



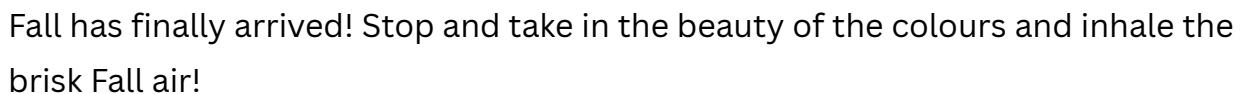
# FALL NEWSLETTER 2025

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## A magnifying glass with a red handle and a gold-colored rim is positioned over a yellow background. The word "curiosity" is printed in a black, typewriter-style font and is the central focus of the magnifying glass. The word is slightly blurred at the top and bottom edges of the lens, while the middle part is sharp. The handle of the magnifying glass extends from the left side of the frame.



When we stay curious, we open ourselves to growth. We try new ideas, ask thoughtful questions, and seek to understand before we assume. Whether it's learning a new strategy, exploring a fresh approach to programming, or simply observing a child's discovery through new eyes — curiosity keeps our work alive and meaningful.

## 2.

As educators, we model what it means to be lifelong learners. When children see us learning, reflecting, and growing, we demonstrate to them that curiosity is not just something we teach. Instead, it's something we live!



## PROFESSIONAL CURIOSITY

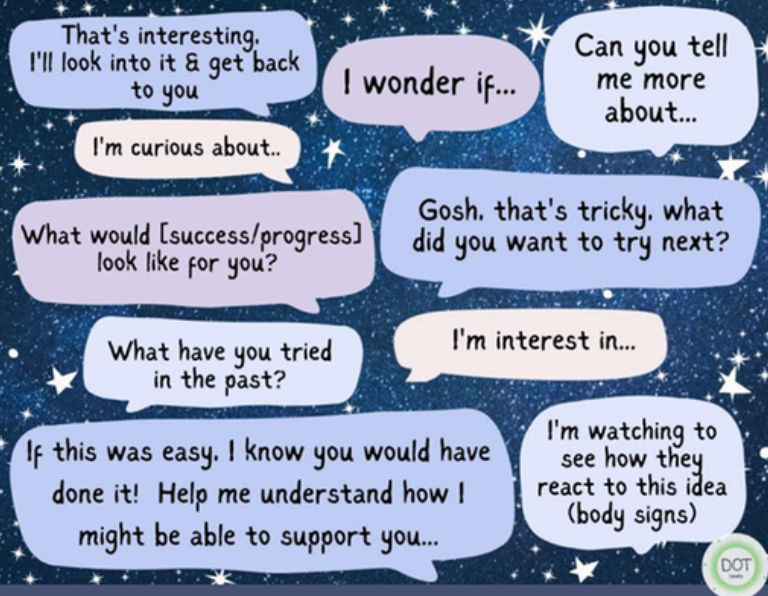
Professional curiosity means being alert, inquisitive, and open-minded when working with children and families.

- ✕ Not accepting things at face value
- 🔍 Asking respectful questions to explore concerns further
- 👁️ Noticing subtle signs that something might be wrong
- ✅ Following up when something doesn't feel right

It's about thinking beyond the obvious, challenging assumptions, and seeking clarity—especially when a child's safety or wellbeing might be at risk.

## Professional Curiosity

can sound like:



That's interesting. I'll look into it & get back to you

I'm curious about..

I wonder if...

Can you tell me more about...

Gosh, that's tricky, what did you want to try next?

What would [success/progress] look like for you?

I'm interest in...

What have you tried in the past?

If this was easy, I know you would have done it! Help me understand how I might be able to support you...

I'm watching to see how they react to this idea (body signs)



Let's continue to nurture that same sense of wonder within ourselves that we so beautifully cultivate in our children! "Curiosity is the wick in the candle of learning." – William Arthur Ward.

Albert Einstein also said, "I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious."

*(Tracy-Ann Brown-Chung, Director of Operations, Head Office)*

# Child Care Centre Licensing Standards



Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 Licensing Standards Licensed childcare centres must meet and maintain specific provincial standards set out in Ontario Regulation 137/15 General. These standards address items that affect quality in a licensed childcare centre, such as staff/child ratios, physical environment, staff qualifications, and children's health and wellbeing.

A review of the Childcare Licensing Manual will provide access to information about the legislative and regulatory requirements for licensed childcare Centres. It includes information on:

- Mandatory requirements as set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15.
- The rationale for requirements and why they are important in childcare Centres.
- Special instructions to help childcare Centres understand and interpret the requirements.
- Measures used to assess compliance with the requirements. Recommendations for alternative ways of demonstrating compliance and for enhancing program quality.

**\*Childcare Licensing Manual link:** <https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-04/edu-child-care-centre-licensing-manual-en-2024-04-17.pdf>

**\*\*As a reminder, each Centre is required to review the Pre-Licensing Renewal Checklist, as earlier visits from the Ministry is likely.**

*(Gail Williams-Miller, Marketing and Program Support Manager, Head Office)*



# CECE Professional Advisory: Duty To Report



## Professional Advisory: Duty to Report

Professional advisories are developed for Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs). They communicate the important legal requirements that RECEs must know and understand. Developing this resource is part of the College of Early Childhood Educators' (College) ongoing commitment to advise RECEs on their roles and responsibilities set out through legislation.

This professional advisory communicates the requirement to report child abuse and neglect, the suspicions of harm or the risk of harm to children, under section 125 of the ***Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*** (CYFSA). RECEs have a responsibility to protect children from harm. It is essential that they are knowledgeable about their duty to report to a Children's Aid Society (CAS) under the CYFSA.

This professional advisory is designed to:

- **Explain** the duty to report section of the CYFSA; and
- **Emphasize** the responsibilities of early childhood educators, outlined in the CYFSA and the ***Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*** (Code and Standards).

