up”. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs announce that a transition or routine is to take place immediately giving the children no advance warning. |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs minimize waiting time for children by moving children through a transition in small groups. Long line-ups are avoided. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs move children through routines and transitions in large groups resulting in long waiting times for the children. |

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

ARRIVALS

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs warmly welcome the children and their families upon their arrival and throughout the day. ECPs acknowledge the children by name as they arrive, children's moods/feelings upon arrival and exchange important information with families. ECPs assist children in saying goodbye to their parents.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are unwelcoming caregivers, for example, avoiding families, no greeting and unresponsive facial expressions. No relevant information is exchanged. ECPs believe saying good bye will affect the child negatively.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs complete non-intrusive health inspection and checks for marks, bruises, cuts, fever etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs check openly and reveal loudly the child's condition.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage parents to assist with the arrival process by changing diapers if needed, organizing their child's clothing, bag etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not explain to parents the morning routine.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage parents to let them know if an early pick up will be happening.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs and parents do not communicate relevant information.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs set up the physical environment before the children arrive.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are busy setting up the room as the families arrive.

DRESSING AND UNDRRESSING

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs communicate with children when dressing them by identifying body parts, label clothing and sing to the children and see these one-on-one experiences as meaningful opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs dress the child in silence. ECPs demonstrate limited facial expressions, no smiles and miss opportunities to expand the children's language.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage children to make attempts to dress themselves, ie put on their own shoes.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not encourage the children's self help skills.

NAPPING

1	<input type="checkbox"/> Each child has an individual crib in which to sleep.	<input type="checkbox"/> Cribs are not available for each child.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand how each of the infants likes to be put to sleep.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs put the children in their crib for sleep with little regard to individual preferences such as, rubbing their forehead, patting their back etc.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs remove the children upon waking from their cribs and engage them in activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs leave children in their cribs long after they are awake. They do not respond to children's cries to be picked up and comforted.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

WASHROOM / TOILET LEARNING

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs co-ordinate toilet learning with the home.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not engage families in information regarding toilet learning.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs inform the infant that a diaper change is about to take place. Songs are cues to signal the transition.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs pick up the child and complete the diapering with no advanced warning or engagement.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> To assist in the toileting routine, ECPs actively interact with the child.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs quickly move through the routine with very little verbal/non verbal interactions.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs assist infants and toddlers to clean up properly after using the toilet and stay with them during this routine, eg. washing hands etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Children are left to use the bathroom on their own.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs post visual cues for the washroom routines in a prominent place where the children can see it.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not prepare posters or other visual cues to assist the children through washroom routines.
6	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs praise children for their success in using the wash room appropriately, eg. model toilet flushing after use.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs ignore children's appeal for help and their eventual success or slapping the child for not using Wwashroom when instructed.
7	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs assist toddlers to dress after toileting and give children enough time to complete the washroom routine.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs leave the children on their own to dress after toileting. Children are rushed.

LEAVING

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs prepare infant belongings prior to parent arrival.	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal belongings are not organized when parents arrive.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs exchange information about the child's day with family members.	<input type="checkbox"/> No information is shared.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage family members and the child to check their bag before leaving.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not facilitate a "leaving procedure" at the end of the day.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs wave goodbye to the children before leaving and a common interactive departure takes place.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs leave the institution without any good byes to the children.



Best Practices for Environments

STANDARD 4: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Early childhood institutions have physical environments that meet building, health and safety requirements; allow adequate space for children, and facilitate the development of children and staff

STANDARD 5: INDOOR AND OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT, FURNISHING AND SUPPLIES

ECIs have indoor and outdoor equipment and furnishing that are safe, child friendly and promote optimal development of children

STANDARD 8: SAFETY

ECIs provide safe indoor and outdoor environments for children, staff and visitors to the institutions

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECIs must be operated in safe, well-designed, comfortable and secure buildings, with sufficient space inside and out for the children and staff to work, play and rest comfortably.	<input type="checkbox"/> The ECI does not meet Standard 4.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide physical adjustments to support children with visual, hearing and other disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs make no accommodation for individual special needs.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs consult the National Regulations and Standards to ensure a safe learning environment for the children both indoors and outdoors.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs disregard Regulations and Standards.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs demonstrate an understanding that children's behaviour is often shaped and influenced by the set up of a visually appealing and developmentally appropriate environment.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are unaware of the influence of the environment on children's behaviour, eg. Children are punished for not being able to sit for long periods of time in an overcrowded, over or under stimulating environment.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> Infants are kept on the ground level of the building and ECPs understand that the optimal stimulation for young children happen at the child's level – the first 24 inches from the floor.	<input type="checkbox"/> Infants are not on the ground level. ECPs store materials up and away from the children. Displays are at the adults level, not at the children level.
6	<input type="checkbox"/> There are separate areas for changing, feeding and sleeping. Cribs meet all safety standards and mats are provided for older children and a monitor is used. There are enough sleeping spaces for each individual child.	<input type="checkbox"/> Separate areas are not maintained. Infants sleep in the main playroom. No monitor is present to alert staff when children awake. ECPs are unaware of safety standards and do not do periodic checks for safety. Older children share mats.
7	<input type="checkbox"/> Babies under 24 months and older children have their activities in separate rooms/area.	<input type="checkbox"/> Children are of all ages are placed in one space.
8	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide an environment that is predictable, responsive and safe and therefore supports the infant's sense of trust. The environment also reflects materials that would be found in the home, for example, a mirror in the changing area.	<input type="checkbox"/> The environment is set up to meet the needs of the adult caregiver and not how the child interacts in the environment. Children do not see objects that are familiar to them.
9	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that bright colours stimulate and excite, pale warm colours are calming, soothing, relaxing. ECPs understand that the environment will impact on the behaviour of the children, for example visual clutter is over stimulating.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are not aware of how colour affects the environment or how the overall environment will affect behaviour. Too many materials remain in the room for long periods of time, ie. Signs hanging from the ceiling.
10	<input type="checkbox"/> When possible, ECPs attempt to use sound absorbing materials, removable carpets, mats.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs make no attempt to chose materials made to absorb sound.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS *CONT.*

