

2010-11

Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten Program

The Extended-Day Program

Draft Version



THE EXTENDED-DAY PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION	1	KEY COMPONENTS OF THE EXTENDED-DAY PROGRAM	15
Vision	1	Entry and Exit	15
Guiding Principles	2	Independent Exploration of Classroom Materials	15
The Role of Play in the Extended-Day Program	3	Preparation of Nutritious Morning/Afternoon Snacks	16
The Importance of Observation	4	Small-Group Activities	17
Getting Started as a Team – Professional Conversations	4	Gross-Motor Activities in the Gym or Outside in the School Yard	17
		Technology	18
A SAMPLE EXTENDED DAY	6	Self-Selected Reading	18
		Quiet Activities	19
SAMPLE FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING EXTENDED-DAY OPPORTUNITIES	12	Music and Drama	19
		Large-Group Activities	19
		Reading Aloud	20

Une publication équivalente est disponible en français sous le titre suivant :
*Programme d'apprentissage à temps plein de la maternelle et du jardin d'enfants –
Programme de jour prolongé, 2010–2011. Version provisoire*

This publication is only available on the Ministry of Education's website, at
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>.

INTRODUCTION

VISION

The Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten program for four- and five-year-old children consists of a core day program and an extended-day program. The extended-day program is complementary to the core program and aligned with it in order to provide a seamless and consistent experience for the children.

The core day program is delivered by Early Learning–Kindergarten teams consisting of teachers and registered early childhood educators. The extended-day program is an integral part of the Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten program; it is offered before the core day program begins and continues at the end of the day, and is delivered by teams of registered early childhood educators. The extended-day program offers an approach to pedagogy and planning that is consistent with the approach taken in the core day program, and makes use of shared resources and shared common spaces to create a seamless system of care and education for children and families.

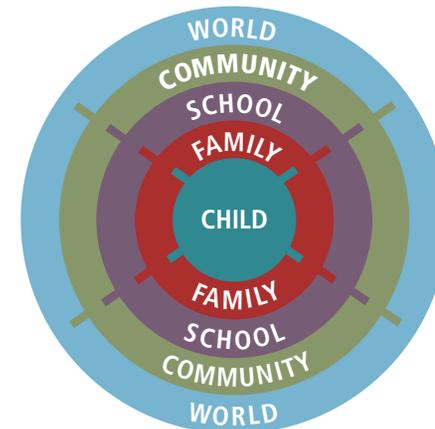
With their unique qualifications and experiences, early childhood educators bring their knowledge of early childhood development, as well as a focus on age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive program planning, to facilitate experiences that promote each child’s physical, cognitive, language, emotional, social, and creative development and well-being. In the core day program, their observations also contribute to the assessment and evaluation of children’s learning.

The extended-day program is intended to “provide a balance of investigation or exploration and guided explicit instruction through play-based learning. Children need many opportunities to investigate and explore. These experiences allow children to build on their existing knowledge, create and clarify their own new understandings, and experience a variety of approaches to a problem or question.” (*Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten Program for Four- and Five-Year-Olds – A Reference Guide for Educators*, p. 6; <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/kinder2010.pdf>)

The Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten program consists of six areas of learning – Personal and Social Development, Language, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Health and Physical Activity, and the Arts. These areas of learning are based on five developmental domains – social, emotional, communication/language, cognitive, and physical. The “big ideas” given with the six areas of learning are the broad, important understandings that children should retain from their participation in the Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten program. The chart on page 2 illustrates the relationship between the areas of learning, developmental domains, and big ideas. For details of the program, see *The Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten Program, 2010–11, Draft Version*; available at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/kindergarten.html>.

Areas of Learning	Developmental Domains	Big Ideas
Personal and Social Development	Social, Emotional	Children are connected to others and contribute to their world. Children have a strong sense of identity and well-being.
Language	Communication/Language, Cognitive, Emotional	Children are effective communicators.
Mathematics	Communication (mathematical literacy), Cognitive	Young children have a conceptual understanding of mathematics and of mathematical thinking and reasoning.
Science and Technology	Cognitive	Children are curious and connect prior knowledge to new contexts in order to understand the world around them.
Health and Physical Activity	Physical	Children make healthy choices and develop physical skills.
The Arts	Communication/Language, Cognitive, Emotional, Physical	Young children have an innate openness to artistic activities.

The Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten program also recognizes the importance for children’s development of the interrelationships between and among the family, the school, the broader community, and the world, and it builds on those interrelationships.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The extended-day program is consistent with and complementary to the core day program in the following ways:

- All children benefit from consistent routines through the day program and the extended-day program. They will also have opportunities to help develop these routines with the Early Learning–Kindergarten team (e.g., routines for self-regulation at learning centres).

- All children benefit from extended periods of time in a play-based program to independently explore and consolidate learning throughout their day.
- All children benefit from ongoing interaction with the same group of highly trained early learning professionals throughout their day.
- All children benefit from daily participation in activities that promote health, well-being, and active living (e.g., preparation of nutritious snacks, outdoor play, gross-motor activities).
- Families benefit from ongoing and regular communication with members of the Early Learning–Kindergarten team who are actively engaged with their child throughout the day.

