



Inclusion Philosophy

Access

Discovery Children's Centre is committed to the inclusion of all children; we accept and welcome children of all abilities into our program. We believe that every child in our care has the right to experience our Centre's group program to the best of his or her ability.

Discovery's environment is set up to consider the unique needs of each child. We make changes to our daily program so that all children can access areas, materials and activities in order to promote growth in all areas of his or her development.

Participation

All children will be given the opportunity and support to enable them to participate fully in the program. We provide developmentally appropriate group experiences for all children and encourage socialization with every child with peers.

Discovery's program emphasizes learning through play. Unstructured learning opportunities are present during regular routine; all staff in this instance are watching for "teachable moments", not creating them. Learning takes place through experiences that place skill development in a normal context, learning with an opportunity for peer modeling and peer interaction, and developing age appropriate independence. These goals can be best reached when staff guides the child to participate with other children in activities that will enhance development. Children are most likely to remember what they have learned and to use this information when the learning has taken place in a regular play based child-oriented context.

Our staff at Discovery provide a practical approach to behavior management that involves a democratic philosophy of child training that we have found to be very effective. This approach encourages mutual respect between staff and children, cooperation, responsibility and self reliance. The Centre's goal is to encourage children to be responsible adults capable of living meaningful, productive, happy lives. While we develop the children's skills in this area we are always cognizant of each child's ability to manage themselves therefore the techniques we use are adapted based on each child's individual developmental level.

Support

In some cases, additional staff will be assigned to a room for extra support. The role of the additional staff is to become a part of a team with an enhanced teacher/child ratio so that staff may be free to support the needs of individual children. Support from staff will depend on the needs of each child. More support is given to children who are unable to care for their basic needs and require a high level of support in order to function in a group setting. Health and safety considerations may require that some children have staff that are quickly available to meet their needs. Other children may require intense involvement from a staff for a brief period of time while they adjust to the day care setting but then are able to have their needs met within the regular peer group experience. Still other children need less support; they need support to focus on skill development but can learn well in a larger group.

The role of the additional staff is to become a part of a team with an enriched teacher/child ratio so that staff may be free to support the needs of individual children. One of the staff, (Unit leader or Teaching partner) will be asked to act as a resource and communication source between the parents, therapists, and the other staff ensuring that all supports are aware of the child's needs and goals.

We support families through a collaborative team approach. We work together with parents and professionals, (Speech Language Pathologists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Child Development Counselors, and Behavioral Specialists) to develop an individual plan to support the needs of each child.

We support staff by giving opportunities for professional development in current areas of child development research, theory and practice.

The aim of our Centre is to value each child in our care for their unique qualities as well as for their special differences. The successful implementation of our inclusion policy depends on the availability of adequate financial and environmental supports from the Government of Manitoba.