11	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs organize the ECI so that it includes a variety of learning centres for large and small group activities with attention to traffic flow – entrances and exits.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECP's Early Childhood Institution does not include learning centres. If there are any, these are not utilized by the children and are used for display purposes only. ECPs do not create a floor plan and learning centres are placed in inappropriate areas with no consideration to entrances and exits and traffic flow.
12	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs organize the environment so that centres in the room are separated by child size shelving, transparent curtains etc. Visibility for ECPs is ensured by the safe placement of furniture.	<input type="checkbox"/> There is nothing to distinguish where one centre begins or ends. ECPs do not organize the furniture so they can see the children at all times. Furniture is too large for maximum view of the children.
13	<input type="checkbox"/> Furniture in the room is child size and in good condition without splinters or rough edges.	<input type="checkbox"/> Furniture is designed for adults, is unsafe and is not in good repair.
14	<input type="checkbox"/> When storing and presenting materials to children, ECPs provide clear storage containers, a labeling system and low accessible shelves.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not organize materials in the Early Childhood Institution. There is no labeling system, materials are placed out of the reach of children.
15	<input type="checkbox"/> When there are limited materials, for example, blocks, ECPs organize so that one class gets all of the centre's blocks for one week in order for children to have a "full" experience.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not co-ordinate their efforts to rotate materials throughout the class/school.
16	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs working with toddlers understands their role in setting up opportunities for toddlers to do things for themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not allow the toddlers to explore the environment on their own or provide opportunities to do things independently. The environment is set up for care giving but not for learning.
17	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that some children can become over stimulated and provide a "sheltered space" or a semi-private area in order to recover or to be alone with a friend.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs set up the environment for the whole group without understanding that some children may need time to self regulate.
18	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs display photos of the families so that when the child is upset, he/she can be comforted by the photos.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not see the significant of family photos and how they can be used to help children self regulate.
19	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs model a tidy and organized environment with their own teaching supplies and materials.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs expect children to maintain their space while their own desk is untidy and unorganized.
20	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide an ill cot for sick children.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not provide an isolated space for ill children.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs recognize that the outdoor environment provides opportunities for key learning experiences and ECPs ensure that the daily schedule reflects opportunities for these experiences. The outdoor space is fenced.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not use the outdoor learning environment. No fence is in place.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> A safe learning outdoor environment is ensured by ECPs supervising at all times, daily playground checks for damaged equipment, debris, animals, poisonous plants, glass, persons not connected to the institution etc. The outdoor environment meets Standard 5.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs allow the children to go outside without supervision. ECPs do not check for dangerous materials, equipment or unwelcome visitors. Standard 5 is not met.



Best Practices for Planning for Curriculum

STANDARD 2: DEVELOPMENTAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Early childhood institutions have comprehensive programmes designed to meet the language, physical, cognitive, creative, socio-emotional, spiritual, cultural and institution readiness needs of children



BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs recognize that curriculum is embedded in the environment and plan accordingly. This includes materials, activities, arrangements, relationships and interactions that adults provide.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not understand the importance of the environment on children's learning.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs plan curriculum that is based on observations of each child's developmental level, skills and interests of the child in consultation with families. Infants are valued as individuals.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs plan for curriculum for the group rather than the individual. Families are not consulted.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs plan with a holistic approach to the child including all domains.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs focus only on the caregiving aspects of the child's day.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that the Early Childhood Institution's environment should reflect an understanding that play is how children learn.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs initiate teacher directed lessons and do not allow or facilitate play in the environment.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> Environments for young children reflect a sensory based child centred environment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Children have limited opportunities for sensory experiences in the playroom. The environment reflects caregiving rather than a child centred environment.
6	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs observe, plan and evaluate their curriculum in order to provide sequential and meaningful experiences for the children moving from simple to more complex experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECP planning reflects random activities, some chosen from activity books, with no thought to how they meet the needs of the individual child.
7	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand the stages of developmental play levels as children move from solitary to parallel play to co-operative play.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs expect children to interact beyond their capabilities, eg. Toddlers willingly sharing materials or favourite toys.
8	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs record their observations in an Individual Program Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs make no effort to record their observations in a written format.
9	<input type="checkbox"/> Plans are developed for small group and individuals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Plans are developed for the whole group.
10	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs plan for both the indoor and outdoor environment. Many experiences that can be done indoors can be done outdoors.	<input type="checkbox"/> Children rarely are given opportunities to interact with the outdoor environment, ie. walks, outdoor activities etc. ECPs are not receptive to engaging children in the outdoor environment.
11	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that children need time for repeated practice to support their exploration of the world around them.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs rush the children through the day without considering the children's need to fully explore. The schedule is rigidly adhered to.
12	<input type="checkbox"/> Diverse developmentally appropriate props and materials reflect children's interests, cultural background and support the emerging development of language skills. Boys and girls have the same experiences and opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Materials are not suitable for the age group. ECPs do not understand how to effectively use props and materials to develop language skills. Gender stereotyping takes place.
13	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage the use of standard English while respecting the primary language of many Jamaican children.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs insist on standard English only.
14	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand the importance of music, movement, one to one games, chants etc. in the development of the whole child.	<input type="checkbox"/> Children are not exposed to various interactions with ECPs and are left for long periods of time on their own.