It is not intended to provide specific legal advice.

# Staff Workshop - Duty To Report Key Points



Image link: Ontario Children's Services

<https://x.com/childrenon/status/1316118503200612352>

## Staff Workshop – Duty to Report

### Key Points:

- Each staff member has an individual duty to report any form of suspected child abuse.
- Reports are to be made within the 24-hour timeframe.
  - Staff - call Children's Aid Society (CAS)
  - Centre Director & Designates - call CAS, report to your Program Advisor at the Ministry of Education and report the RECE to the College of Early Childhood Educators.
- Child, Youth and Family Services also regulates this legislation.
- A staff can call and ask CAS for clarification if you are not sure if a situation of concern is reportable.
- Staff have a responsibility to:
  - the child first (their safety and well-being)
  - to the families (for the safety of their child)
  - to your colleagues (mentor each other)
  - to the community (provide quality programs, support children and families, build connections and collaborate with community partners)
- Self-care practices are important and beneficial for staff.
  - Ask for help. Request support from your room team or centre director. Or seek professional counselling where needed.
  - Know your emotional limits and triggers. Plan ahead.
  - Maintain a positive outlook on life.
  - Incorporate self-care practices into your daily lives to promote an efficient work-life balance.

***(Gail Williams-Miller, Marketing and Program Support Manager, Head Office)***

## Inclusion of Children with Disabilities



Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) make the well-being, learning and care of children their foremost responsibility. They value the rights of children and create learning environments where all children can experience a sense of belonging and inclusion. (Ethic A, Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, 2017)

*“The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice emphasizes that RECEs develop caring and responsive relationships with children and families. RECEs collaborate with colleagues and community members to co-create safe environments that promote a sense of belonging, well-being and inclusion. Inclusive environments value and support children’s varied interests and capabilities. These are places where children and their families can fully participate in ways that are meaningful for them (Standard III).”*

### Supporting the Full Participation of Children with Disabilities

The inclusion of children with disabilities is important, not just because it is a human right and required by certain legislation, but because everyone benefits from engaging in a welcoming society where all members are supported to participate fully. RECEs advocate for inclusion because it is an ethical and professional responsibility. Inclusive policies and practices support children, families, colleagues, the profession and society as a whole (pg. 1).

***(Gail Williams-Miller, Marketing and Program Support Manager, Head Office)***

## Impact of Beliefs and Bias

Evaluate the ways that your “personal beliefs, attitudes and biases affect inclusion and influence your overall professional practice. As you work with diverse communities and families, it is important to become aware of the beliefs you hold, support and value. This includes your beliefs about your own capacity to create inclusive, welcoming environments and the beliefs you have about the differing characteristics and capabilities of children, specifically as they relate to disability, inclusion and inclusive practices. When RECEs have a better understanding of their biases and beliefs, and why they have them, they are able to create better informed practices, which can positively support the full participation of all children” (Thornton & Underwood, 2013) (pg. 8).

## Supporting Children with Disabilities and Their Families

Children with disabilities are not one uniform group. It is important to consider the various contexts and factors that contribute to shaping a child’s development and identity within their families and communities. These factors impact how children view themselves and their ability to participate and engage in their environment. For example, not all children with the same diagnosis have the same experiences with disability, nor do they have the same experiences in their home life, community, child care or school. Overlapping factors that might influence a child’s lived experiences, like access to resources, are complex and varied. As a professional, you need to make yourself aware of the various and shifting contexts and factors that impact children with disabilities and their families.



*(Gail Williams-Miller, Marketing and Program Support Manager, Head Office)*

Contexts and factors are influenced by historical, social, economic and political forces and may include:

|           |                  |                      |           |
|-----------|------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Race      | Indigeneity      | Gender               | Education |
| Ethnicity | Sexuality        | Immigration status   | Language  |
| Poverty   | Family structure | Culture              | Geography |
| Sex       | Religion         | Socioeconomic status | Age       |

Different communities will have different beliefs and understandings about disability. For example, in some Indigenous communities and languages, there is no direct translation for the word disability. All children are seen as gifts given to the family and the community. (pg. 9)

### **Role of the family and community**

When it comes to supporting children, the family plays the primary role. When you establish trusting, responsive relationships that recognize and respect diverse viewpoints and experiences, you learn about each family and what they value. Strong relationships support you in co-creating inclusive environments that reflect the unique values of families in your community. Responsive relationships are also based on mutual trust, openness and respect for confidentiality.

### **Role of colleagues and other professionals**

Apart from a child's family, you and your colleagues may be the first professionals to recognize developmental differences. Through strong relationships with children and families, knowledge of child development, ongoing observations and documentation of learning – and a growing awareness of the differences in children – you and your colleagues identify ways to support children by adapting the learning environment. All of this can occur whether there has been a formal diagnosis of a disability or not. Adaptations to the environment can be made without calling specific attention to the child who inspired them.

*(Gail Williams-Miller, Marketing and Program Support Manager, Head Office)*





Resource consultants, many of whom are RECEs themselves, can consult with you and with families and make recommendations about how to find and access relevant support agencies. Resource consultants can also support you, the child and their family prior to, and following, the identification of an area of required support or a diagnosis of a specific disability.

