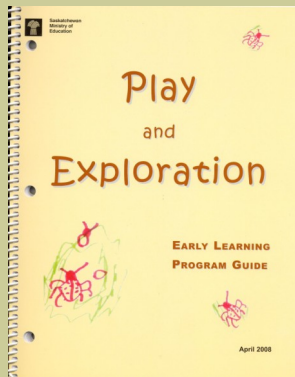




What Do You Need to Know About *Play and Exploration*?



Play and Exploration Principles of Learning

- Children as Competent Learners
- Holistic Development and Learning
- Strong Positive Relationships
- Stimulating and Dynamic Environments



Learning opportunities for children to examine, explore and wonder about their world enhance the development of creative thinking and problem solving skills at a young age.

What is *Play and Exploration*?

Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide is a publication from Saskatchewan's Ministry of Education. It is intended that all early learning programs will reflect the vision, principles and quality elements described in the *Guide*.

Why should our centre use *Play and Exploration*?

Play and Exploration promotes high quality early learning and care for children and families based on current early childhood research and best practice. In centres that use *Play and Exploration*, staff build strong relationships with children and families, create environments that are child centred and encourage exploration and creativity. Children connect to nature and develop strong relationships with staff and other children. Children are honoured as active learners through their play. Educators are excited about their work and families see their children's ideas and interests reflected in the learning program.



How can the board of directors support the implementation of *Play and Exploration* at our centre?

- Review the *Play and Exploration* guide and become familiar with the content
- Acknowledge and support staff when they provide learning experiences which align with *Play and Exploration*
- Encourage staff to attend related professional learning opportunities
- Attend site visits with staff
- Apply for the Mentorship Initiative
- Support the purchase of appropriate materials and resources
- Add the learning program as an agenda item at your meetings. Include any updates, plan for improvement, or invite staff to share successful projects
- Provide opportunities to share this information with parents such as at the AGM
- Support continuous improvement and growth of the centre and the staff



Safely using real materials allows children to feel powerful, respected and valued. Note the safety goggles used with the hammer and nails pictured above.



Relationships develop through joint experiences with a shared interest.

How does *Play and Exploration* look different from more traditional approaches?

- Educators build the learning program around the interests of the children
- Emphasis on small group projects that engage children
- Displays featuring children's experiences and work rather than commercially produced materials
- Natural materials are preferred
- Authentic/real materials such as tape measures, safety glasses, menus, pots, brooms etc.
- More home-like and less institutional atmosphere

Other resources the board should be aware of:

- Phase I and II workshops
- *Play and Explorations for Infants and Toddlers* booklet, slideshows and workshop
- Site visits
- Mentorship initiative
- Environment video and viewing guide
- Into Practice booklets: *Leading for Change* and *Creating Early Learning Environments*
- Additional workshops available through Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association (SECA)
- Family brochures

For More Information

Contact your Regional Early Learning and Child Care Consultant

Or visit our website at: www.education.gov.sk.ca/ELCC