Three to Five Year Olds





Best Practices for Working with Families

STANDARD 10: INTERACTIONS WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The management and staff of early childhood institutions have good relationships with parents, caregivers, family members and the community

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

1	<input type="checkbox"/> All institution practices underline the fundamental principle that the family is the child's primary source of love and care and the most powerful influence in the child's life. For example, key messages and important written and verbal communication reflect the importance of partnerships with families.	<input type="checkbox"/> Institutions do not recognize the important role families/guardians play in the lives of their children. ECPs do not communicate in a verbal and written format with families in order to strengthen the partnership.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> The institution demonstrates respect for diverse family systems and practices which include religious beliefs and practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> The institution is not respectful of all family "types". ECPs display a bias towards some family structures, cultural and religious practices.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that family and community involvement is a means of expanding the child's opportunities for learning and development.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not involve the community in the life of the school.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> The institution welcomes family participation in the Early Childhood Institution- meetings, fundraising, Board of Directors, PTA, cultural and social events and as volunteers in the Early Childhood Institution etc. An open door policy exists in the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs act as experts discouraging family involvement in the school.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> According to Standard 10, ECPs must meet once before the child starts attending the institution. Home visits allow ECPs to build strong relationships with new families. Parents are encouraged to spend time with their child in the ECI prior to their child's entry into the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not meet with families before the child starts.
6	<input type="checkbox"/> The institution collects relevant information about the child and family, for example health records, through a planned orientation process.	<input type="checkbox"/> The institution does not collect vital information on the child and the family.
7	<input type="checkbox"/> A parent orientation information booklet is provided for new families that include all of the critical and relevant information about the operation of the institution and is prepared by ECPs, principals and board members.	<input type="checkbox"/> No family booklet is provided in order for families to understand the school's expectations.
8	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs will find opportunities to recognize family contributions. A skills bank is established to record the expertise and interests of new families which can be used to enhance curriculum delivery, operations of the Early Childhood Institution etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> No skills bank is established and families expertise is not acknowledged or utilized.
9	<input type="checkbox"/> The physical environment appears welcoming, eg. signs are posted, inviting entrance ways. Families are made to feel welcome. An open door policy is in effect.	<input type="checkbox"/> The environment of the institution is not maintained and signage is not visible. Parents are not made to feel welcome at the ECI and are barred from freely entering.
10	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly curriculum is posted for families to review. A pictorial schedule is displayed to help parents and children understand the day's events.	<input type="checkbox"/> No pictorial schedule is displayed. No weekly curriculum is posted.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

11

In order to celebrate children's accomplishments ECPs communicate important messages and celebrate children's strengths and accomplishments. Inviting displays of children's work are provided.

ECPs do not communicate with families. ECPs work is displayed, not the children's.

12

ECPs are in tune with individual families demonstrating strong interpersonal communication skills that foster partnership with families particularly during a time of need. ECPs encourage families to share information that will have an impact on the child, eg. Parents are separating.

ECPs are not skilful communicators. ECPs are unaware of particular challenges individual families may be facing, for example, financial issues, sickness etc.

13

ECPs encourage father participation, eg. Father's Day, meeting for father's only, breakfast events.

ECPs speak more to mothers and do little to engage fathers in the school.

14

ECPs develop strategies for communicating with families in circumstances where children arrive at the institution by taxi, sibling or family friend, for example, if there has been little family contact, the ECP would call home.

ECPs are rarely engaged with families. Few messages are communicated in a written format. ECPs do not follow up when children are absent for extended periods of time or does not attend institution on a regular basis.

15

Family meetings are held to discuss how the child has adjusted to institution noting the child's progress developmentally at a time that is convenient for both parties. These take place at least every 6 months and meetings are recorded and signed by both parents and staff. Meetings are also held to help families understand appropriate ways to discipline with the child without using corporal punishment.

No meetings are held. No reporting process is in place. Meetings take place but no record of the meeting is in place.

16

ECPs are responsible for educating families about quality learning environments, play based experiences. ECPs and family members learn together through workshops established in co-operation with each other.

The institution does not organize any opportunities for life long learning.

17

A resource area is established in the institution with relevant resources for families. It might also include family albums, family board, and ideas for parents to do at home with their children, resources that can be shared between institution and home, eg. Borrow A Book Program.

No resource centre is established for families.

18

A process is in place to resolve issues when they arise between families and the centre. General comments and concerns of parents are recorded in a log book and in a place that both staff and parents can easily access and read.

No conflict resolution policy is in place. No record is kept of concerns or parent's comments.

19

Parents have the right to refuse to let their children participate in ECI activities, including going on outings.

ECPs insist that children attend events and outings.

Best Practices for Interactions and Relationships

STANDARD 3: INTERACTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

Early childhood staff has the characteristics, training, knowledge, skills and attitude to promote positive behaviours and reduce difficult and challenging behaviours in children



BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

1

ECPs responsive and respectful interactions are designed to support the development of self esteem and self worth. A trusting, caring relationship is displayed between adults and children.

ECPs demonstrate indifference, are unsupportive of children's efforts and demonstrate an "in charge attitude." ECPs lack appropriate teaching strategies and use humiliation and shame to obtain compliant behaviour.

2

ECPs accept children as they are (culture, economic background, language, religious beliefs and practices, and gender).

Preferential treatment (non-verbal, verbal) is directed towards some children. ECPs show preference for one gender over another. ECPs ignore religious beliefs, cultural practices etc.