*“Unless you are qualified through additional training or certifications, as an RECE, you are not in a position to define disability, nor diagnose any child as having one. As a professional, you practise within the parameters of your professional knowledge and competence.” (Standard IV: C. 12) (pg. 12)*

When RECEs and other professionals collaborate with families to establish goals to support a child, it is imperative that RECEs are aware of the relevance of the goals and ensure they are implemented. RECEs play a critical role in supporting the child and family as they transition to different service providers, community programs and schools. (pg. 13)

*“Inclusion in the Learning Environment*

*“All children benefit from being in inclusive environments where they are able to participate and collaborate in meaningful ways and form authentic, caring relationships.” (How Does Learning Happen?, 2014, p.24-25).” pg. 14*

**Link:**

[https://www.college-ece.ca/en/Documents/Practice\\_Guideline\\_Inclusion.pdf](https://www.college-ece.ca/en/Documents/Practice_Guideline_Inclusion.pdf)

**(Gail Williams-Miller, Marketing and Program Support Manager, Head Office)**



## **News from the Health and Safety Committee:**

### **Fall 2025: Changing temperatures**

Safety in the workplace is of the utmost importance in an organization. Therefore, all staff must prepare for the colder, harsher weather approaching and help to eliminate any potential hazards within the centres. For example, potential hazards, such as a wet floor, toys on the ground, or anything else of that nature, can cause slips, trips, and falls at any time in the centre.

As winter approaches, these same slips, trips, and falls are just as common outside the centre, in the parking lot, playgrounds, front and side entrances and/or the walkways. Please take extra precautions when walking and ensure you have the proper footwear to support proper traction. If any slippery areas require shovelling or salting, please inform your Director, Assistant Director and/or the H&S representatives.

As Mini-Skool staff have done this in the past, I know you will continue to be diligent and supportive when it comes to safety in the workplace. We thank you for your efforts and dedication to Mini-Skool's H&S program.

Take care and have a safe Autumn season!

Dave & Chris

*(Dave Diaz, Human Resource Manager and H&S representative, Head Office)*



**Raising the Bar**  
*Early Childhood Education*  
An ASCY Community Initiative  
*A Quality Initiative in Peel*

## **Continuous Quality Enhancement**

Raising the Bar in Peel (RTBP) is a continuous quality initiative designed to enhance quality care in childcare and early years programs. Through authentic participation in RTBP, programs are committed to maintaining Provincial regulatory standards as well as local community standards.

In cooperation with Affiliated Services for Children and Youth (ASCY), copyright owners of RTB, Peel's Adaptation for Raising the Bar emerged and is based on enhancing relationships through:

- Lifelong Learning
- Reflective Practice
- Mentorship
- Leadership
- Collaborative Inquiry

The initiative provides an intentional opportunity for programs to build their professional capacity and to enhance their practices and relationships through a reflective, goal-oriented, and action-oriented model.

There are so many resources available through CDRCP, including workshops or webinars:

Connecting families and child care educators in the community through resources, training opportunities and support. [www.CQRCP.com](http://www.CQRCP.com)

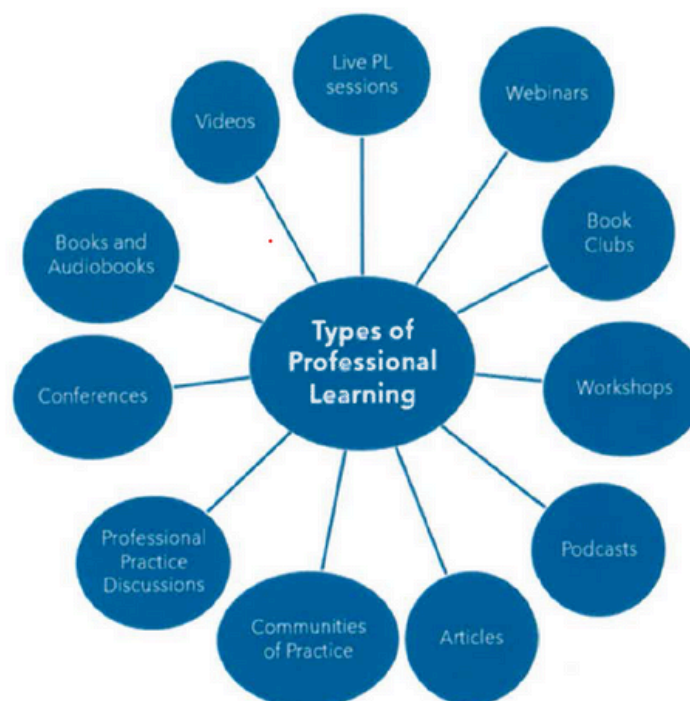
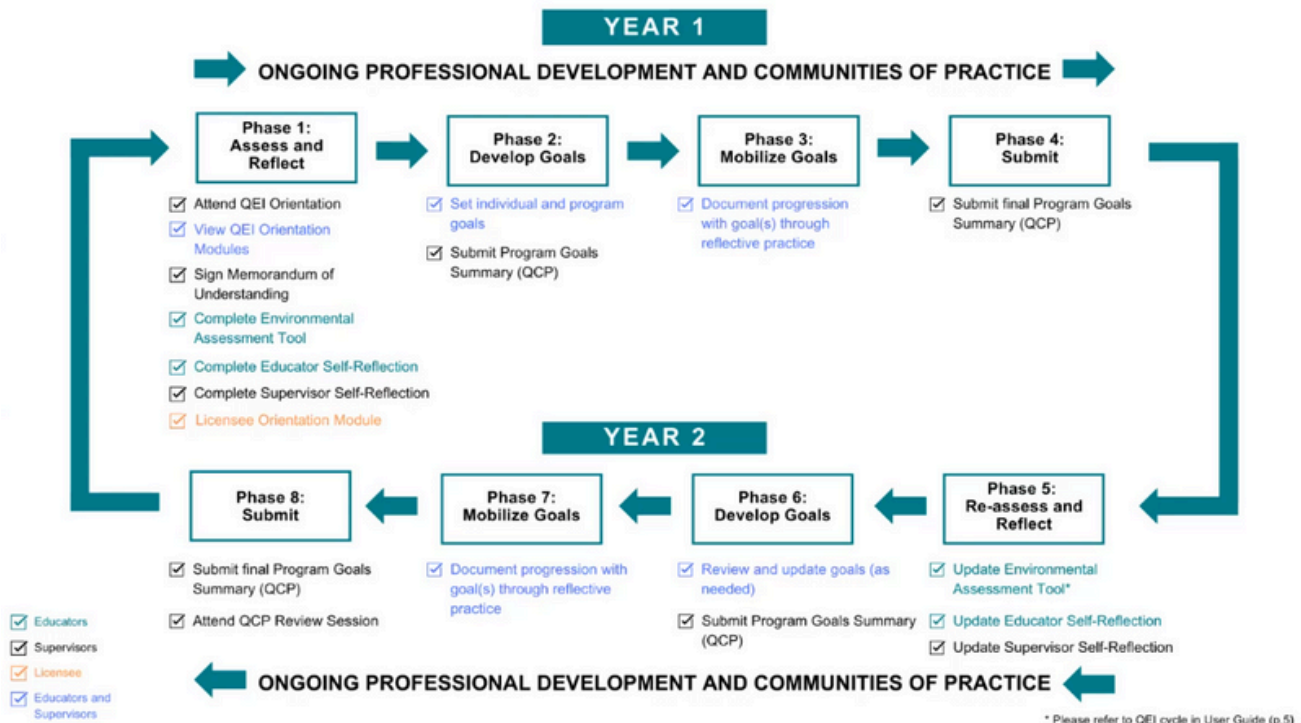
Others are available through Early Childhood Investigations:

