Expansion of Well-Being

Children experience safe and caring environments where their emotional and physical health, positive identities, and sense of belonging are nurtured and protected.

Emotional Health and Positive Identities

Children develop a sense of self.
Children develop a sense of other.

Belonging

Children develop a sense of place.
Children build respectful and responsive relationships.

Physical Health

Children take responsibility for personal care.
Children learn about food and nutrition.
Children explore body and movement.
### Emotional Health and Positive Identities

**Children develop a sense of self.**

*Educators take care to listen, model problem solving, and support children’s initiatives.*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s involved in learning</th>
<th>Sample narratives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing recognition of self</td>
<td>Mikayla (15 months) crawls over to the mirror placed at floor level, points at herself in the mirror, laughs, and reaches out to her reflection. <em>100 Aker Woods Daycare</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-constructing their identities</td>
<td>Andy (4 years) says to his educator as he is cleaning up, “I’m good at this, aren’t I?”  His educator responds, “Yes, you are.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing growing self-confidence, self-respect, and ability to take initiative</td>
<td>Leisa notices that Liam (2 years) fills up his water glass on his own. She acknowledges his accomplishment by saying, “I noticed you poured that water yourself.” <em>Chatham Day Care Centre Inc.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing in their capacity to express feelings, concerns, and needs</td>
<td>Joseph (4 years) struggles with complex, noisy group activities. He learns the strategy to remove himself to a quiet space in the classroom and return when he is ready. <em>UNB Children’s Centre</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursuing interests, passions, and strengths</td>
<td>After capturing a ladybug to be the classroom pet, Sophia (3 years) asks Jennifer, her educator, to read a book about ladybugs. Sophia then goes over to the bookshelf and starts to pull out other books about bugs. <em>The Preschool Centre on Clark St.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being curious and questioning</td>
<td>Fascinated with sharks, Bruce (4 years) draws them, paints them, reads books about them, and searches the Internet with help from his educator.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suggested Provisions and Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Document, photograph, and share stories about and with the children.</td>
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<td>Honour children’s feelings and concerns with thoughtful responses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model and encourage awareness and acceptance of a range of identities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listen and draw attention to children’s initiatives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan an environment that offers accessibility and choice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listen to and name children’s feelings and emotional reactions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explore the consequences of children’s actions and develop strategies together for responding to challenges. Ask questions like, “How do you think they feel?” “How did you decide who gets to play?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respect children’s and families’ ways of expressing feelings, concerns, and needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Join in children’s wonderment, affirm children’s questioning, and plan with their curiosity in mind.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share your joys and pleasures in life with the children.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask “I wonder” questions. For example: “I wonder how long a shark lives?” “What’s the biggest thing a shark can eat?”</td>
<td></td>
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**Emotional Health and Positive Identities**

**Children develop a sense of self.**  
*Educators take care to listen, model problem solving, and support children’s initiatives.*

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<td>Persevering and persisting</td>
<td>Molly (3 years) is struggling with putting a puzzle together. She tells the educator, “Gail, this puzzle is making me frustrated.” Gail asks, “Would you like some help?” “No,” she says, “I’ll walk away from it for a minute. Okay?” Gail says, “That is a great way to solve the problem.” Molly leaves the puzzle table and goes to look at a book for about one minute, then back to the puzzle and asks, “Gail, can you help?” Gail puts one piece in for her and she finishes the puzzle. <em>Kings County Kids Daycare Centre</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First day I went out in my backyard and my hands were behind my back  
by Olivia
Encourage tasks and activities that are challenging.

Stand by and offer help with encouraging words and new materials.

Be prepared to wait; model persistence and perseverance in your relationships with children and materials.

**For Reflection**

Reflect upon your reactions to children’s behaviour. What strategies do you draw upon to address issues of conflict and disagreement between children? Who do these help and who might they harm? Think about how you model perseverance and persistence.

In what ways are individual children’s expressions of feelings, ideas, or concerns encouraged and supported? Think about time to listen, space to listen, and ways to encourage self-expression. Ask yourself if you are helping them to learn to take initiative.

Think about how varied cultural backgrounds influence feelings and beliefs about touch and personal space. Think about the kinds of touch children experience in your program. What is your own level of comfort with touch?