3

ECPs display good understanding of individual development in a group setting and recognize that each child is an individual.

ECPs most frequently interact in a group with little understanding of the needs and interests of individual children.

4

ECPs undertake to work with children in small groups—where the best learning takes place.

ECPs only interact with children in large groups. Individual interaction is reserved mostly for discipline. Children rarely work in small groups where the ECP moves from group to group.

5

ECPs demonstrate enjoyment and affection and acknowledge children's feelings and alleviate their fears. ECPs understand the importance of shared emotions as a way for children to learn about and express emotions. ECPs recognize, respect and respond to feelings of children, ie. Fear, sadness, joy time to be alone. ECPs encourage children to talk about their feelings. ECPs verbal responses to children are soft and gentle, body language displays warmth and empathy through regular smiles and personalized attention. ECPs give children the opportunity to explain and express themselves and respond by acknowledging children's feelings. ECPs listen patiently and respectfully to children's ideas and views.

ECPs demonstrate a lack of empathy for children's emotions and tend to be harsh and dismissive. ECPs' strategies are inappropriate such as telling a child to stop crying – "nothing is wrong with you" invalidating the child's feelings. ECPs underestimate children's potential, children's feelings are not taken into consideration and no opportunities are given for free expression. Personalized attention is related to disciplining the child. ECPs voice tone and facial expressions are demeaning and frightening. ECPs interrupt and take control of all situations, giving little or no opportunity to children to explain and express themselves. Emphasis is always on supplying the "right" answer.

6

ECPs demonstrate knowledge and understanding of children by interacting in a developmentally appropriate manner for example, they understand that children in this age group are only beginning to understand that others have ideas, emotions and desires of their own, therefore support children in their emerging understanding of this concept.

ECPs expect children to behave/act beyond their stage of development, ie expecting children to sit still for long periods of time. ECPs do not understand that children in this age group are just developing their understanding of others and their ability to share, compromise and resolve conflicts.

7

ECPs support children learning to channel their emotional expressions into constructive interactions. ECPs celebrate children's attempts to self regulate including attention, emotion and behaviour regulation.

ECPs are rule bound. ECPs do not understand their role in facilitating the process of conflict resolution and therefore bullying and aggressive behaviour emerges especially when ECPs are not present. ECPs do not celebrate children's pro social accomplishments.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

8

ECPs have the knowledge and skills to support children's emerging skills as they learn how to become aware of the needs and rights of others in the environment and build the capacity to express emotions and control impulses. ECPs encourage children to engage in co-operative, pro social behaviour and they are supported in the development of their self management skills. ECPs celebrate the children's positive actions towards others.

ECPs expect children to control their emotions at all times and at times use shouting, slamming the desk, name calling, shaming etc. ECPs do not demonstrate an understanding of how to encourage appropriate expression of emotions and impulse control. ECPs rarely genuinely praise the children but when they do, it is a way of getting other children to comply, for example, praising one group at the expense of another.

9

ECPs recognize that the goal of behaviour guidance is to help the children develop self control and strategies for resolving conflict using a win-win problem solving approach. ECPs recognize that some children will need time to calm themselves.

ECPs do not have the skills to redirect the children using the Win-Win Problem Solving approach. ECPs leave children to struggle through conflicts and disagreements on their own.

10

ECPs use a variety of appropriate behaviour guidance strategies, including verbal and nonverbal interactions, appropriate limits, modeling, positive reinforcement, praise and redirection to support children. No form of physical punishment, emotional abuse or neglect is seen.

ECPs make arbitrary rules for the children and rely on only a few guidance strategies, such as raising their voice and using a punitive approach. These strategies do not allow children to develop an inner sense of managing and regulating their own behaviour. Emotional abuse and neglect is seen as well as physical punishment such as slapping, pinching, shaking, pushing and putting the child in unusual positions.

11

ECPs encourage children to be doers and give children opportunities to be helpers. ECPs encourage children to share and be thoughtful of others.

ECPs do not seize opportunities as they emerge in children's interactions, to recognize and encourage problem solving and other pro social behaviours.

12

ECPs provide genuine praise in response to children's efforts. ECPs promote children's art work, for example, displaying children's work at their level.

There is a dominance of the ECP's work displayed rather than the children's efforts, for example, wall displays, letters hanging from the ceiling etc.

13

ECPs celebrate children's milestones for example, reading their first word, tying their own shoes etc. ECPs record these observations for sharing with families.

ECPs express little interest or enthusiasm when children reach developmental milestones.

14

ECPs position themselves in the room so that they are able to safely monitor the children and respond to their needs both indoors and outdoors.

ECPs sit with their backs to the children and are unaware of what is taking place. They are unable to respond to a child's needs or when dangerous situations present themselves. ECPs leave the children on their own for extended periods of time.

15

ECPs model expected social graces, i.e. please, thank you, friendly greetings. ECPs apologize when required.

ECPs ignore social values. Only children are expected to apologize.