Early Childhood Investigations Webinars- Free Online Childcare Training,  
<https://earlychildhoodwebinars.com/>

*(Kayla Bellerose, Acting Centre Director, Bromsgrove Centre)*

# 2025 QEI RTBP

## Licensee Orientation Module (CDRCP)



*(Kayla Bellerose, Acting Centre Director, Bromsgrove Centre)*

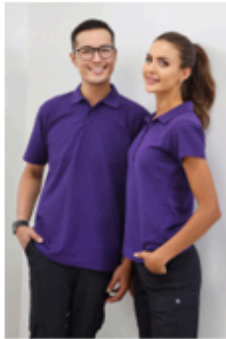
# COMING SOON!

## Mini-Skool Staff Uniforms

Which do you prefer?

Cast your VOTE at your Centre Director office.

A.



B.



C.



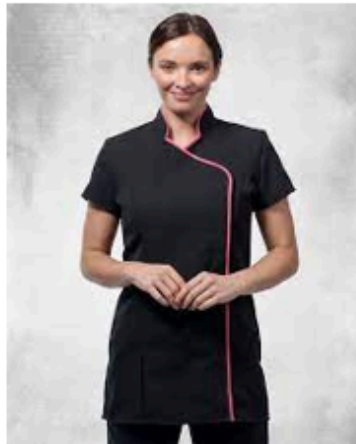
D.



E.



F.



G.



*(Gail Williams-Miller, Marketing and Program Support Manager, Head Office)*



# Peel District School Board:

## Prepare your child for Kindergarten



### How to prepare my child for school?

That's a question many families ask. Your child already has many skills.

Your child:

- is curious and full of potential
- communicates with gestures, words and/or sounds
- is developing preferences
- knows the difference between him or herself and others, between family and strangers
- understands and can express spatial relationships—up from down, in from out, front from back
- may speak and have a large vocabulary of words in your first language

Your child will build on these skills during the early years of school. There are activities you can do with your child now to help prepare for kindergarten. Here are some ideas:

- Create and write together. Provide your child with paper, pens, paints and materials to draw or write something.
- Look at grocery flyers together. Talk about what your child points to and looks at. Notice and name the letters and numbers in the flyers that are near these items. Play a guessing game with the pictures – for example, "I am seeing a toy that you play with in the sand, and it starts like 'b'".
- Read aloud with your child every day. Your reading time doesn't have to be long—5 to 10 minutes each day is great. Make reading a regular part of your day.
- Talk with your child about things you see. Try to spend time each day talking with and listening to your child. Conversations in your first language or English build strong oral communication skills.
- Play board games and complete puzzles.

*(Kayla Bellerose, Acting Centre Director, Bromsgrove Centre)*

- Play "store." Put price tags on toys (under 20 cents) and let your child use nickels and dimes to pay for them. Then switch places—let your child be the shopkeeper.
- Go for a walk in the neighbourhood. Look for numbers that are in the environment and listen to what your child is noticing. Follow their interests and curiosities as you talk about numbers, shapes, colours and everything that you see along the way.
- Let your child help you follow a recipe to cook something. Measuring is math; cooking or baking is chemistry.
- Measure the rain. Use a plastic jar with straight sides and a flat bottom and a marker. On the outside, mark "half full" and "full." Keep track of the amount of rainfall.
- Look closely to inspect things up close—bugs, leaves, fabrics or anything your child is interested in. Use a magnifying glass if you wish.
- Let your child become a bathtub scientist. Give your child different objects—together, predict which will float and which will sink; then test the predictions.

### **Help your child prepare for the transition to Kindergarten**

We asked kindergarten students what they needed to know when they came to school— here's what they said:

- how to tidy up
- how to share
- how to be nice to others
- how to listen

### **Dress for (kindergarten) success**

- In the course of an average kindergarten day, your child will jump, run, walk, bounce, stretch, crouch, bend and sit in a chair or on the floor. Choose clothes and footwear that will be comfortable during all of these activities.
- Choose clothes, jackets, shoes and boots that are easy to put on, take off and fasten.
- Kindergarten children learn best when they explore, discover and experiment—in other words, get messy. Choose clothes that are durable and easy to clean.
- Outdoor play is an essential part of the kindergarten program. Prepare outdoor clothing for all types of weather.