THE ROLE OF PLAY IN THE EXTENDED-DAY PROGRAM

Play is a means to early learning that capitalizes on children’s natural curiosity and exuberance. Play is a vehicle for learning and lies at the core of innovation and creativity. It provides opportunities for learning in a context in which children are at their most receptive. Play and academic work are not distinct categories for young children, and learning and doing are also inextricably linked for them.

It has long been acknowledged that there is a strong link between play and learning for young children, especially in the areas of problem solving, language acquisition, literacy, numeracy, and social, physical, and emotional skills. Young children actively explore their environment and the world around them through a process of learning-based play. When children are manipulating objects, acting out roles, or experimenting with various materials, they are engaged in learning through play. Play, therefore, has a legitimate and important role in early learning and can be used to further children’s learning in all areas of the Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten program, including the extended-day program. Play is so important that the United

Nations has recognized it as a specific right for all children (“Fact Sheet: A Summary of the Rights Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child”, Article 31, http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf, accessed February 11, 2010).

Play nourishes every aspect of children’s development – it forms the foundation of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional skills necessary for success in school and in life. Play “paves the way for learning”.

Canadian Council on Learning (Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Centre), “Let the Children Play: Nature’s Answer to Early Learning”, *Lessons in Learning* (Ottawa: CCL, 2006), p. 2

Effective extended-day programs make use of play and embed opportunities for learning through play in the physical environment and play activities (*Early Learning for Every Child Today*, January 2007, p. 15; <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson/UserFiles/File/ELECTpdf.pdf>). Both child-initiated play and more structured play-based learning opportunities should be integral parts of the extended-day program. Children are offered choices of learning activities that reflect their developmental stages. The learning activities are designed by the extended-day team to encourage the children to think creatively, to explore and investigate, to solve problems and engage in the inquiry process, and to share their learning with others.

When children are fully engaged in their play, their activity and learning is integrated across developmental domains. They seek out challenges that can be accomplished ... Through play, children learn trust, empathy, and social skills.

Charles Pascal, *Every Child, Every Opportunity: Curriculum and Pedagogy for the Early Learning Program*, pp. 8, 9; http://www.ontario.ca/en/initiatives/early_learning/ONT06_023401#1

The extended-day team members support children in their play-based learning by:

- providing large blocks of time for both child-initiated and structured play;
- guiding, shaping, engaging in, and extending play but not dictating or dominating it;
- allowing children to be “in charge” of their play – engaging them in the planning of the learning activities and allowing time for unstructured play;
- providing a variety of hands-on, concrete materials, tools, and equipment that encourage children to engage in different forms of play;
- changing materials, tools, and equipment as needed, to guide, shape, enhance, and extend learning;
- asking questions to expand and enhance play;
- observing and monitoring play.

It is important for team members to understand and be able to explain the learning that takes place through play to parents, colleagues, and community partners in order to encourage them to support play at home and in community settings as well, and so to expand children’s opportunities for playing and learning.

THE IMPORTANCE OF OBSERVATION

A well-planned extended-day program provides team members with many opportunities for ongoing observation and documentation to assess children’s strengths, needs, and interests. The information from observation can be shared with the children, their families, and other members of the Early Learning–Kindergarten team. The extended-day team can use this information to plan ongoing experiences for the children.

Documentation is a process that makes learning visible by recording the evidence of children’s efforts and learning. It begins with an understanding of children’s development that frames the process and provides a focus. Observations of children’s experiences are captured through notes, pictures, and videos, and are supplemented by the child’s own representations. Educators analyse and interpret the evidence that they have collected, and use it to assess children’s developmental progress and to design future contexts for learning. Parents contribute to the documentation by sharing their understanding of learning that happens at home.

The “Continuum of Development” that is the central component of *Early Learning for Every Child Today* is a tool that supports ongoing documentation. It outlines the sequence of skills that children up to the age of eight can be expected to acquire across broad, interconnected areas of development – physical, social, emotional, communication/language, and cognitive. Children’s growing capacities to regulate their behaviour, attention, and emotions and their emerging learning dispositions underpin these areas of development.

GETTING STARTED AS A TEAM – PROFESSIONAL CONVERSATIONS

Honest and respectful communication is the key to making the core instructional day and extended-day program work effectively for children, families, and the members of the Early Learning–Kindergarten team.

Here are some important areas of focus and sample questions for discussion during professional conversations in team-building activities:

- Establish joint working norms. What do you personally need in the relationship to make things work? How will we establish consistency in the way that parents and children address the team?

- Determine shared materials. What materials, resources, and space will be shared between the day program and the extended-day program? What materials, resources, and space will be reserved for use in either the day program or the extended-day program?
- Establish consistent routines and approaches to the use of shared space and materials. What expectations do you share about the use of and care for shared materials?
- Establish and use shared expectations and language to promote self-regulation. What are the similarities and differences between our approaches to the development of self-regulation?

- Establish a communication system that is consistent and that works for all team members. What information will we share on a daily basis? With our school colleagues? With the children's families? How might we best share information?
- Establish a time when all members of the team can talk about common issues and questions. What is working well? What might need to be modified or adapted? What future action will we take collaboratively?