Recall specific examples of how you invite children to actively set their learning goals, persist in pursuing them, share their strengths and interests, celebrate their accomplishments, and persevere to solve challenges they encounter. In what ways does your planning reflect the interests and passions of the children?
## Children develop a sense of other.
*Educators nurture a sense of community connectedness while celebrating the unique qualities of each child.*

**What's involved in learning** | **Sample narratives**
---|---
Supporting, encouraging, and listening to others | Lola (4 years) picks up *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* to read to the class. The children listen closely as Lola retells the story. After Lola finishes, Laura (4 years) exclaims, “You’re a really good reader, Lola.” *UNB Children’s Centre*

Caring for others | Olivia (3 years) is new to the group and still gets teary-eyed from time to time. Three children notice her tears one morning. They approach her, give her a hug, and say, “Our mommies and daddies are at work, but they’ll come back later.” *The Preschool Centre on Clark St.*

Experiencing trust and compassion with children and adults | Gillian (15 months) is anxious in her first days in the infant room. Being in a group with other children is new to her. Jennifer, her educator, keeps her close as she assures her of the actions of the other infants. *Chatham Day Care Centre Inc.*

Learning constructive ways to negotiate a range of relationships | Austin (4 years) is very upset after drop-off time. His educator takes him outside to his favourite place and sits in the sand with him and listens to him. Later, together, his educator and guardian plan strategies to support Austin’s transitions. *UNB Children’s Centre*
Listen carefully to children’s communication.

Reflect children’s words and gestures back to them - to clarify your understanding.

Draw children’s attention to what others are trying to say.

Invite children to express their point of view.

Model care for children, colleagues, and families.

Ask children: “What can we do to help your friend?” “How do you think he’s feeling today?” “I wonder what made her sad?”

Promote an optimistic outlook by maintaining a calm and positive disposition.

Communicate in consistent, respectful ways.

Attend to relationships; encourage multi-age or sibling interactions; describe, out loud, how children might be feeling.

Bring children together and help them find ways to solve problems; invite children to offer their own ideas. For example, “Is there something we could do differently?” “What if we...?”
Emotional Health and Positive Identities

Children develop a sense of other.
*Educators take care to listen, model problem solving, and support children’s initiatives.*

For Reflection

In what ways does your centre build upon dispositions of optimism, joy, and a zest for living and learning? Think about positive self-talk, problem solving, curiosity, humour, contributions, accomplishments, and care.

How do you support children in new situations and new relationships? Think about the children’s moments of anxiety, change, and responses to new people, places, and activities. How do you plan for welcoming new children and their families? Think about how you invite other children to participate in this process.

In what ways do you encourage children to think about how their actions affect other people, places, and things in their environments? How do you acknowledge the contributions children make? How do children acknowledge each other’s contributions?

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Me and my friend Jessica by Nicole
Inclusiveness and Equity          Compassion and Caring

• Living Democratically

• Individuality                     And Independence

• Social Responsibility

• Communication

• Imagination, Creativity & Play

• Spirituality

• Zest for Living and Learning

Aesthetics • Spirituality • Zest for Living and Learning • Inclusiveness and Independence • Social

Communication • Imagination • Compassion and Caring • Living Democratically • Individuality • Communication • Imagination, Creativity & Play • Spirituality • Zest for Living and Learning • Inclusiveness and Independence • Social
**Children develop a sense of place.**
Educators support children’s connections to environments within the centre and local community.

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<td>Negotiating new spaces</td>
<td>On Julie’s (3 years) first day at the centre, the children take her on a tour, pointing out where she can hang her coat, keep her artwork, and wash her hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying, creating, and using personal landmarks</td>
<td>The children (3 years) are on their daily morning walk with their educator, Jane, and a visitor. As they turn the corner, one child points out the tower of the local church: “Look there’s the castle.” <em>Passamaquoddy Children’s Centre Inc.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming familiar with the sights, sounds, rhythms, and routines of new situations</td>
<td>Children in the four-year-old classroom hear voices in the hall. The arrival of the after-schoolers signals that it is almost time for parents to come. One child says, “There are the big girls. Our mommies are coming soon” <em>Just Kids Preschool Centre Inc.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generating a shared repertoire of narratives and memories</td>
<td>Months after the centre’s trip to the beach, Carl and Daisy (4 years) play lifeguard and search for shells in the sandbox.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making connections between the centre, home, and broader communities</td>
<td>After being out on a walk around town, Jason (4 years) is in the book corner looking at a brochure of the town. “Hey, we saw that on our walk, right Angela?” Jason points out all the places he saw. <em>Kings County Kids Daycare Centre</em></td>
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SUGGESTED PROVISIONS AND PRACTICES

Create an inviting, warm environment. Attach children’s names to personal spaces such as clothes hooks or cubbyholes. Label places in the centre using words and symbols. Maintain and revisit routines and procedures while the new child adjusts to the centre.