*(Kayla Bellerose, Acting Centre Director, Bromsgrove Centre)*

## More helpful hints

- Speak positively to your child and others about starting school.
- If possible, offer your child time to explore and design with crayons, markers, play-dough or clay.
- Encourage and support your child with self-care skills such as fastening zippers and buttons, dressing themselves (educators will be there to help out when school starts).
- Visit and play in the school yard and playgrounds.
- Encourage and practice washroom routines like flushing, dressing and washing hands. Remember that you and your child will make great progress with toilet learning between now and the start of Kindergarten!
- Invite your child to select and help prepare snacks based on foods that they like to eat.
- Encourage them to practice opening and closing, and eating from the food containers that they will be using throughout the school day.
- Encourage your child to listen and notice the signs of their body for when they are hungry and thirsty.
- Children will be playing outdoors every day in all seasons, so prepare for a year of all kinds of weather clothing!

### Link:

<https://www.peelschools.org/prepare-your-child-for-kindergarten>

*(Kayla Bellerose, Acting Centre Director, Bromsgrove Centre)*

# Educator's Corner

## ✨ A Gentle Reminder for Our Team ✨

“See a child differently, and you’ll see a different child.” – *Susan Hopkins*

Remember, perspective is everything. Each child is more than their behavior—each one carries a story, a need, and a potential waiting to be seen.

When we shift our lens from:

frustration → to curiosity

♥ From judgment → to empathy

From limits → to possibilities

We begin to see a different child—one who feels safe, understood, and supported.

Let’s carry this into our practice each day:

✨ Look deeper.

✨ Listen with compassion.

✨ Believe in their potential.

**Reminder:** The way we choose to see a child shapes the child we come to know.

*(Ntsiki Mitchell, Centre Director, Bramalea Centre)*

# Serving Sizes for Toddlers

A toddler's daily energy requirements are not very large. After tripling their birth weight by their first birthdays, a child's **growth** slows down. So, the amount they eat does not need to be huge.



## A general guide for feeding your toddler

- Each day, a child between ages 1 and 3 years needs about 40 calories for every inch of height. This means that a toddler who measures 32 inches in height, for example, should be taking in an average of about 1,300 calories a day. However, the amount varies with each child's build and activity level.
- The child's serving size should be approximately one-quarter of an adult's.

## Example of an average toddler-sized meal

- One ounce of meat, or 2 to 3 tablespoons of beans
- One to 2 tablespoons of vegetables
- One to 2 tablespoons of fruit
- One-quarter slice of bread

Your toddler will get enough calories along with all the **protein**, vitamins, and minerals they need from an average daily intake similar to the chart below.

Link:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/toddler/nutrition/Pages/serving-sizes-for-toddlers.aspx>

*(Christine Halliday, Centre Director, Brampton Centre)*



| Average Daily Intake for a Toddler  |                  |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Food Group                          | Servings Per Day | Number of Calories Per Day | One Serving Equals                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Grains                              | 6                | 250                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bread - 1/4 to 1/2 slice</li> <li>Cereal, rice, pasta (cooked) - 4 tbsps</li> <li>Cereal (dry) - 1/4 cup</li> <li>Crackers - 1 to 2</li> </ul> |
| Vegetables                          | 2 to 3           | 75                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vegetables (cooked) - 1 tbsp. for each year of age</li> </ul>                                                                                  |
| Fruits                              | 2 to 3           | 75                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fruit (cooked or canned) - 1/4 cup</li> <li>Fruit (fresh) - 1/2 piece</li> <li>Juice - 1/4 to 1/2 cup (2-4 oz.)</li> </ul>                     |
| Dairy                               | 2 to 3           | 300-450                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Milk - 1/2 cup</li> <li>Cheese - 1/2 oz. (1-inch cube)</li> <li>Yogurt - 1/3 cup</li> </ul>                                                    |
| Protein (meat, fish, poultry, tofu) | 2                | 200                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 oz. (equal to two 1-inch cubes of solid meat or 2 tbsps. of ground meat)</li> <li>Egg - 1/2 any size, yolk and white</li> </ul>              |
| Legumes                             | 2                | 200                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soaked and cooked - 2 tbsps. (1/8 cup)</li> </ul>                                                                                              |

(Christine Halliday, Centre Director, Brampton Centre)

# When your child is a picky eater



Meals are important social times in a child's day. They help children learn about food while connecting with family and friends.

Eating in a positive atmosphere helps children develop healthy attitudes about food and themselves. Parents and caregivers play an important role in keeping mealtimes relaxed and enjoyable.

## **How much food should my child eat?**

If your child is healthy and growing well, you don't need to worry. Most children's appetites are right for their age and growth rate. At around 2 years, most children start eating less. This is because growth starts to slow down.

As a parent or caregiver, your job is to provide your child with healthy choices at meal and snack times. It's then up to your child to decide what, how much and (sometimes) whether they will eat. Listening to their bodies—eating when they are hungry and stopping when they are full—will help children develop [healthy eating habits](#) for life.

Every child needs a balanced diet with foods from all 3 food groups—vegetables and fruit, whole grain products, and protein foods. [Canada's Food Guide](#) gives information about the type of food recommended for your child.

It's unlikely that your child will eat something from every food group at each meal, but try to get all the servings your child needs over several meals and [snacks](#) throughout the day.

## **What if my child is a picky eater?**

Young children often go through stages where they refuse to eat certain foods, only want to eat a small number of specific foods, or are easily distracted at mealtimes. Toddlers are learning to become their own person. One way that they show their independence is by self-feeding and choosing their own foods.

*(Christine Halliday, Centre Director, Brampton Centre)*

Just like you, your child will have days when he feels like eating certain foods and days when he doesn't. They might not even be interested in eating at every meal or snack time. Don't worry too much about what your child eats in any given day, but make sure that they eat a variety of healthy foods over several days.

It is common for young children to react negatively to certain foods. Some children are slow to accept new tastes and textures. Keep offering them to your child, and they will probably start to accept and enjoy them with time. Creating mealtime pressure or forcing your child to eat can actually cause them to resist eating.

