

# High-Quality Early Childhood Curriculum

## What is a high-quality early childhood curriculum?

A high-quality early childhood curriculum is reflective of the children it serves. It should include a focus on social-emotional skills, exploration and investigation (i.e., asking questions and predicting), rather than academic goals. All children, and specifically children with diverse needs, benefit from learning and practicing social-emotional skills.



## Why is a high-quality early childhood curriculum important?

When activities are planned based on children's interests, strengths, needs, and backgrounds, learning is intrinsically motivating and meaningful, and represents the diversity of children.



## How do I create a high-quality environment?

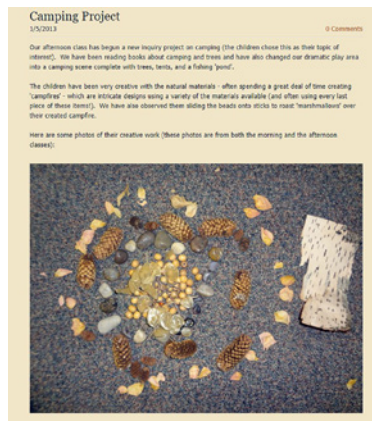
The design of your time, space, and materials reflects how you think about children as mighty learners and citizens, how you value family connections and contributions, and what you consider important learning processes. When educators plan and make decisions in response to the children they serve, **ALL** children and families are included.

Activities should consider the developmental level of children and the materials and/or adaptations needed to support ALL children's participation and engagement.

- Plan meaningful activities based on children's interests
- Support children's engagement by including visuals for schedules and routines, providing directions, transitions, etc.
- Observe and converse with children during play time

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- Nurture peer interactions, emotional literacy, and problem-solving skills by creating intentional opportunities for play and exploration
- Engage in collaborative reflective discussions with families and your team related to your observations and questions about the children's interactions, play and learning with your colleagues
- Document children's thinking, feeling, and experiences (i.e., taking photos of their play, writing down their ideas and observations, displaying their work, etc.)



When documentation is displayed in a room, children know their ideas are valued and they feel a sense of belonging. Educators can use this documentation to further plan the environment and learning or play activities.

## References

- Hemmeter, M.L., Ostrosky, M.M., & Fox L. (2021). *Unpacking the pyramid model: A practical guide for preschool teachers*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
- Makovichuk, L., Hewes, J., Lirette, P., & Thomas, N. (2014). *Flight: Alberta's early learning and care framework*. <https://flightframework.ca/downloads/Flight%20Framework%20Document%20F.pdf>
- Underwood, K. (2013). Everyone Is welcome: Inclusive early childhood education and care. In The Ontario Public Service (Eds.), *Think, feel, act: Lessons from research about young children*. (pp. 31-38). Queen's Printer for Ontario. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/think-feel-act-lessons-research-about-young-children>

## Helpful Resources for Educators:

### Flight: Alberta's Early Learning and Child Care Framework:

Flight framework is a pedagogical guide for working with young children. It "inspires curriculum meaning making that highlights relationships and curriculum decisions shaping responsive practices in early learning and child care communities" (Makovichuk, Hewes, Lirette & Thomas, 2014, p. 4). For more information and resources on holistic goals, dispositions for learning, and image of the child visit: [www.flightframework.ca](http://www.flightframework.ca)

### Learning, Reflecting and Being Curious

Supports how educators can use learning, reflection, and curiosity to support their newcomer and Indigenous families. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f170b16bf7d977d587e43c4/t/612e4e642215d32dd755a9bd/1630424684419/ECELC-teaching+tools-leading-3-21.pdf>

### Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research About Young Children

6 key research briefs focusing on adult-child relationships, environment as a third teacher, leadership, self-regulation, pedagogical documentation, and inclusive childcare. <https://files.ontario.ca/edu-think-feel-act-lessons-from-research-about-young-children-en-2021-01-29.pdf>