A SAMPLE EXTENDED DAY

The following narrative is one example of a child's experience in an extended-day program. The materials, experiences, and interactions illustrate "a day in the life" and are not intended to be descriptive of all programs.

The narrative brings to life some of the strategies, explorations, and inquiries described under "Key Components of the Extended-Day Program" (see pages 15–20) by showing how Ali, a child in Kindergarten, engages with other children and the early childhood educators in the extended-day program. The narrative also integrates

some of the explorations and investigations listed in the charts under "Sample Framework for Planning Extended-Day Opportunities" (see pages 12–14).

The narrative describes examples of what the children might be doing throughout their time in the extended-day program and how the early childhood educators might be interacting with both parents and children during their time together before and after school. The narrative also shows some ways in which connections can be made between explorations and investigations and the learning areas of the core day program.

THE START OF THE DAY

Mrs. Singh, the early childhood educator, arrives at school at 6:30 a.m. and is greeted by Mrs. McFee, the school custodian who is opening the entrance that families will use for the day. Mrs. Singh enters the classroom and turns on the lights, reads over the team communication book, and checks the learning plan for the day. She begins to organize learning materials.

Ali arrives at school with his mom at 7:15 a.m. He's not hungry for breakfast right now, but he knows that a nutritious snack is available at the snack table. He can choose to have a snack until the time that the group goes to the gym or outside to play.

As she does each morning, Mrs. Singh greets Ali and his mom as soon as they enter the classroom. Once Ali's mom has signed him in, Mrs. Singh engages in an informal chat with her. Mrs. Singh knows that Ali was frustrated the day before when he had a hard time printing his name. Mrs. Singh asks how

he was feeling when he got home the night before. Ali's mom mentions that he did not sleep well and wonders whether he might be a little overtired. Mrs. Singh makes a mental note to write this information in the Early Learning–Kindergarten team communication book.

While his mom is talking to Mrs. Singh, Ali begins to organize his belongings. As soon as he takes off his coat and hangs it in his cubby, he puts on his shoes, puts his communication book in the designated bin, and kisses his mom goodbye.

Over the course of the past week, Ali has been very engaged in exploring magnets at the discovery table. The children became interested in the topic of magnets as soon as a new set of magnetic blocks was added to the classroom construction centre. Ali chooses to begin his day with further exploration of how he can use magnets to make objects move. He is soon joined at the centre by a classmate who has just arrived at school. Ali takes great delight in describing his discoveries to his friend.

After giving Ali and his friend time to explore the magnets on their own, Mrs. Singh joins them at the centre. She says to them, “I see the paperclip is sticking to the magnet. The magnet is attracting it. I wonder if the magnet could attract the paperclip if they were not so close together.” Ali and his friend take up Mrs. Singh’s challenge. They continue to explore the distance needed between the magnet and the paperclip to produce attraction.

A little later, the children are invited to participate in the preparation of the nutritious snack. Ali and his friend tidy up the discovery table and then wash their hands before moving over to the snack table.

On the snack table, Mrs. Singh has placed a box of cereal, milk, and some bananas. She invites the children to join her in preparing their own morning snacks before heading off to the school’s gym. She reinforces several numeracy concepts that the children have been working with this term while they are sitting, chatting, and eating together. Before gathering the children to go to the gym, Mrs. Singh ensures that the snack table is cleaned and ready for the rest of the day.

Involving children in the preparation of nutritious snacks can be an effective way for the early childhood educator to reinforce healthy eating habits, oral-language development, appropriate social skills, fine-motor control, and early math concepts, such as one-to-one correspondence, counting, shapes, and patterning.

Ali and his friends accompany Mrs. Singh to the gym, where they help her to set up four stations of equipment for gross-motor development. Even though the children come from different Early Learning–Kindergarten classrooms, everyone is familiar with this set-up routine; it is the same routine used by all Early Learning–Kindergarten children in the gym during the core instructional part of the day. Ali chooses to practise throwing beanbags into hula hoops. Some children are moving around on scooters, some are bouncing utility balls, and some have started a game of hockey.

Five minutes before it’s time to clean up, Mrs. Singh gets the CD player ready for a familiar music and movement activity (e.g., “The Beanbag Song”) that the children will participate in while gym equipment is being put away. The Early Learning–Kindergarten team has talked about introducing a cooperative game at this time tomorrow.

The Early Learning–Kindergarten teacher, Mr. Riley, arrives at school. As he passes the gym on his way to the classroom, he stops to greet the children and Mrs. Singh. Mrs. Singh mentions that she has recorded in the team communication book that Ali did not sleep well the night before.

Mr. Riley continues to the classroom. He checks the team communication book and reviews the learning plans for the day. He places the shared reading material on the easel and ensures that the whiteboard markers will be ready for interactive writing. Mr. Riley also prepares for the small-group, differentiated learning activities that have been planned for the day by the team.

The children return to the classroom. Ali goes to the book corner, where he and a partner read a familiar book. During this time, other children are listening to stories on CD, writing notes at the writing centre, using play dough at the visual arts table, doing puzzles, or exploring math manipulatives.