**Here are some tips to help:**

- Children enjoy deciding what to make for dinner. Talk to your child about making choices and planning a balanced meal. Include them on grocery trips.
- Let your child know about 10 or 15 minutes before dinner starts. This helps them shift their focus and settle down when it's time to have a meal.
- Involve your child in meal preparation, for example, washing vegetables, pouring, stirring, and so on. It might help them be open to trying foods if they help to prepare them. They will probably also enjoy helping you set the table.
- Eat together at the table and try to make mealtime social and fun. Most young children have short attention spans, so be realistic about how long you expect your child to sit at the table. When the meal is done, take away the food.
- Avoid distractions like cell phones, toys, books, TV or other screens during mealtimes.
- Offer a variety of healthy foods for meals and snacks. Most children will eat what they need, even if their appetite changes from day to day.
- Most young children like to copy the things that others do. Set an example by eating healthy foods.
- Offer at least one food at every meal that you know your child likes.
- Give small portions of each food item at every meal. You can always offer more if they finish everything on their plate.
- Give them the opportunity to make choices where appropriate. For example, let them choose between 2 different vegetables.
- Encourage your child to try at least a few bites of different foods at each meal.
- Serve drinks only after the main course. Too much milk or juice can affect your child's appetite.
- If they refuse certain foods or whole meals, let them make that choice.
- Stick to a rule that the kitchen doesn't reopen until the next planned snack or meal.

*(Christine Halliday, Centre Director, Brampton Centre)*

- Offer snacks and desserts from the [Canada Food Guide](#). However, don't offer a snack too close to a regular meal time.



- Don't use food as a reward.
- Threatening, prodding, scolding, bribing and punishing can cause your child to resist eating even more. Praise and encouragement will help them develop food likes and dislikes.
- Try offering new foods at breakfast. This is usually the time that your child is hungriest and most likely to try something new. Once they have tried a food a number of times, it can be moved to later in the day, and another new food can be introduced.
- Eliminate milk in the middle of the night because it interferes with eating breakfast.

### How can I teach my child the importance of healthy foods?

Don't label food by telling your child that chocolate bars are "bad" and apples are "good." It's more important to talk about "everyday foods" like vegetables and fruit, whole grain cereals and breads, and "sometimes" foods—like chips and candy—that are eaten as special treats once in a while.

Link:

[https://caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/healthy-living/when\\_your\\_child\\_is\\_a\\_picky\\_eater](https://caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/healthy-living/when_your_child_is_a_picky_eater)

*(Christine Halliday, Centre Director, Brampton Centre)*

# Picky Eating vs Toddler Selectivity



We know it can be confusing when your now-toddler starts to get fussy with food. Is it picky eating or typical toddler behavior? Perhaps you've struggled with feeding your child for a while, and you're not sure if you should seek help for true picky eating. Below are some questions to help you determine which of our resources would best meet your needs.

## **Note:**

If your toddler is struggling with the transition to chewable foods from spoon feeding or purées, check out [Purees to Finger Food](#) for how to navigate the transition and help your toddler build the oral motor skills needed to chew and move food around in the mouth.

## **What does toddler selectivity look like?**

Most children need a strong foundation of a mealtime schedule, routines, and boundaries to develop eating skills. In general, the following characteristics are common in toddlerhood and best managed by the strategies discussed in our [Toddler Guides](#):

- Food throwing
- Struggles to get into or remain seated in the high chair
- Tantrums when favorite foods are not offered
- Inconsistently refuses vegetables or proteins
- Spits food
- Eats a small amount and then says “all done” or leaves the table

*(Christine Halliday, Centre Director, Brampton Centre)*

- Shows preferences for certain foods or food groups
- Eats well at some meals and poorly at others
- Eats well at daycare/with caregivers and poorly at home or vice-versa
- Eats some foods on the plate but will not taste/try everything

### **What makes picky eating different from toddler selective eating?**

Picky eating takes toddler selectivity to a new level. Picky eating is often related to underlying issues like anxiety or fear around food and/or meals, sensory processing, or developmental delay.

Children who exhibit picky eating behaviors need slow, consistent change and challenges balanced with love and additional accommodation to learn to tolerate a typical mealtime environment and explore new foods.

The level of support required for picky eating is often too much for typically developing selective toddlers. It's important to assess your toddler's behaviors and determine whether the behavior is typical and age-appropriate or not, as the support required for picky eating may worsen toddler selective behavior and rigidity, preventing them from making progress.

Let's walk through some questions to help you understand which resources your child will benefit from the most.

### **Young toddlers (12-18 months)**

This age group is tricky, as most kids at this age are showing signs of typical toddler selectivity, not picky eating. To determine if your young toddler is truly struggling with picky eating, first consider these questions:

#### **1. Is your toddler coming to the table hungry?**

- Do they graze or snack frequently?
- Do they drink more than 16 ounces of cow's milk or milk alternatives per day?
- Do they drink bottles or nurse frequently throughout the day or night?
- Do they lack a consistent mealtime schedule?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, your child is likely not coming to the table hungry. Check out the [Toddler guides](#) for help establishing hunger and mealtime rhythms.

#### **2. Do you offer your child a wide variety of foods, including foods you eat?**

If the answer is NO, start with the strategies in the [Toddler Guides](#) to establish foundational habits, which should steadily improve your child's eating habits.

If, however, your child is coming to the table hungry, AND you offer a wide variety of foods, AND your child exhibits some of the following behaviors, check out our [picky eating resources](#).

*(Christine Halliday, Centre Director, Brampton Centre)*



- Refusing to eat or explore foods for several (3+) months
- Only eats fewer than 10 foods consistently
- Cries when they see or sit in the high chair. Changing the environment. Sitting on a parent's lap, eating somewhere else does not help.
- Gags on most foods, not only challenging-to-chew foods
- Needs screens, toys, distractions, hand feeding, or pressure to eat even a few bites of food

### **Older toddlers/children (18 months+)**

Start with the [Reverse Picky Eating Virtual Course](#) if your child...