Visit places outside the centre to help children become familiar with the community. Point out landmarks such as local businesses, familiar buildings, and natural items such as boulders or trees. Listen to children as they notice and name features of the surrounding sites.

Draw attention to predictable sounds and sights of the centre.

Comfort children through unexpected events and offer explanations for new sounds or changes that might take a child by surprise.

Be close by when children enter new situations.

Build upon shared events by writing group stories and providing related props for dramatic play.

Help to make connections between events by comments such as “Do you remember when...?” and “This reminds me of...”.

Weave home practices into the everyday of the centre; for example, home languages, foods, child rearing practices, faiths, sleeping routines, patterns of physical contact, freedom of movement, and emotional expression.

Accept children’s contributions from home into the centre.
BELONGING

Children develop a sense of place.
Educators support children’s connections to environments within the centre and local community.

For Reflection

Each centre is situated in its own unique community. How do you help children to identify with the area surrounding the centre? Think about identifying and visiting local businesses, parks, and familiar landmarks. Think about community members who can participate in the centre or whom the children can visit.

How are daily routines made familiar to the children and how is their participation encouraged? How are changes in routines handled? Think about clean-up, diapering and dressing for outdoor play.

In what ways do you affirm families’ connection to the centre? Think about how families see themselves reflected at the centre — through artifacts from home, favourite recipes, family pictures and stories. How do you invite families to share hobbies and talents? How welcoming are your entry ways and your arrival and departure routines?

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• Compassion and Caring

Individuality
• Social Responsibility

Imagination, Creativity & Play
• Spiritual & Zest for Living

Communication
• Aesthetics

Spirituality
• Imagination & Independence

Living Democratically
• Individuality & Independence

Social Responsibility
• Communication
**Belonging**

**Children build respectful and responsive relationships.**  
*Educators provide time and spaces for children to develop and maintain relationships*

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<td>Developing cherished as well as casual friendships</td>
<td>“I like everyone in our class,” states Julie (4 years). “But Isaac is my best friend,” she adds, while talking to her educator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forming close relationships with a range of adults</td>
<td>After Tommy’s fourth birthday he moves from Mildred’s room to a new group in the centre. Every time something especially exciting happens, Tommy returns to share the stories with Mildred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing in their awareness that their actions contribute to the well-being of others</td>
<td>Children in the four-year-old room take pleasure in pushing the infants on the swings. The infants respond to the interactions with spontaneous, contagious laughter. <em>100 Aker Woods Daycare</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in group initiatives</td>
<td>Claire (3 years) exclaims, “Let’s have a parade,” and begins to march. Her friends see her and join in. A line of children makes its way through the classroom. The educator, noticing their excitement, pulls out the rhythm instruments and hands them out as the children march by.</td>
</tr>
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**For Reflection**

What opportunities does your centre provide for children to develop friendships across ages? How do the centre’s policies and procedures support and/or limit such multi-age interactions?

How do you provide space, time, freedom, and support for children to develop friendships? Think about indoor and outdoor activities, on-site and beyond-site relationships. Think about scheduling, physical space, staffing ratios, indoor and outdoor activities.

How do you encourage the participation of every child? Think about children’s friendships, patterns of exclusion, activity choices, gender, race, and class.
Suggested Provisions and Practices

Allow children private social spaces to make and sustain friendships within their own and other age groups.

Let families know about their children’s friendships so that they can choose to extend them beyond the centre.

Acknowledge and maintain the special bonds that form between children and adults within the centre.

Provide for multi-age groupings in which caregivers get to know all the children.

Consider following a group of children through their daycare experience.

Provide spaces for children to work together and learn from one another.

Model appreciation of others with positive talk; encourage children to listen, support, celebrate, question, and care for other children; talk through and point out how their actions affect others.

Be open to unplanned changes in scheduling.

Build upon children’s spontaneous and recurring activities; be playful in following their lead.

Be aware of how each child participates within the centre community.

How are children’s contributions to your centre invited and accepted? Think about toys, stories, cultural artifacts, ideas, questions, and children’s theory building.