At 8:45 a.m., Mr. Riley notices that it is time for his supervision duty. He goes outside to supervise the children arriving for the day program. Those children who take the bus have been met by one of the early childhood educators from one of the classrooms that does not offer an extended-day program.

Meanwhile, in the classroom, Mrs. Singh gives a verbal reminder to the children that it is almost time for them to tidy up so that the classroom can be ready for the school day. When the entry bell rings five minutes later, Ali and his friends clean up the materials they have been using and join the children arriving for the day program. Team members from the classes that do not operate an extended-day program come to the extended-day classroom to take the children in their classes back to their own classroom.

The school day begins for everyone.

THE END OF THE DAY

Ms. Watson, the second early childhood educator, remains in the classroom with the children who will attend the afternoon extended-day program. Children from other classrooms who attend the extended-day program are brought into the classroom by other members of the Early Learning–Kindergarten team.

To ensure a smooth dismissal for the children in the day program and a seamless transition for the children in the extended-day program, the early childhood educators need to establish jointly with the children an entry routine that is structured and predictable. A structured and predictable entry routine that the children have helped to create will ensure that the teacher will be able to successfully dismiss the children in the day program while the early childhood educator engages the children in the extended-day program in meaningful activity.

Ms. Watson helps the children to select activities such as listening to stories on CD, illustrating books at the writing centre, painting, playing board games, building with small plastic blocks, or playing in the classroom's ice cream store. Ms. Watson notices that one child is having a hard time finding an activity so she reminds the child of the new materials that had been added to the visual arts centre. The child is very interested in the new materials and decides she would like to make a necklace. Ms. Watson helps her to select some of the materials she will need.

Ali chooses to go to the construction centre with two of his friends. They continue working on the winding road they had started creating during the day program. They are eager to tell Ms. Watson about their construction. Ms. Watson helps the children to extend their thinking by asking specific questions about the fork they have made in the road. Ms. Watson's questions prompt Ali and his friends to think about the road signs that some other children had made for the sand table. Ali and his friends decide to make some road signs for their construction, using markers and paper from the writing centre.

After dismissing children who attend the day program, Mr. Riley returns to the classroom and adds notes to the team's communication book. He then reviews his anecdotal observations from the day and adds a few missing details. He briefly discusses some of his observations with Ms. Watson while she is gathering snack materials.

Before the children come to the snack table, Ms. Watson sanitizes it. She then invites the children to help her prepare the afternoon snack of pita, hummus, and baby carrots. Ali and his friends wash their hands and join Ms. Watson at the snack table. They help to count out the number of plates and decide how many pieces they should cut the pitas into.

Mr. Riley proceeds to make some phone calls to parents. During one of his phone conversations, he finds out that a child will be absent from school, so he adds this information to the team's communication book. Before heading home for the night, Mr. Riley makes sure that the poem for shared reading that the team has chosen for the next day is ready. Then he places the read-aloud from the day onto the desk by the white message board for parents and children to see. He writes on the message board the following prompt: *Talk with each other about what happened to the child in this story.* He also reminds parents that the box for lost mittens is getting quite full.

While the children are eating their afternoon snack, the school principal, Ms. Samuels, stops by the classroom for a brief visit. Ali tells her about the road that he and his friends have been working on, and shows her some of the road signs they have started to make.

After cleaning up their snack spots, Ali and his friends join Ms. Watson to help make play dough. With Ms. Watson's help, they read the recipe printed on chart paper to determine what materials they will need. Ms. Watson reinforces

the concepts of print that were introduced to the children in the day's shared reading. The children then work with Ms. Watson to follow the steps outlined in the recipe. They take turns measuring and mixing the ingredients.

Small-group cooking and craft projects give children the opportunity to practise reading and following directions. The ability to read instructions (also known as procedural text) is an essential skill for school and life.

Before gathering the children for outdoor play, Ms. Watson ensures that the snack table and play dough materials have been cleaned up, while Ali and his classmates put on their coats and change into their outdoor shoes.

Once outside, the children help Ms. Watson take out the outdoor play equipment from the storage shed. Ali chooses to ride a tricycle around the play space. Some of his peers choose to use skipping ropes, dig in the sandbox, draw with sidewalk chalk, or play soccer.

In order to build a foundation for lifelong healthy, active living, young children need to develop a positive attitude towards health, safety, and physical activity. Time spent each day in the school gymnasium or out in the school playground is essential to the development of gross- and fine-motor control, strength, coordination, and balance.

Ms. Watson greets a parent as he arrives to pick up his daughter. She briefly chats with him about his daughter's day before he signs her out and goes inside to collect her backpack.

While the children are outside with Ms. Watson, a member of the caretaking staff has come into the classroom to empty the garbage and recycling bins and to sanitize the tables.

Outside on the playground, Ms. Watson sees Ali and his friends examining a bucket of rocks they have found in the play space. The children have a clipboard with paper and crayons and are taking turns recording their observations. Ali is particularly interested in a small, dark rock.

