

Early Learning and Child Care Summer Safety Information

ENHANCED EXPERIENCES AND OUTINGS

Children learn best through play in a familiar and comfortable environment.

Think about the children's interests and how you can build on learning opportunities.

You can enhance your program by bringing in visitors or going on neighbourhood outings.

These experiences provide valuable learning opportunities without having to plan elaborate field trips.

Offer enhanced experiences and materials that are not usually available

- For younger children, go on a treasure hunt or musical parade in your playground.
- Bring in entertainers such as musicians, storytellers or magicians.
- Invite people from your community such as police officers, fire fighters or paramedics with their vehicles and equipment.
- Arrange an instructor with specialized knowledge for a dance, yoga, drama or art experience.
- When bringing in various types of visitors, consider arranging a few group times so the visitors can adjust what they are doing for different age groups and/or have greater interaction with smaller groups of children.
- Organize "theme days" that appeal to the children and offer active as well as quiet games and experiences over a day such as tropical day, mystery or clue day, pajama party day or scavenger hunt.
- Organize sport clinics, "camps" or special art projects based on discussions with the school age children.
- For school holidays, work with the school age children to come up with long term projects that they would like to design, plan and implement such as building the neighbourhood out of cardboard, recycled materials and art supplies, or fundraising to support a local charity.
- Work with the school age children to research and implement science experiments that require more time than is available on school days.

Explore your neighbourhood

- Neighbourhood outings can be very rewarding and more appropriate than field trips, especially for younger children.
- Use walks and outings in your neighbourhood to enhance your program. Neighbourhood outings can help children become more familiar with, and feel connected to, their community.
- Upon enrollment, inform parents of neighbourhood outings that are part of the regular program. Make sure that permission forms have been signed and are on file for all children participating on an outing.
- Take small rather than large groups of children. Even with very small groups, a minimum of two staff, including a trained ECE, should be included on every outing.
- Bring current child information records, first aid kit, water, hand sanitizer and at least one cell phone for emergencies. Bring a list of the children in the group and leave a copy at the facility.
- Do frequent head counts and take attendance:
 - ✓ before leaving your facility;
 - ✓ upon arrival at your destination;
 - ✓ several times during the outing;
 - ✓ when a staff arrives or leaves the group;
 - ✓ before leaving the outing location; and
 - ✓ when you arrive back at your facility.
- Take along items such as a camera to take pictures on the trip, magnifying glasses to explore and bags to collect “treasures” for later discussions or experiences.
- Expand on your program during these walks. Talk with the children about what you see, hear, smell, touch and experience and bring memories back for further discussion and learning opportunities.
- If the children have expressed interest in rocks on the playground, look for special rocks, collect some to take back to display and use magnifying glasses to explore the rocks that are too big to move.
- If the children are interested in cooking, visit a local restaurant or bakery and add new items to the daily living area to extend their play and learning.
- If the children are fascinated with a nearby construction site, visit it regularly so you can see and talk about the progress. Add a variety of cardboard tubes and boxes to the block area and construction vehicles to the sand box to encourage the children to experiment with building structures.