



Program Statement Policy

7.2.33

The Learning Enrichment Foundation believes and acknowledges our responsibility to provide exceptional quality early childhood education and care. We believe that children, families and community are at the center of our operation. We believe every child should have an equal opportunity to be included regardless of his or her abilities. We believe play is the essence of learning, and it is through active learning that children discover their world. Through play, a child has the opportunity to set free their imagination and acquire skills, which will foster success in all facets of their development. As Early Childhood Educators our role is to foster the child's exploration and provide adult support experience based on a child's observations and interests. We strive to offer stimulating, enriching and inclusive programs, providing a holistic approach to the unique needs of each child.

We strive to ensure that our programs reflect the diversity of our families by incorporating family and cultural preferences into daily plans. Family members are invited to share stories, special experiences, talents, cultural celebrations and practices. Families are encouraged to share stories in their native language, share music and media and provide family photos.

Family Communication and Engagement

Our goal is to foster engagement and communication with families about the program and their children. This is achieved through our open door policy, where families are invited to actively participate in their child's day. LEF has begun the implementation of Storypark in most of our infant, toddler and preschool centres. Through Storypark, families have the opportunity to connect with their child's classroom educators, receive weekly observations of their child's interests and developmental growth. Through notifications, families have the opportunity to become more engaged with the program. Weekly sharing of pictures and documentation further strengthens the connection between home and child care. We recognize that daily communication with educators is crucial. As part of our approach, educators will plan and share children's progress reports, memos, seasonal newsletters and parent events.

Children as Co-learners

We believe that each child in our care has the right to develop as a competent, capable, curious individual who is rich in potential. It is our role as educators to value the complex nature of each child. We recognize and consider every child's own social and cultural contexts, their own perspectives and life experiences. Children are given the opportunity to lead, explore and take risks.



Program Statement Policy

7.2.33

Children’s interests, observations and individualized support plans are the contributing components to our weekly program plans. Children’s participation in intentional planned activities is documented through pictures, drawings and anecdotal observations.

Our program approach is to support spontaneous and child-initiated experiences, in which the child is the leader. The environment is the third teacher where the child will inquire, explore, think and express a wide range of emotions, learning to self regulate and reflect. The child is at the center; their ideas and interests influence the planning and steer the learning.

We build on teachable moments to help each child develop confidence and self-help skills to cultivate their independence. The impact and effectiveness of these strategies will be documented through anecdotal observations and through the completion of the developmental milestone checklist (Looksee). The Looksee checklist will be completed when children start in the program and following thereafter, based on Looksee targeted age.

Educators as Co-Learners

We realize that a fundamental element to this success is the role of the educator. Our philosophy promotes that educators in our centres who are interacting with children are reflective practitioners.

We recognize the importance of understanding *Ontario Pedagogy for Early Years, How Does Learning Happen?* to strengthen our program delivery and to reach a higher quality of care.

FOUNDATIONS	GOALS FOR CHILDREN	EXPECTATIONS FOR PROGRAMS
Belonging	Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.	Early childhood programs cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.
Well-Being	Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.	Early childhood programs nurture children’s healthy development and support their growing sense of self.

Program Statement Policy

7.2.33

Engagement	Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.	Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.
Expression	Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.	Early childhood programs foster communication and expression in all forms.

* Above chart is cited from *"How Does Learning Happen?" Ontario's Pedagogy for Early Years* document

The goal of our educators is to facilitate children's learning, development, health and well-being. We expect that our programs:

- *Provide pedagogical support and examples educators can refer to as they think about and plan how to act to help the children best achieve their goals*
- *Help educators become researchers and co-learners with children, families, caregivers, and colleagues – learning about children, with children, and from children*
- *Help educators focus on building and maintaining relationships and supporting connections among themselves, children, families, and the early years environment.*

LEF is committed to supporting our educator's understanding of outdoor risk taking experiences and the impact that nature based programming has on children's learning. Our educators are responsible for planning and creating positive learning environments both indoor and outdoors. Program plans are developed based on pedagogical observations of children's interests and needs. Educators are involved in creating and planning weekly curriculum. Program plans are reviewed and signed by the supervisor weekly. The environment acts as a third teacher to help scaffold children's learning. Using anecdotal observation will help to expand the knowledge of each child's interests.

We plan for and create positive learning environments in response to each child's need by:



Program Statement Policy

7.2.33

1. Supporting each child in their environment to be an active, engaged learner who explores their world with their body, mind, and senses.
2. Considering a flexible schedule that responds to children's cues and individual needs and interests, child-initiated and adult supported.
3. To engage children in meaningful play in order to foster creativity and inquiry.
4. Provide opportunity for children to develop relationships within their environment through exploring and inquiry based learning
5. To use observations to understand each child's development
6. Daily opportunities for exploring outdoor play and risk taking
7. Ensuring practitioners are responsive, adaptive and knowledgeable
8. Educators reflect on organizing time, space and materials supporting children's needs for rest, sleep and quiet time.

Our goal is to involve local community partners to support children, families and our educators. We do this through team meetings, consultation, workshops and community resources, by inviting our local community partners into our centres.

Educators, who have an understanding of child development, demonstrate meaningful adult interactions and plans. They are able to provide experiences that challenge children to reach their full potential.

- Follow a child's lead
- Provide stimulating and challenging environments for children
- Planning is informed by the observations and the child's interest. For example: use open ended questioning, tools and materials to expand on children's experiences
- Scaffolding the child's learning by tapping into their prior knowledge and using those as a framework for future activities with the intention to promote a higher level of learning opportunities.

Our program goal is to support educators in their continuous professional learning by providing access to ongoing training. LEF partners with Evergreen Brick Works, Right to Play, and Child Life Solutions to facilitate professional development for all of our educators. These partnerships are reviewed and adjusted annually. Educators are also encouraged to participate in training through the City Wide Calendar, Community Colleges and other professional organizations of their choice.



Program Statement Policy

7.2.33

Educators complete an annual performance review and program statement implementation checklist in collaboration with their supervisor and senior manager, to support the reflection in their professional growth.

Health, Safety, Nutrition & Well Being

We believe that health, safety, nutrition and well-being are central to helping children grow and flourish to their full potential in all areas of development. We strive to ensure that every child is developing a sense of health by offering a variety of healthy meals and snacks. Our menu is reviewed annually by the food menu committee with input from all centres and approved by a Registered Dietitian to ensure it meets the nutritional recommendations of Health Canada. Resources are available for families on nutritional guides. Educators will encourage and model proper nutrition and physical activity.

We provide a holistic approach to all areas of development by responding to children's individual cues, developmental indicators for speech and language, and by observing developmental milestones and general health signals. In promoting children's health and well-being, families are provided resources to community services, Community Living Toronto, food banks and Toronto Public Health publications.

To promote children's safety, educators are trained in standard first aid and in implementing policies and procedures such as fire drills and lockdowns. We adhere to Toronto Public Health regulations regarding illness & outbreak management (Sick Child Policy, Sanitary Policy and Illness Record Forms).

Educators/Students/Volunteers Signature: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Prepared By: Policy & Procedure Committee
Effective Date: January 11, 2017

Approved By: Executive Director
Revised Date: January 9, 2020