Ms. Watson uses the digital camera to capture the children examining their rocks. When Ali expresses his observation that the rock looks shiny like a magnet, Ms. Watson documents his ponderings and tries to extend his thinking by saying, “I wonder what we can do to find out if it is a magnet.” In response to Ms. Watson’s prompt, one of Ali’s classmates suggests bringing the rock inside to the discovery table to see what happens when it is put close to a magnet.

Children are naturally curious about the world around them. Early childhood educators can encourage children to engage in the process of inquiry by pointing out interesting phenomena in the environment and by asking questions that have the children exploring, investigating, and questioning. Inquiry sits at the heart of play-based learning and the Full-Time Early Learning–Kindergarten program expectations for science and technology.

A few minutes before it is time to go back inside, Ms. Watson reminds the children that outdoor play time is almost complete. She then invites them

to help return the equipment to the storage shed. Ali and his friends help Ms. Watson to put away the outdoor play equipment before heading back into the extended-day classroom.

Once back in the classroom, Ms. Watson asks the children to put their observation clipboards at the discovery centre so that others will be able to look at them. She quickly uploads to the classroom computer the picture of Ali’s inquiry with the rock. She will come back to type up the documentation from Ali and his friends before she leaves for the day. This documentation can provide the basis for a small-group writing activity the following afternoon.

After returning his coat to his cubby, Ali heads over to the book corner. He looks through the basket of non-fiction books to find the book on magnets from which Mr. Riley had read aloud the day before. He remembers hearing Mr. Riley read something about rocks that are magnetic. He flips through the book to find the word “magnet” and studies the corresponding picture of a rock. Quietly, he joins the other children on the carpet who chose to listen to the read-aloud.

Drama and music are important components of the Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten program. Children can use the arts to express their growing sense of self and their interpretation of the world. Providing children with opportunities to express themselves through the arts develops decision-making skills, stimulates memory, facilitates understanding, develops symbolic communication, promotes sensory development, and encourages creative thinking.

Ali's mom arrives at the classroom door. It is 5:45 p.m. She gets Ali's backpack and quickly glances through his personal communication book. She notices that both Mr. Riley and Mrs. Singh have written brief sentences about his building at the construction centre and his interest in the magnets.

Ali's mom joins him at the carpet to listen to the read-aloud. Ali has been retelling the stories to her on the way home each night, and she is eager to hear tonight's story.

Reading aloud is an important tool for literacy development. Not only does reading aloud play a significant role in developing a child's love of reading, but the experience of listening to others read aloud well also motivates children to want to become effective readers themselves. Reading aloud encourages vocabulary development, comprehension, and an understanding of the rhythms and structures of language. It is important that text is read aloud daily from a variety of formats and on a variety of topics. Both fiction and non-fiction texts need to be read aloud.

When the read-aloud is over, Ali's mom signs him out for the day, and they head home together.

As Ali and his mom leave the room, Ms. Watson overhears Ali excitedly telling his mom how he discovered that he can use a magnetic wand under the table to move objects. Ms. Watson makes a mental note to share this observation with the rest of the Early Learning– Kindergarten team by writing it down in the team communication book before she leaves for the day.

Now that many parents have started to arrive, Ms. Watson helps to get the rest of the children organized to go home. Papers are cleaned out of cubbies, personal communication books are placed in backpacks, and indoor shoes are safely stored away.

With just a few children remaining, Ms. Watson does a last-minute classroom check to prepare the classroom for the morning. She gets the children to help wash the paint brushes and to stack the chairs.

At 5:58 p.m., Ms. Watson says goodbye to the last family after gently reminding them that late fees come into effect after 6:00 p.m. each evening. She then goes back to the classroom computer to type up the documentation from the children's inquiry with the rocks and magnets. She writes a brief message on the classroom message board reminding the children and parents of the Family Literacy night activities that have been planned for the following week, and records her observation about Ali in the Early Learning–Kindergarten team's communication book.

After saying goodnight to the caretaking staff, she leaves the school for the day.

SAMPLE FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING EXTENDED-DAY OPPORTUNITIES

The chart on the following pages provides a suggested framework that teams of early childhood educators might wish to use when planning extended-day opportunities. Extended-day teams will need to take into consideration the strengths, needs, ideas, and interests of the children in their program, and make use of the unique qualifications and experiences of the team members and the available resources.

The framework is presented in two parts – activities before the core day program begins (7–9 a.m.) and activities after the core day program ends (3:30–6 p.m.).

Extended-day activities include a balance of individual, small-group, and whole-group experiences, and provide opportunities for play-based learning, inquiry, and self-regulation. Examples of the kinds of experiences that might occur are outlined under “Key Components of the Extended-Day Program” on pages 15–20.

Extended-day experiences are aligned with the six learning areas of the core day program. While most learning areas could be components of all activities in some way, the ones in boldface type listed in the Learning Area Links column of the chart should be considered to be the main focus of the activities in the particular examples given.

Children in the extended-day program will have opportunities to engage in activities that they select themselves and in activities that are led by the early childhood educator(s). Throughout the extended-day program, the early childhood educators will observe and interact with the children in order to facilitate their learning.