Best Practices Transitions, Schedules, Routines

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

SCHEDULES

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs post a written/pictorial schedule and a copy is available to families upon request.	<input type="checkbox"/> No written/pictorial schedule is posted in the room. There is no organization to the day.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs recognize that the schedule is really the “skeleton” of the day and that the schedule may be change based on the children’s needs rather than a strict adherence to the clock. ECPs ensure that the schedule is flexible enough to create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs adhere rigidly to the schedule with no flexibility regarding children’s needs or interests. ECPs are insistent that the schedule be maintained, creating an atmosphere of anxiety and frustration.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that the children need a schedule that is predictable so that children can anticipate what is happening. ECPs understand that children will function with confidence when they recognize a pattern each day.	<input type="checkbox"/> Children experience the schedule as arbitrary and have little understanding of the day’s events or how the day unfolds. Instead of verbally cuing children, they are physical directed by grabbing or pulling, rulers are slammed etc.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> The schedule is responsive, to the child’s needs to be both active and quiet both indoors and outdoors. ECPs schedule activities that need concentration early in the day before children are tired.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not respond to the children’s cues for the need for more active play. Children remain indoors for most of the day and when sent outside ECPs are not engaged with the children.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> In the schedule, ECPs incorporate time and materials for play, self initiated learning and creative expression. ECPs understand that children need blocks of time to truly become involved in their play.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs focus mostly on seat work, pencil and paper and chalk talk.
6	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs recognize developmental differences in children’s abilities to regulate their attention, emotions and behaviours and plan accordingly.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not understand developmental differences.
7	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs allow for planned devotion time where children and ECPs come together to worship.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are unprepared and minimize the importance of devotion time.

ROUTINES AND TRANSITIONS

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs minimize the number of transitions and keep them simple allowing children, when possible, to use the washroom, serve themselves, dress etc. ECPs limit the number of instructions given at one time to avoid confusion. Children are told what will happen when the transition is completed.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs plan for most routines and transitions to take place in large groups. ECPs deliver many instructions at the same time, confusing the children who are then unsure of what to do.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that children need lots of warning before a transition. ECPs provide clues to the next transition by singing songs, ie “It’s Time To Tidy Up” and/or providing non verbal cues, eye contact, using children’s names etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not understand that the child’s concept of time is different from the adults. Little or no advance warning is given to the children before giving a final direction.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that there are learning opportunities in transitions and possibilities for the children to learn self help skills, independence and engage in social interactions. ECPs capitalize on meaningful opportunities. For example, when children must wait, ECPs tell stories, sing songs and help the children through the waiting period. Children are giving books to read.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not provide children with opportunities to demonstrate initiative through routines, for example, little opportunity for self help, serving one another etc. Teachable moments are missed. ECPs expect children to wait quietly at their desks for long periods of time without access to any resources.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs minimize waiting time for children by moving children through a transition in small groups. Long line ups are avoided.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs conduct all routines and transitions in large groups. Children spend long periods of time waiting.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> During the lunch routine, ECPs organize so that children are served their lunch in smaller classroom groups rather than all of the classes at the same time.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs have the children served all at the same time resulting in long line ups or wait for long periods of time for their lunch.

ARRIVALS

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs work with families to ensure that children arrive accompanied by a family member. Children who arrive on their own, have signed permission from a parent or a phone call giving permission for the child to arrive at institution on their own.	<input type="checkbox"/> Children are not accompanied by a family member. ECPs have no signed permission form or a phone call from the parent allowing the child to travel on their own or with a sibling.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Children are registered as they arrive and when developmentally appropriate record their own entry.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs have no check-in procedure. No accountability for arrivals.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs warmly welcome the children and their families upon their arrival and throughout the day. ECPs acknowledge the children by name as they arrive, children’s moods/feelings upon arrival and scan for possible health issues and exchange important information with families.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are unwelcoming caregivers, for example, avoiding families, no greeting and unresponsive facial expressions. ECPs ignore the child and are thought to be okay despite displayed emotion. ECPs are not supportive of separation anxiety demonstrated by the child. Possible contagious diseases are missed by the ECP.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage parents to send their children in age appropriate clothing for free exploration and shoes for safe play experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs make no comment or effort to discuss appropriate clothing with the family. The children are then punished by both ECPs and parents when their uniforms are dirty.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs arrive early because they understand that the environment must be prepared before the children arrive. ECPs know that children need adequate time to settle in by providing interesting and challenging set ups.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs arrive after the parents and are rushed to set up the room. ECPs do not provide children with an opportunity for a smooth transition into the schedule.
6	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage the children in their self help skills by having the children store their back packs on their own.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage parents to store their children’s bags before they leave.

DRESSING AND UNDESSING

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are vigilant about their own appearance and are dressed appropriately and ready for play.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs not attend to their appearance and wear clothing that does not allow for playful interactions with the children.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Children’s privacy is respected when undressing or when accidents occur.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs undress the child in front of an audience.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage children to dress themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do everything for the child, missing teachable moments.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage children to help their peers.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs prohibit children helping others.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs always ensure that children are dressed appropriately.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs dress the child inappropriately.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

WASHROOM/TOILET LEARNING

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage children to use the washroom independently or in small groups unless assistance is needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs send the children to the washroom in large groups.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs celebrate children's washroom accomplishments.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs miss opportunities to support the child's developing self help skills and feelings of accomplishments.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs teach proper hand washing procedures. ECPs ensure children wash their hands with liquid soap and water after using the toilet and before meals/snacks. ECPs teach children how to use paper towels, when resources allow, to turn off the tap to prevent the spread of infection. ECPs post visual and give verbal cues for the children in the hand washing routine.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not teach the children proper techniques in washing their hands after bathroom use or in preparation for their meal/snacks. Bar soap is used instead of liquid. ECPs do not supervise the washroom routine and provide little or no assistance to the children in their understanding of the spread of infection. ECPs provide no cues for the children or posters to encourage proper hand washing routines.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs make the children aware of the environmental implications of letting the water run or wasting paper towels.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not discuss the environmental implications of the washroom routine.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs help boys to lift and put down the toilet seat and properly wipe themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide no assistance to male children.
6	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs teach girls the proper wiping methods from front to back.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide no assistance to female children.
7	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs set up mirrors at the children's level in the bathroom.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not set up a mirror for children to see themselves in the grooming procedure.
8	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs create a pass system for going to the washroom for older children.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs allow too many children to leave the room to use the washroom.