How do educators and families learn from and about each other at your centre? Think about how you ensure time and space for authentic and personal communications, and consider relationships between families, between educators, and between educators and families.
### Physical Health

**Children take responsibility for personal care.**

*Educators provide access, time, and encouragement as children undertake self-care practices.*

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<td>Growing independence in self-care routines</td>
<td>When asked if he would like a snack today, Pierre (4 years) says he is not hungry. At the same time, Emma (4 years) requests a second helping of cheese and crackers. The educator recognizes the capabilities of children to make their own decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about individual differences in self-care practices</td>
<td>Everyone knows Kyla (3 years) is allergic to juice. One day, her educator, Jennifer, accidentally sets juice in front of her and Emma (3 years) says, “Jennifer, Kyla can’t drink juice. It makes her tummy sick, right?” The Preschool Centre on Clark St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping others with personal care</td>
<td>Sam (3 years) becomes very anxious when the fire bell rings. His close friend Mary (4 years) takes his hand. She whispers softly to him as they leave the building, “It’s just a practice. You will be all right.”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Suggested Provisions and Practices

Offer gentle encouragement and reminders about self-care routines.

Allow children to actively participate in making decisions about food consumption, rest time, alone time, toileting routines.

Recognize that children are curious about individual differences.

Talk with children and families to determine their health routine practices.

Model and practise a range of self-care routines.

Acknowledge children’s accomplishments with statements such as, “I noticed you put on your own coat today.”

Review procedures, such as fire drills, regularly.

For Reflection

What beliefs do you hold about children’s participation in self-care routines? Think about snack time, dressing, toileting, sleeping, diapering. How might your beliefs shape the practices in your centre? How do these practices inhibit or encourage children to take initiative?

In what ways are children encouraged to help themselves? In what ways are children encouraged to help others? Think about your responses to children’s requests for help. Think about access to supplies, peer helping, and contributions to procedures.

How do you address children’s comments and questions about individual or family differences in self-care routines? Think about learning about families’ practices, having open discussions, and taking what children say seriously.

How are government health and safety regulations made visible in your centre and within centre policies? How do you negotiate these regulations as you plan for learning? Think about access to required posted information and responsibility for the management of regulatory information.
**Physical Health**

**Children learn about food and nutrition.**
*Educators honour individual and cultural food practices, and provide children with a range of nutritious foods that are new, familiar, and local.*

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<td>Understanding the relationship between food and their bodies</td>
<td>Jane (2 years) says “thirsty”. She walks over to her cubbie to get her sippy cup, takes a drink, and puts her cup back for next time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building confidence to try new foods</td>
<td>The first time tacos are on the menu, Jack (3 years) prepares his but then hesitates to eat it. His educator, Christa, sits beside him and speaks of how tasty the hamburger meat is on her taco. Jack tastes some from his plate, smiles, and says, “I like it.” <em>Unicorn Children’s Centre Inc.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring a range of cultural practices of eating and sharing foods</td>
<td>Rémi’s mom comes into the four-year-old room to make sushi with the children. She models how to roll the rice and seaweed, stands by to help the children as they make their own, and then sits to eat with the children who want to taste this new food. <em>UNB Children’s Centre</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making decisions about food consumption, preparation, serving, and clean-up routines</td>
<td>Jayme (3 years) arrives late one morning and brings her breakfast with her. She sits at the table and eats her breakfast. At snack time, Jayme refuses a snack, declaring, “I’m not hungry, I already ate.” <em>Unicorn Children’s Centre Inc.</em></td>
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Model healthy food habits, and discuss how food provides energy and keeps our bodies healthy.

Be sensitive to children’s identification of thirst and hunger; allow access to water and other drinks as appropriate.

Encourage and model risk taking with new foods.

Invite families and other community members to share the ways they prepare, serve, and eat foods.

Consider children’s likes and dislikes, health conditions, and cultural practices.

Be flexible with snack scheduling.

Provide food when children are hungry and respect their awareness of fullness.

Expect children to share responsibility for preparation and clean-up routines.

**For Reflection**

How can you become more familiar with the food practices and preferences of children and their families? How might such insights influence your practice? Think about regional favourites, traditional practices, and dietary choices.

How are children included in food preparation and serving? Think about developing safe routines so children can participate regularly in food preparation. Think about children’s questions, potential learnings, and discussions about food — cooking, shopping, and growing.