- Is willing to starve themselves rather than eat a non-favorite food
- Exhibits specific sensory sensitivities and/or challenges such as refusal to have messy hands, won't touch wet or messy textures, or hates having hands washed, face washed, teeth brushed, etc.
- Shows signs of severe anxiety at the table—i.e., exhibits more intense or different meltdowns/tantrums compared to other meltdowns that may occur at other times of the day
- Behavior and refusal are consistent—i.e., refusal/behavior doesn't come and go meal-to-meal, day-to-day, week-to-week, or from one caregiver to another
- Will not touch or interact with food at all even with low/no pressure and ample opportunities to go at their own pace. Note: Throwing food counts as interacting.
- Has exhibited refusal behaviors and/or eating issues for 4-6 months+.

### **General considerations (all ages)**

Consider focusing on our if...

- You feel like you can't stop [nursing, bottles, hand-feeding, distractions, and/or pressure] or the child will not eat.
- Child will only eat certain brands or types of food—i.e., Kraft macaroni and cheese but not Annie's, dinosaur chicken nuggets and not standard, cheese from a red packet but not blue.
- The child will completely refuse a meal (even a preferred food) if it is on the plate with or touching a new or disliked food.
- You are stressed about how your child will behave at meals or if they will eat at a meal. Meals and eating are the hardest part of parenting the child or you panic at the thought of eating out with your family or going to a friend or family's house for dinner if you don't have something specific to cater to your child.

**Link:**

<https://solidstarts.com/toddler-selectivity-vs-picky-eating/?hcUrl=%2Fen-US>

*(Christine Halliday, Centre Director, Brampton Centre)*

# Welcome Fall



Fall has officially arrived! The cool, crisp mornings and the colourful leaves remind us that change can be beautiful. Just like the season, our classrooms are full of new beginnings, growth, and the joy of discovery.

This season is a wonderful time to slow down, notice the beauty around us, and enjoy simple comforts. Whether it's a walk-through crunchy leaf, a cozy Storytime, or sharing a warm treat with loved ones, fall invites us to celebrate togetherness and gratitude.

## The Joys of Fall

- Brilliant autumn colours that brighten our days.
- Creative seasonal crafts and cozy activities.
- A chance to reflect and share gratitude.
- Comforting fall flavours—like apples, cinnamon, and caramel!
- 

And because fall wouldn't be complete without a seasonal treat, here's a recipe to enjoy at home or share with friends:

*(Sabrina Campacci, Centre Director, Richmond Hill Centre)*

# Apple Caramel Dip Recipe



## Ingredients:

- 1 block (8 oz) cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup caramel sauce (store-bought or homemade)
- 3–4 crisp apples, sliced

## Instructions:

- In a bowl, mix the cream cheese, brown sugar, and vanilla until smooth.
- Spread the mixture evenly in a shallow dish.
- Pour caramel sauce over the top.
- Serve with sliced apples for dipping.
- Optional: Sprinkle with chocolate chips or toffee bits for a little extra crunch.

*(Sabrina Campacci, Centre Director, Richmond Hill Centre)*

# Employees of the Quarter



**Cielo Barona,  
Assistant Teacher,  
Bromsgrove Centre**

*"Hi, my name is Cielo, and I've been with Mini-Skool for just over a year. I work in the Nursery alongside my lovely coworkers and the most wonderful babies. I enjoy spending time with my children as they always bring me so much joy. I will continue to cherish every memory as I move forward in my journey here at Mini-Skool Bromsgrove!"*

*"Since joining us in July 2024, Cielo has quickly become a beloved and familiar face in our Infant Program. Her warm smile and nurturing spirit have made a lasting impression on the children, families, and team members alike. We're thrilled to announce that Cielo has recently accepted a Full-Time Assistant Position here at Bromsgrove - a well-deserved step forward in her journey with us! Her dedication, kindness, and positive energy brighten our days, and we feel incredibly fortunate to have her as part of our Bromsgrove family. We can't wait to see how she continues to flourish in her role. Way to go, Cielo!"*

**Kayla Bellerose, Acting Center Director, Bromsgrove**



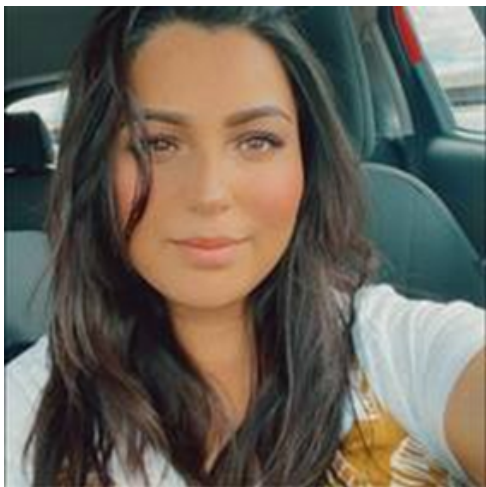
**Mini Sanjeeva Kumar  
Registered Early Childhood  
Educator, Bramalea Centre**

*"I have been working at Mini-Skool Bramalea since October 2017, and have had the opportunity to work with almost every age group. Over the years, Mini-Skool has given me the chance to grow both personally and professionally. I began my journey here as a placement student, and today I am proud to be an RECE in a busy pre-school classroom. I am fortunate to work alongside such dedicated and hardworking coworkers, and feel truly honoured to be chosen as the Employee of the Quarter. Each day at Mini-Skool brings new challenges that inspire me to grow as a child care professional and I am excited to see what tomorrow holds."*

*"Team Bramalea is delighted to recognize Minimol as our Employee of the Quarter. Minimol is a reliable and dedicated team member who always shows up with consistency and care. Her creativity shines through her decorative skills, bringing warmth and beauty to her assigned classroom. She actively participates in centre activities, helping to create a positive and engaging environment for children, families, and staff alike. We truly appreciate her contributions and celebrate her as an invaluable part of our team."*