NAP TIME/REST

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs should allow children to rest on mats and pillows when available. ECPs create a restful environment by using a soft voice, darkening the room, playing nature sounds, classical music etc. and providing cushions, mats, towels.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs allow children to rest without proper materials. ECPs make children rest at their desks with their heads down for long periods of time. ECPs play up beat music, energizing the children, using a loud voice telling the children to put their head down causing them to be even more disruptive.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs read a story to support children's relaxation and transition to sleep. When possible, ECPs model resting with the children as the children will mimic their behaviour.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs shout at the children and knock the desk to settle the children. ECPs walk around and find other activities to do during resting time.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs should allow the child to continue resting when he/she may be ill or had little rest at home.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs force the child to get up after resting time.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage children who do not require a nap to work quietly if they choose.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs force children to rest or sleep.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

CLEAN UP

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs wipe tables and tidy up play areas and keep their own materials and work space in a neat and organized fashion. They model putting toys in containers for the children.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not tidy up tables or play areas and their materials are scattered or piled around the room. They do not model for the children.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs model sweeping and mopping of the floor giving children, child size broom/mop/dust pans and letting them choose their tasks. ECPs create a visual poster with pictorial cues for duties. Appropriate time is given to the children to complete the task.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide adult size brooms/mops/dust pans for the children to use. Children are not allowed to choose their tasks, ECPs command the child to do a task. No visuals or duty poster is created. ECPs hurry the child to complete tasks.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage children to work in pairs to tidy up to support co-operation.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs expect children to complete tasks on their own missing opportunities for sharing tasks.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs sing songs, rhymes/jingles that suggest clean up activities and praise the children's efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs use unrelated songs/activities or no cues at all. ECPs ignore the children's efforts; no use of social graces. ECPs entice with stickers or other rewards rather than allowing the children to take pleasure in the task itself.

LEAVING

1	<input type="checkbox"/> When the ECPs is leaving, he/she informs the children what is happening and why and where the practitioner is going. This also applies when the ECP needs to leave the room.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs leaves with no acknowledgement of the child or family members. ECPs do not inform the children where they are going or why they are leaving.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs and children gather personal property to take home and children are given enough time to do this. ECPs inform the children of exciting activities planned for the next day.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not have a closing routine and not enough time is given for the children to separate from their toys. ECPs do not share the next day activities with the children or their families.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs greet and speaks to each parent/caregiver who collects the child sharing information about the child's day.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not exchange greetings and celebrate accomplishments that the child has achieved during the day children. ECPs only share negative information about the child.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> Families are encouraged to come to individual classrooms for their children.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs release the child to older siblings or they are sent out of the classroom environment to greet their family member on their own.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs set up the room for the following day before leaving the centre at night.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs leave before setting up which prevents positive child/family interactions in the morning.

Best Practices for Environments

STANDARD 4: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Early childhood institutions have physical environments that meet building, health and safety requirements; allow adequate space for children, and facilitate the development of children and staff

STANDARD 5: INDOOR AND OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT, FURNISHING AND SUPPLIES

ECIs have indoor and outdoor equipment and furnishing that are safe, child friendly and promote optimal development of children

STANDARD 8: SAFETY

ECIs provide safe indoor and outdoor environments for children, staff and visitors to the institutions



BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

1	<input type="checkbox"/> ECIs must be operated in safe, well designed, comfortable and secure buildings, with sufficient space inside and out for the children and staff to work, play and rest comfortably.	<input type="checkbox"/> The ECI does not meet Standard 4.
2	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that the availability of space and materials in a class environment has a big impact on children's behaviour. Behaviour is often shaped and influenced by the set up of a visually appealing and developmentally appropriate environment.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are unaware of the influence of the environment on children's behaviour, eg. Children are punished for not being able to sit for long periods of time in an overcrowded, over stimulating environment.
3	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that bright colours stimulate and excite, pale warm colours are calming, soothing, relaxing. ECPs recognize that visual clutter is over stimulating.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are not aware of how colour affects the environment or how the environment will influence children's behaviour. Too many materials remain in the room for long periods of time, ie, Signs hanging from the ceiling.
4	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs understand that the classroom environment should reflect an understanding that play is how children make sense of their world, practice skills, and integrate knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs initiate teacher directed lessons and do not allow or facilitate play in the environment.
5	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs display solid knowledge of child development and curriculum through age appropriate activities and classroom set up. ECPs organize the ECI so that it includes a variety of learning centres for large and small group activities with appropriate attention to traffic flow.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not include learning centres. If there are any, these are not utilized by the children and are used for display purposes only.
6	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs organize the environment so that centres in the room are separated by child size shelving, transparent curtains etc. When storing and presenting materials to children, ECPs provide clear storage containers, a labeling system and low accessible shelves.	<input type="checkbox"/> There is nothing to distinguish where one centre begins or ends. ECPs do not organize materials in the classroom. There is no labeling system, materials are placed out of the reach of children.
7	<input type="checkbox"/> Children are given opportunities to make decisions and make choices independently; environment is set up in an accessible, appealing and organized manner to encourage active exploration.	<input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Institutions are not accessible, appealing and organized but are rather over crowded and over stimulating.
8	<input type="checkbox"/> When there are limited materials, for example, blocks, ECPs organize so that one class gets all of the centre's blocks for one week in order for children to have a "full" experience.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not co-ordinate their efforts to rotate materials throughout the class/school.
9	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs are responsive and resourceful of curriculum that incorporates found objects, local materials and encourages families to provide materials from home.	<input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not provide meaningful materials for the children.
10	<input type="checkbox"/> Furniture in the room is child size and in good condition without splinters or rough edges and there is seating for more than the number of children.	<input type="checkbox"/> Furniture is designed for adults, is unsafe and is not in good repair. There are not enough suitable chairs for each child.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS *CONT.*