How does your centre encourage and balance families’ contributions for snacks and meals with government standards for food and nutrition? Think about the time, space, and supplies necessary to work with families to prepare foods on site.
## Physical Health

**Children explore body and movement.**

*Educators challenge children’s physical limits throughout planned and open activities.*

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<tr>
<td>Participating in a variety of physical activities, indoors and out</td>
<td>“Are you hungry Shawnda?”, some of the four-year-old children on the playground ask. “No, not really,” their educator replies, “but, wait a minute — my stomach is starting to growl.” The children excitedly squeal and run in the opposite direction. Unicorn Children’s Centre Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about their bodies in space</td>
<td>Evan (2 years) stands at the edge of a puddle preparing to take a leap. He pauses while watching his friend Gerry jump over the same puddle. Evan then launches himself over the muddy water.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increasing bodily awareness, control, strength, agility, and large muscle coordination</td>
<td>After discovering a giant snowball on the playground, Rémi (4 years) decides to move it with help from his educator, Leigh. He exerts great effort trying to push the snowball that is “taller and fatter” than he. He calls on his friends for help. UNB Children’s Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing fine motor capacities</td>
<td>Jessie (10 months) sits in her high chair carefully picking up her Cheerio’s one at a time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowing and stretching physical limits</td>
<td>Sarah (3 years) stares at the monkey bars for a long time. With great concentration and effort she climbs up the first three rungs and back down again. “Look, Daddy, look. I did it. I climbed up by myself.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Releasing and restoring energy in outdoor places</td>
<td>The children (4 years) excitedly talk about last night’s storm. Hearing their delight, their educators rearrange the day’s schedule so that everyone can romp in the snow.</td>
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**Suggested Provisions and Practices**

Provide all children with opportunities for vigorous daily physical activity, both indoors and out.

Participate with children and model a positive disposition toward physical activity.

Encourage children to explore play spaces and take risks to move in new or challenging ways.

Acknowledge children’s efforts and provide materials to assist them in their explorations.

Provide for daily vigorous physical activity and encourage children to participate in a range of large motor activities such as games of chase, climbing, throwing, catching, and running.

Play games familiar to you, and new ones made up by the children.

Provide interesting and age appropriate materials for children to use and explore.

Encourage daily activities such as buttoning, snapping, tying, cutting, and grasping; and recognize that these activities require time and practice.

Provide children the space to try new things.

Support, encourage, and guide child-initiated healthy risk taking.

When outside, model and join in children’s free movement: run, chase, dance, and spin with them.

Be outdoors daily, in a range of weather conditions.

Take walks together around the centre or local community.
Physical Health

Children explore body and movement.
Educators challenge children’s physical limits throughout planned and open activities.

For Reflection

How do policies at your centre promote or prevent exploration of natural spaces, healthy risk-taking, and quality outdoor activity? Think about regulations regarding going off site, weather-related policies, and schedule restrictions.

In outdoor/indoor areas collect examples of children’s healthy risk taking. Think about conversations, gestures, facial expressions, body movement, patterns of action, and social relationships. Think about how you support children’s initiatives in outdoor and indoor spaces.

How do you discover the interests, hobbies, and activities of families and staff after centre hours? How are such interests and activities explored in your centre?

Think about where you played outdoors as a child. Who did you play with? What did you do? What materials were available? What risks did you take? How might this experience inform your planning for outdoor participation?

How do you involve children in decisions about safety and appropriateness of play space equipment and materials? Think about issues of inclusion, gender, and age appropriateness.

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How do policies at your centre promote or prevent exploration of natural spaces, healthy risk-taking, and quality outdoor activity? Think about regulations regarding going off site, weather-related policies, and schedule restrictions.

In outdoor/indoor areas collect examples of children’s healthy risk taking. Think about conversations, gestures, facial expressions, body movement, patterns of action, and social relationships. Think about how you support children’s initiatives in outdoor and indoor spaces.

How do you discover the interests, hobbies, and activities of families and staff after centre hours? How are such interests and activities explored in your centre?

Think about where you played outdoors as a child. Who did you play with? What did you do? What materials were available? What risks did you take? How might this experience inform your planning for outdoor participation?

How do you involve children in decisions about safety and appropriateness of play space equipment and materials? Think about issues of inclusion, gender, and age appropriateness.
Inclusiveness and Equity
Compassion and Caring

- Living Democratically
- Individuality
- Social Responsibility

- Communication
- Imagination, Creativity & Play
- Spirituality
- Zest for Living and Learning

- Aesthetics
- Spirituality
- Zest for Living and Learning
- Inclusiveness and Independence
- Social Responsibility
- Communication
- Imagination, Creativity & Play
- Spirituality
- Zest for Living and Learning
- Inclusiveness and Independence
Well-Being

Inclusiveness and Equity          Compassion and Caring

• Living Democratically
  • Individuality                     And Independence
  • Social Responsibility
  • Communication
  • Imagination, Creativity & Play
  • Aesthetics
  • Spirituality
  • Zest for Living and Learning
  • Inclusiveness and Independence