7:00–9:00 a.m.

Children arrive throughout this period of time and are welcomed by the early childhood educator.

Activity	Learning Area Links	What the Child Does	What the Early Childhood Educator Does
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> independent exploration of classroom materials preparation of a nutritious breakfast or snack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal and Social Development Language Mathematics Science and Technology the Arts Health and Physical Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organizes personal belongings (e.g., backpack, communication book, shoes) investigates materials at various classroom learning centres works with peers and the early childhood educator to prepare snack; eats snack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> greet families sets out and organizes learning materials facilitates snack preparation refers to communication books and team message board extends children’s thinking and investigations by questioning and prompting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gross-motor activities in the gym or outside technology activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal and Social Development Language Mathematics Science and Technology the Arts Health and Physical Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> helps to set up gross-motor activity stations in the gym or outside helps to set up the technology required for technology activities participates in the activities with peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plans developmentally appropriate gross-motor and technology activities facilitates activities that draw on the children’s interests and complement the core program plans and leads cooperative games encourages active participation in all activities supports the growth and development of social and group skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> self-selected reading and quiet activity time preparation for the day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal and Social Development Language Mathematics Science and Technology the Arts Health and Physical Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> chooses and reads materials chooses quiet activities, such as doing puzzles, writing, drawing, or playing board games helps to tidy up the classroom and set out materials for the core program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> works as part of the Early Learning–Kindergarten team to set up the classroom for the core program

3:30–6:00 p.m.

Activity	Learning Area Links	What the Child Does	What the Early Childhood Educator Does
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independent exploration of classroom materials • preparation of a nutritious snack • small-group activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and Social Development • Language • Mathematics • Science and Technology • the Arts • Health and Physical Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participates in preparing a snack; eats snack • participates in small-group activities (e.g., making play dough with the early childhood educator and peers, working on collaborative art or drama projects) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervises the arrival of children from other Early Learning–Kindergarten classrooms • facilitates snack preparations • organizes materials for small-group activities • facilitates the small-group activities • extends children’s thinking and investigations by questioning and prompting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gross-motor activities in the gym or outside • technology activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and Social Development • Language • Mathematics • Science and Technology • the Arts • Health and Physical Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • helps to set up gross-motor activity stations in the gym or outside • helps to set up the technology required for technology activities • participates in the activities with peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plans developmentally appropriate gross-motor and technology activities • facilitates activities that draw on the children’s interests and complement the core program • plans and leads cooperative games • encourages active participation in all activities • supports the growth and development of social and group skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-selected reading and quiet activity time • whole-group experiences (e.g., read-aloud, music, drama) • preparation to go home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and Social Development • Language • Mathematics • Science and Technology • the Arts • Health and Physical Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chooses and reads materials • chooses quiet activities, such as doing puzzles, writing, drawing, playing board games, or using math manipulatives to build, pattern, sort, and count • listens to texts read aloud • helps to tidy up the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reads aloud • facilitates the tidying up of the classroom • communicates with parents • documents children’s learning

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE EXTENDED-DAY PROGRAM

The key components described on the following pages provide a beginning framework, rather than a prescription, for extended-day teams to use when planning extended-day opportunities. Each extended-day team will need to take into consideration the strengths, needs, and interests of the children in their program and to capitalize on the unique qualifications and experiences of the various team members. Extended-day teams will also need to consider the availability of school/community resources and space when planning their program.

While most extended-day programs will take place in school settings, some children may attend programs that are offered in settings away from the school, such as a neighbourhood community centre or a home childcare.

ENTRY AND EXIT

The extended-day schedule enables children and their families to enter and exit school at flexible times that meet their individual family needs. During the gradual entry process in the morning, families have a chance to chat with the early childhood educators and to share information that might be pertinent to the child's day ahead. Similarly, in the afternoon/early evening, families can hear about how the day has gone for their child and stay informed about classroom and school happenings. It will help to have consistent routines and accepted practices to create a smooth transition between the day program and extended-day program – for example, routines and agreements concerning the organization of personal belongings, use of materials, and clean-up of learning centres. When the children have a clear sense of what to expect, they are better able to self-regulate. It is also vitally important to engage children in the establishment of these routines. The children learn the

language of problem solving and see how their actions can have an impact on themselves and others. Also, when children participate in the creation of routines, they are highly motivated to follow them.

In settings away from school, it is similarly important to have predictable and consistent routines that the children have helped to create. Predictability is comforting to young children, and helps to promote self-regulation and to establish a sense of inner calm.

Additional Considerations

Choice of language is important in the establishment of routines. Language that describes a desired behaviour in a positive manner (e.g., “We walk slowly in the room” instead of “Don't run”) helps to clarify for the children what is expected of them. Children will meet high, but realistic, expectations.