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> When possible, ECPs attempt to use sound absorbing materials, removable carpets, mats. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs make no attempt to chose materials made to absorb sound. |
| 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs encourage the children to be responsible for their environment, for example, a responsibility chart might be created. Children are encouraged to handle materials respectfully. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not encourage the children to participate in maintaining the environment. ECPs do not encourage the children to appreciate their learning materials. |
| 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide an ill cot for sick children. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not provide an isolated space for ill children. |

OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs recognize that the outdoor environment provides opportunities for key learning experiences and ECPs ensure that the daily schedule reflects opportunities for these experiences. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not use the outdoor learning environment. |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide an outdoor play area that allows for both gross motor experiences. Spaces are set up to provide a learning centre approach, for example, sand play, art experiences, reading, greening the environment etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not create a learning centre approach in the outdoor environment. The outdoor materials do not engage the children. |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> A safe learning outdoor environment is ensured by daily playground checks for damaged equipment, debris, poisonous plants, glass, animals, persons not connected to the school. The outdoor space should have an appropriate fencing. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not check for dangerous materials, equipment or unwelcome visitors. The play space is not enclosed. |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs supervise the children in the outdoor environment at all times. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs allow the children to go out into the playground without supervision. |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs model appropriate health, safety and environmentally appropriate practices such as composting, garbage removal etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs do not provide opportunities for the children to engage in environmentally friendly activities. |
| 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs provide additional physical adjustments to support children with visual, hearing and other disabilities. | <input type="checkbox"/> ECPs make no accommodation for individual needs. |

CHECKLIST FOR LEARNING CENTRES

GROUP SPACE, MUSIC, MOVEMENT, DANCE

- 1 Children should be introduced to a wide range of cultures through music and dance
- 2 Dance/movement space should be carpeted to cushion falls
- 3 Tape recorder is positioned to ensure safety
- 4 Written songs, poems, jingles should be displayed to encourage dance/reading and aligned with the current theme
- 5 Make use of indigenous materials and trashables for music and movement. Children make their own instruments, collect materials from home
- 6 Props are needed – drums, cymbals, shakers, triangles, blocks, rhythm sticks to develop rhythm patterns. These should be durable and stored in clearly labeled containers.

ART, SAND, WATER, WOODWORKING

- 1 Every classroom should have an art centre and set up so that children are able to manage independently. Free exploration of materials is encouraged. A number of strategies are developed to assist children with managing in the space, ie. Visual cues for the number of children who can participate
- 2 Art centres should be equipped with the following: Protective clothing, smocks, plastic bag aprons, art table, easel, sufficient and appropriate materials, paint brushes, paint(non toxic), crayons, pencils, straws, newspaper, fudge sticks, basins, newsprint, seeds, play dough etc.
- 3 Sand and water are best placed at the door or near the water source. It should include large basins, containers for holding water, molding containers, shovels, buckets, funnels, bottles, measuring containers, pictures of beach and models of fishes. This centre should be arranged on large plastic with towels to prevent slipping. There should be enough water/sand in the containers to make the experience meaningful to the children
- 4 Sensory exploration is encouraged through a variety of mediums, play dough, soil, rocks, logs, shells
- 5 Woodworking should be equipped with real tools
- 6 Art is displayed at the children eye level
- 7 These centres should also be set up in the outdoor environment

CHECKLIST FOR LEARNING CENTRES

MATH AND SCIENCE

- 1 Adequate floor space for open shelves for free access and exploration to promote self help skills and a feeling of accomplishment—I can do it!
- 2 A variety of loose parts/manipulatives to develop fine motor skills, eye hand co-ordination to promote emergent literacy and problem solving skills are available
- 3 Math and science should include bins of manipulatives, coins, bottle caps, rocks, shells, seeds etc. to be used for sorting, patterning, seriation, matching, classification, estimating, grouping – regrouping, number families, and counting
- 4 Measuring instruments such as tape, rulers (non-standardized, standardized), their bodies, string, paper clips, cups, bottles, containers
- 5 Nature area with living and non living plants, pets, rocks, aquarium, bark, shells, bugs etc.
- 6 A garden in the outdoor environment – children do the planting, measuring, weighing, harvesting etc.

LANGUAGE, LITERACY, BOOKS

- 1 There should be low book shelves with easy access on both sides for the children.
- 2 Space for children to read in small groups or space for children on their own. The area should include comfortable floor space with pillows, carpeting and rugs.
- 3 There should be a wide variety of children's quality literature at a variety of reading levels, pop up books, environment, science, activity, fairy tales, nursery rhymes, bible stories, children's magazines, sections of the local newspaper.
- 4 Encourage children to replace books in designated areas and good book handling practices should be encouraged.
- 5 Include materials to support children's literacy – felt boards, puppets.
- 6 Encourage children and families to borrow books to take home and share – Borrow A Book Program.
- 7 The centre could include a writing centre that supports free expression, having materials for children to make books, write their own stories, sequencing story cards, word lists etc..
- 8 A listening centre with materials for independent use – tape recorder, CD players, tapes, CDs, headphones, walkman.

