



TRANSITION INTO EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE

This guide will provide you with information to help you plan and prepare for the transition into early learning and childcare.

COMMUNICATION

When your child attends a childcare facility, you will have opportunities to communicate with the early childhood educators. Due to varying schedules, you may or may not see the same educator every day. There are several strategies you can use to ensure you are able to communicate and review daily events to support the learning process and your child's overall experience.

- Use a communication book to communicate daily with your child's educators
- Be clear and concrete - if your message or request sounds confusing, the educators may not understand what your child needs
- Listen carefully to what individuals are saying and ask clarifying questions
- Keep a notebook, log or a diary to record your discussions
- Use e-mails as a follow up to meetings

For more information on how to effectively communicate with your childcare facility, please read Section 1 (How to be an Effective Advocate for Your Child) of the [Achieving Inclusion resource](#) (linked).

WHAT ARE BEST PRACTICES FOR TRANSITIONING INTO CHILDCARE?

Families, Educators, and Early Learning Centres all play key roles to ensure children experience a smooth transition into childcare. Below are some best practices to ensure a positive transition experience for your child.

FAMILIES	EARLY LEARNING FACILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a one-pager 'About Me' for the educators• Maintain positive relationships and get to know the educators by name• Communicate fully, effectively, and often• Be engaged in their learning• Be prepared with what your child needs• Share stories about social situations at home. These are short descriptions of an activity that will take place in their childcare, such as waiting in line, to help them learn what to expect• Advocate appropriately for supports when necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schedule a meeting to allow the family to visit - with their child when possible• Allow the family to take photos of the educators and environments to help prepare the child• Maintain positive relationships• Ask questions and communicate fully, effectively, and often• Support families with knowing their legal rights• Seek and advocate for additional support• Be prepared to meet the needs of the child

WHAT ARE MY CHILD'S RIGHTS?

Inclusion in the early years is about educating and supporting all children in the same early learning environment. It is the practice of enabling all children to participate actively and meaningfully in any environment. Inclusion means rights for all.

- Your child has the right to access, fully participate in, and be supported in all routines and play experiences, regardless of ability or additional need.
- Your child has the right to meaningfully participate in all program activities and to be accommodated for any and all opportunities provided to their peers.
- Your child has the right to be fully supported while attending early learning. There should be positive collaboration with community partners, outside agencies, and other professionals to ensure a positive and inclusive learning experience. All children deserve not just a space, but a place where they are welcomed, respected and their individual needs are met.

WHAT DOES AN INCLUSIVE PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

KEY FEATURES OF AN INCLUSIVE PROGRAM:

- Unconditional acceptance of all children in all aspects of the childcare program.
- Children receive the necessary supports to be successfully included in their neighborhood child care program.
- Families are considered valuable partners.
- Children are seen for what they can do rather than what they cannot do.
- Children are not required to have the same social and educational goals to be able to learn and play with their peers.
- Administrators and owners are strong leaders.
- All children are provided opportunities to develop friendships.



FORM A SUPPORT NETWORK

Families understand their child's strengths, needs, and interests. Collaboration with educators means sharing input and suggestions, sharing expertise, communicating regularly, and building a partnership strong enough to support the excitement and challenges of childcare.

Reaching out to professionals and other community partners helps to bring insight and clarity to many concerns that parents and educators may have regarding your child.

This allows for access to resources and support in relation to early childhood development and guidance. Ask your child's educators about local community partners, what services they offer, and how they could potentially contribute to any concerns relating to your child.

The section below shows the different types of support systems that exist as well as the many forms that assistance can take.

The support network includes:

- Immediate and extended family members.
- Members of the early learning and childcare facility (i.e. pedagogical leader, educators, support workers)
- Professionals working with the child (i.e. occupational therapists, speech language pathologists, psychologists, early interventionists, physiotherapists, social workers)
- Community resources (i.e. early learning consultants, resource libraries, government agencies, programs providing funding support)



When we celebrate inclusion and diversity, we create environments designed for everyone, so that all children succeed, using their own gifts and skills.



www.inclusionnb.ca