**Ntsiki and Javair Centre Management**





**Hassina Dahi,  
Registered Early Childhood  
Educator, Cawthra Centre**

*“Working at Mini Skool means being part of a team that truly values children, families, and educators. Every day is filled with opportunities to inspire curiosity, support growth, and create meaningful connections. It’s more than a workplace, it’s a community where I feel proud to contribute to the early years journey and make a positive difference in children’s lives.”*

*“Hassina came to us as a supply staff right as COVID started. It was a challenging time to be in childcare, but she stuck it out and helped us provide a caring, warm and engaging environment for the children. Over the years, Hassina has progressed from a supply staff to an assistant staff, to an assistant RECE, and most recently, she has been promoted to a Supervising RECE in a classroom. Hassina always makes time to talk to a family, lend a hand to a coworker and continues to provide exciting and fun activities for the children in her care. We are so happy to have her on our team and can't wait to see her as the new leader in her room.”*

#### **Alliana and Fazi, Centre Management**



**Riddhi Bhatt,  
Registered Early Childhood,  
Richmond Hill Centre**

*“Hello everyone,  
I am so grateful to be recognized as the Employee of the Quarter for Richmond Hill, Mini-Skool. Working in childcare has been my passion for the past 13 years, and it continues to bring me joy each day. Being an educator allows me to build meaningful relationships with children and families, and I truly appreciate the opportunity to be part of their growth and development.  
Outside of work, I recently got married and enjoy spending my free time travelling and exploring new places. Photography is one of my favourite hobbies—it allows me to capture memories and moments that are so special.  
Thank you so much for this acknowledgment and for all the support from my colleagues and families. It means a lot to me to be part of such a caring and dedicated team.”*

*“We are excited to recognize Riddhi Bhatt as our Employee of the Quarter at Richmond Hill, Mini-Skool. Riddhi has consistently gone above and beyond in her role, demonstrating outstanding dedication to the children and families in our centre. She approaches each day with warmth, patience, and professionalism, creating a nurturing environment where children feel safe, valued, and encouraged to thrive. In addition to her regular responsibilities, Riddhi also serves as a dependable back-up staff, supporting the office and stepping into different classrooms whenever needed and ensuring that routines run smoothly. Her flexibility and willingness to adapt are truly*

*appreciated and has highlighted her commitment to the success of the entire centre.*

*We are proud to celebrate Riddhi's hard work, compassion, and commitment. Thank you, Riddhi, for being such an inspiring example of what it means to provide high-quality childcare. Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition!"*

**Sabrina Campacci, Centre Director, Richmond Hill Centre**

### **A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL MINI-SKOOL BRAMPTON STAFF!**

*"To all Mini-Skool Brampton Staff,*

*I want to take the time to thank each and every staff member for a job well done. I know this is supposed to be a designation for just one staff, but WOW, what an amazing job everyone did this summer, ensuring the children had a fun-filled summer and with the transition from August into September.*

*We had 66 children go off to kindergarten, 69 children change classrooms, 35 new children start, and half of the staff changed classrooms. So much has happened.*

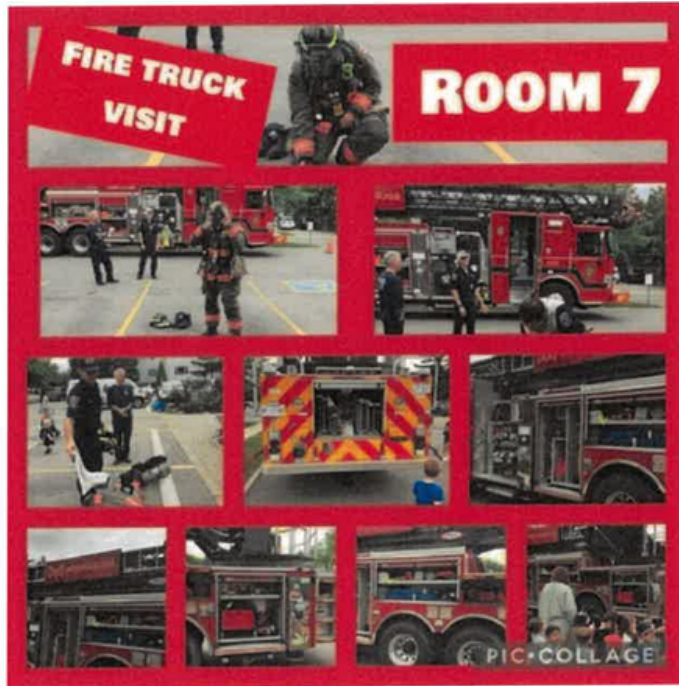
*On the second day of all these changes, the Ministry of Education dropped by for an unannounced visit. Because of all the work that the staff had done to get their rooms ready for the children, the Ministry representative looked over all of their paperwork and gave us a HUGE compliment on our centre. We got a licensing visit with zero non-compliances. We are so proud of all the work that was put into making this a smooth transition for all of the children and their parents, and of course, the Ministry. Wishing all our staff a wonderful end to 2025."*

**Christine Halliday, Centre Director**



# Our Centres' Program Activities, Events and Celebrations

Bromsgrove Centre  
WHAT A FUN SUMMER WE HAD!









## Cawthra Centre









## Brampton Centre





# Bramalea Centre







Mini-Skool Team, You are Awesome at what you do!

Thank you for your hard work, leadership, professionalism, and continued commitment to our clients. Your dedication in providing quality care and service over the years has allowed Mini-Skool to maintain its competitive edge throughout the years of serving the GTA community. We are so blessed to have such a dedicated Team. Keep up the great work!

Your ideas are important and is appreciated. Please email your submissions for our **Winter 2025 Newsletter by Wednesday, December 8, 2025, to [gail@mini-skool.ca](mailto:gail@mini-skool.ca).**