CHECKLIST FOR LEARNING CENTRES

DRAMATIC PLAY

- 1 The dramatic play area may include large equipment, mirrors at the child's level, table and chairs, cushions, open access shelves to store equipment, large mat with cushions, storage spaces for dramatic play clothes.
- 2 Props and materials include the following: wigs, chiffon materials and other colourful fabrics, costume jewelry, spectacles, clothing, shoes, handbags, attaché case, dolls, puppets, masks, models of food and furniture, toys, musical instruments, magazines, newspapers, telephones, typewriter, computer and other old appliances.
- 3 The dramatic area should include a variety of materials to support various interests – cultural events, community life etc.

BLOCKS, CONSTRUCTION, MANIPULATIVES

- 1 The environment should have bins, low shelves, chairs, tables.
- 2 Adequate space for individual as well as group construction.
- 3 Materials need to be safe (no sharp edges etc.)and colourful and vary in shapes and sizes.
- 4 Materials to include interlocking blocks, wooden blocks, cardboard blocks, trucks, farm animals, zoo animals, safety goggles, helmet, pictures, statements, labels.

TECHNOLOGY

- 1 When available, computers are used to enhance and support children's learning.
- 2 CD players, tape recorders, cell phones etc. are integrated into the program.

Best Practices for Planning for Curriculum

STANDARD 2: DEVELOPMENTAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Early childhood institutions have comprehensive programmes designed to meet the language, physical, cognitive, creative, socio-emotional, spiritual, cultural and institution readiness needs of children



BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

1 ECPs recognize that the curriculum is embedded in the environment and plan accordingly. Environments include materials, activities, arrangements, relationships and interactions that adults provide.

ECPs do not understand the importance of the environment on children's learning.

2 ECPs plan and implement a program that addresses the physical, social, emotional, language, aesthetic and intellectual needs of the individual child. ECPs record their observations in an Individual Program Plan that reflects the children's individual learning styles, skill levels and interests and reflects realistic objectives.

ECPs focus only on the intellectual domain. ECPs make no effort to record their observations in a written format. ECPs are not aware that children have different learning styles and are not aware of their skills or interests.

3 ECPs encourage the use of standard English while respecting the primary language of many Jamaican children.

ECPs insist on standard English only.

4 ECPs consult with families regarding each individual child's interests, needs etc. The child has a right to be consulted. ECPs encourage family participation in curriculum development and implementation and volunteering in the institution in order to enhance the confidence of both the child and the family member. Families are also asked for donations of teaching materials, collections etc.

ECPs do not consult families regarding their child's interests, needs etc. ECPs do not include the child in decision making. Family members are not given the opportunity to share their experiences with the children thereby denying them an opportunity to celebrate their gifts and talents. The child does not have an opportunity to see their parent in a different role.

5 ECPs observe, plan and evaluate their curriculum in order to provide sequential and meaningful experiences for children in small groups and individuals. ECPs implement curriculum that moves from simple to more complex experiences.

ECPs planning reflects random activities, some chosen from activity books, with no thought to how they meet the needs of the individual child. ECPs have little or no understanding of how to sequence curriculum.

6 ECPs are able to identify children with special needs and plan accordingly.

ECPs are not able to plan for children with special needs.

7 ECPs understand the importance of emergent curriculum which develops from the children's interests and experiences that are meaningful to them. Children are involved in constructing their own learning.

ECPs plan curriculum in a structured, inflexible way. No opportunities for divergent thinking are encouraged.

8 ECPs promote free play opportunities at the individual and group levels to encourage learning and discovery.

ECPs place limitations on children's play opportunities and insist on large group experiences where children wait for long period of time for their turn or use of materials.

BEST PRACTICE

INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE

9

ECPs encourage children to engage in problem solving, asking open ended questions, exchanging points of view. ECPs allow children to develop problem solving skills through various media, i.e., projects, puzzles, art experiences, science, drama, written work, exploration of space, blocks and physical activity.

ECPs do not engage the children in their learning. Learning is teacher directed. Rules are created to control the children and not the behaviours. ECPs choose children's activities and do not allow children to explore and experiment with materials in order to problem solve. For example, there is only one way to do things, models are used for the children to copy, everyone must complete the same project the same way, stifling the children's creativity.

10

ECPs provide opportunities to freely explore both verbal and written language to create their own stories, poems, read books etc.

ECPs do not provide a print rich environment or verbal interactions to support the children's learning.

11

ECPs encourage the use of Standard English while respecting the primary language of many Jamaican children.

ECPs insist on standard English only.

12

ECPs understand that children need time for repeated practice to support their exploration of the world around them.

ECPs rush the children through the day without considering the children's need to fully explore. The schedule is rigidly adhered to.

13

ECPs provide inclusive and diverse developmentally appropriate props and materials reflecting children's interests and cultural backgrounds. Boys and girls have the same experiences and opportunities.

Materials are not suitable for the age group nor reflect the children's home cultures or reflect gender stereotyping.

14

Children's work is displayed in a prominent place, celebrating all of the children's accomplishments.

ECPs do not demonstrate the value of displaying the children's work. Instead, the ECP's work is displayed.

15

ECPs plan for both the indoor and outdoor environment. ECPs organize the outdoor space with adequate storage for easy access to allow for maximum play experiences, for example, storage sheds, labeled storage container for balls, bean bags etc., tarps for shaded space.

ECPs rarely provide children with opportunities to interact with the outdoor environment, ie. Community walks, outdoor activities etc. No appropriate storage space is evident in the outdoor environment.

16

ECPs explore the community with the children and invite people to speak to the children about relevant topics.

ECPs do not take the children on field trips or engage community speakers.