INDEPENDENT EXPLORATION OF CLASSROOM MATERIALS

Children are naturally curious about their surroundings. They have an interest in exploring and investigating to find out how things work and why things happen. Children have an innate sense of wonder and awe and a natural inclination for inquiry. The extended-day program can capitalize on children's natural curiosity and their desire to make sense of their environment by providing large blocks of time for children to pursue questions of personal interest in a variety of ways – at learning centres, in the outdoors, or in other areas of the school. It is the role of the extended-day team in these settings to respond to, challenge, and extend the

children’s thinking, to introduce new vocabulary, to help the children make connections between new and previous learning experiences, and to stimulate further inquiry. With assistance, children can move from noticing and wondering about objects and events around them to exploring, observing, and questioning in a more focused way.

In settings away from school, children can be encouraged to find opportunities for inquiry everywhere – in the puddle on the ground after a rainstorm, in containers in the kitchen, in the materials found in a fabric box, or in the sand pile in the corner of the park. Any object or event that sparks children’s interest and starts them wondering is fuel for the inquiry process.

Additional Considerations

The inquiry process has the following four elements:

- *initial engagement*: children participate in raising questions about objects or events
- *exploration*: children explore objects or events using all of their senses
- *investigation*: children gather, compare, sort, classify, order, interpret, notice patterns, and draw conclusions
- *communication*: children work individually or with others to discuss and share ideas

When children are engaged in the inquiry process, it is the role of the adult to provide rich materials and resources; to facilitate the children’s thinking with thoughtful, open-ended questions; and to encourage the children to observe and

to talk among themselves. Questions and prompts such as the following help children clarify and expand their thinking:

- What would happen if ...?
- How would we find out?
- I wonder why ...

PREPARATION OF NUTRITIOUS MORNING/AFTERNOON SNACKS

Learning to make healthy food choices is a cornerstone to healthy, active living. When children help in the preparation of healthy foods, they are more likely to sample these foods and to make them part of their daily eating habits. Involving children in the preparation of nutritious snacks can be an effective way for the extended-day team to reinforce healthy eating habits, oral language development, appropriate social skills, fine-motor control, and early math concepts, such as one-to-one correspondence, quantity, and measurement. When children assist with snack preparation, they also learn cooperation skills and self-help skills, which support the development of self-regulation.

If children bring their own snacks to the extended-day program, it is beneficial to have them help organize, set up, and clean up the designated snack area.

In settings away from school, children can also be actively involved in snack preparation. Time can be spent discussing food sources, planning weekly snack schedules, writing grocery lists, comparing grocery store flyers, and deciding on healthy snack options when visiting the grocery store.

Additional Considerations

For additional information, please contact your local public health department.

SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITIES

Small-group activities such as playing board games, creating dramatic presentations or puppet plays, or building large structures with other children encourage the development of cooperation, self-regulation, and problem solving. All of the arts, including music and drama, provide many opportunities for small-group activities (see “Music and Drama,” on page 19). Small-group activities could also be set up for using technology and for reading (see “Technology” and “Self-Selected Reading” on page 18). The discovery centre could be a focal point for investigation of a science question.

It is the role of the extended-day team in all activities to respond to, challenge, and extend the children’s thinking, to introduce new vocabulary, to help them make connections between new and previous learning experiences, and to foster positive social interactions.

In settings away from school, children can be involved in small-group activities using “found materials”. For example, yogurt containers, cereal boxes, and paper towel rolls make wonderful construction toys. Popsicle sticks and pipe cleaners present endless possibilities for artistic expression. Bread tags and buttons are invaluable for counting, sorting, patterning, and other number-related activities.

Additional Considerations

Children need to have access to a wide variety of small-group experiences that offer them different pathways through which they can develop their ability to solve problems, to cooperate with others, and to demonstrate their creative thinking.

GROSS-MOTOR ACTIVITIES IN THE GYM OR OUTSIDE IN THE SCHOOL YARD

Time spent engaged in gross-motor activities in the gym or outside on the school playground reinforces the importance of being physically active and helps to build a foundation for lifelong healthy living. For young children, in particular, their future health and well-being are directly related to the development and strengthening of both their large and small muscles. Early childhood educators can plan activities that engage children in the exploration of equipment (e.g., bean bags, balls, skipping ropes) and in the playing of cooperative games that will help them to develop spatial awareness, muscle coordination and control, flexibility, and balance.

In settings away from school, children can have many other opportunities for movement, such as walking around the local community, playing in the local park, climbing stairs in apartment buildings, or simply dancing to favourite musical tunes. Outdoor games such as those mentioned below can help children develop self-regulation, listening skills, small- and large-muscle coordination, strength, and awareness of how their bodies can move in space.

Additional Considerations

Outdoor activities such as water play, sidewalk games (e.g., hopscotch, chalk drawing), and playing with balls and hoops provide opportunities both to support the development of balance and gross-motor skills (e.g., hopping, throwing) and to extend the classroom into the outdoors.

TECHNOLOGY

The extended-day program can provide an opportunity for children to use technology (e.g., digital cameras, video cameras, and computers) for varied, real-life purposes, including reading and writing. The extended-day team can draw on the expertise of various individuals in the school (e.g., the teacher responsible for technology, older students, or the teacher-librarian) to show the children how to create simple media texts, such as movies, slide presentations, or photo essays, on topics of personal or group interest.

In settings away from school, children can be encouraged to make use of technology at their local library. Computers in libraries offer a range of software choices from educational games to drawing and writing programs. If there is a camera available, children can use it to capture the moments in the day that they wish to share with their families, and then use digital storytelling software to turn the digital photographs into professional-looking videos complete with music and titles.

Additional Considerations

Adults need to teach children how to use computer technology safely, just as they need to teach them how to ride a bicycle safely. To help parents and caregivers understand the strengths and weaknesses of such computer technology as the Internet, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection has created an informative website called “The Door That’s Not Locked”, available at <http://www.thedoorthatsnotlocked.ca/app/en/>. This website provides parents, teachers, and caregivers with a one-stop source for information on Internet safety. Information is provided on the kinds of online activities that appeal to different age groups and ways in which adults can support children in using technology safely.

SELF-SELECTED READING

Children feel empowered when they know they can choose their own books to read on the basis of a favourite topic, a favourite author, or an area of interest. Children can be encouraged to share their favourite reading material in small groups or with a partner. When children have difficulty selecting a text themselves, it is often because they are not aware of their interests and preferences. The early childhood educators in the extended-day program can help children find what interests them by pointing out the connections between texts and the areas of interest the children are demonstrating through their play.

In settings away from school, children can be encouraged to find and read various kinds of print both in English and in their home language. Street signs, billboards, storefront displays, posters in bus shelters, and want ads on community bulletin boards, as well as newspapers, magazines, telephone numbers, and messages on the refrigerator in their homes, are just a few of the examples of environmental print that people see every day. When children see that reading and writing are important skills that are used both in school and outside school, they are motivated to become readers themselves.

Additional Considerations

Text is read for both pleasure and understanding. Educators can help children deepen their understanding of text by asking them questions such as the following:

- What do you think this book might be about?
- What does the picture tell us about what might happen next?
- Has that ever happened to you?

- What do you think of that character? Would you want him or her to be your friend?
- What did you learn from this book?

QUIET ACTIVITIES

In a busy day, children in the extended-day program might need some quiet or “down” time for reflection and relaxation. During this time, some children may choose to work on a quiet activity, such as completing a puzzle or drawing a picture, while others may want to curl up in the book corner with some self-selected reading.

In settings away from school, children can engage in quiet activities such as listening to music, playing with a favourite stuffed animal or toy, relaxing in a comfortable chair, or reading with an adult.

Additional Considerations

Children naturally experience different levels of activity throughout the course of the day. It is important to ask families about their children’s natural rhythms and interests in order to know how to meet the children’s individual needs.

MUSIC AND DRAMA

The arts in their many forms provide a natural vehicle through which children can express their interpretation of their world. Learning through the arts helps develop decision-making skills, stimulate memory, facilitate understanding, develop symbolic communication, promote sensory development, and encourage

creative thinking. Learning through the arts also fosters children’s imagination, helps to develop empathy, promotes the development of relationships, and builds self-esteem. Early childhood educators in the extended-day program can plan experiences that involve the children in singing favourite songs, exploring music production with instruments, and retelling familiar stories using puppets, story-telling props, and costumes.

In settings away from school, children can be encouraged to make their own musical instruments. For example, a coffee cup with a lid that is covered in tissue paper and filled with dried beans makes a wonderful shaker, as does a clear plastic drink bottle partially filled with popcorn and sparkles. Children can also be encouraged to engage in dramatic play with common and easily accessible materials.

Additional Considerations

Children need to have access to a wide variety of materials, resources, and experiences that offer them different pathways through which they can demonstrate their creative thinking. The creative process, rather than a particular end-product, needs to be the focus of children’s artistic experiences.

LARGE-GROUP ACTIVITIES

When planning time for large-group activities, the extended-day team should consider the attention span of the children, the length of time they have been in attendance at school, their familiarity with routines, and their strengths, needs, and interests, so that the time can be adjusted according to the dynamics of the group. Children should be invited to participate in large-group activities rather than required to participate in them.

READING ALOUD

Supportive adults who listen and respond to what young children say, who read to them frequently, who have discussions with them, and who model reading and writing are critical to the development of literacy in young children. Listening to someone reading stories and other kinds of texts aloud enables children to learn new words, extend their experiences, and become familiar with the patterns, rhythms, and structures of language. Early childhood educators working in the extended-day program will read aloud daily from a range of texts, including picture books, non-fiction informational texts, poetry, plays, and simple novels.

In settings away from school, children can be encouraged to explore the possibilities at their local library. Children’s librarians have a wealth of knowledge about the kinds of books that appeal to different age groups, and are wonderful models of how to read aloud and engage children in the story and the illustrations.

Additional Considerations

It is important to help families understand the vital role they play in their children’s literacy development. Families can be encouraged to make reading aloud and the telling of family stories regular parts of their time together. Families also need to know that it is very important to read aloud to their children in their first language as a way of maintaining their cultural roots, as well as expanding their children’s general language proficiency and helping them to acquire new background knowledge.

The Ministry of Education wishes to acknowledge the contribution of the many individuals, groups, and organizations that participated in the development and refinement of this curriculum policy document.

10-212

ISBN 978-1-4435-4303-3 (PDF)

© Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2010