

# Little Lambs Home Daycare

## Program Statement

Little Lambs Home Daycare provides child care in the comfort of a home environment. Through this non-institutionalized atmosphere we proudly deliver an inclusive, child-centered, family oriented program based on the philosophy of children as competent, curious participants and contributors in their environments, their families and their communities and so very rich in potential. Through our daily practice we foster supportive and responsive relationships based on trust and mutual understanding. These relationships start with our employees, home child care providers, volunteers and students and ripples out to relationships with children, families and the community. We pride ourselves on our professional knowledge, compassion and communication that allows us to assist families and children to reach their full potential.

The Minister of Education has named "How Does Learning Happen? (HDLH) as Ontario's framework for guiding programming and pedagogy in licensed child care settings. Little Lambs believes that each child who enters our programs should feel that they belong, that they are engaged in the program, that their well-being is supported and that they are free to express themselves. These four foundations of belonging, engagement, well-being and expression are the rights of every child and provides the basis of our goals and expectations for our program.

As such our program statement is an ever evolving document based on the ongoing engagement of all those involved with Little Lambs Home Daycare. The program statement will be reviewed with all employees, home child care providers, students and volunteers prior to interacting with children and at any time when the program statement is modified. Annual and on-going reviews of the document will be completed to ensure continued compliance and relevance with the Minister's policy statements regarding programming and pedagogy.

## Our Goals and Approaches to deliver a meaningful Home Child Care Program:

### Belonging:

**Goal for children:** Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.

**Program expectation:** 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.

# Little Lambs Home Daycare

- a) Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff;
- b) Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self regulate;

*Sourced from: How Does Learning Happen*

**Approaches to accomplish this goal:** Our home child care providers, ECE home visitors, volunteers and students are encouraged to:

- Use a warm and caring manner through body language as well as words – how we touch, carry, and move children through daily routines sends a strong message.
- Capitalize on opportunities for one-to-one interactions during daily routines (e.g., for infants and toddlers: diaper changing, dressing to go outdoors, and feeding/meal times are ideal opportunities for making connections and building relationships).
- Discover the unique characteristics and gifts of each child by talking with his or her family, observing, and documenting (e.g., in addition to what the children are interested in, notice what brings them joy and how they relate to others and to the environment around them; to support inclusion, consider each child's capabilities rather than focusing solely on his or her needs and deficiencies).
- Rather than reprimanding children for undesirable behaviours, assist them in finding new ways to achieve their goals (e.g., look for the root cause of behaviour; reduce stressors; support children's efforts to initiate and join in play with others; notice, acknowledge, and document positive interactions and attempts at self-regulation and share the information with children and families to gain new insights).
- Helping all children in the program to gain a clearer understanding of the capabilities and challenges of others is a way to build their social competence. The ability to value the differences of others is strengthened both for typically developing children and for children who require additional support.
- Build connections between the home and the program by communicating with families using multiple means (e.g., At Little Lambs we write a daily report for each child. This note allows parents to know how their child ate, slept and played during their time at daycare. This documentation allows families the opportunity to extend learning at home.
- Parents are encouraged to access [www.littlelambs hdc.com](http://www.littlelambs hdc.com) , email updates are sent when required and providers may choose to set up a documentation panel where families can find out more about their children's experiences.

# Little Lambs Home Daycare

## Well Being

**Goal for children:** Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.

**Program expectation:** Early childhood programs nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self.

- a) Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well being of children;
- b) Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving care;

*Sourced from: How Does Learning Happen*

**Approaches to accomplish this goal:** Our home child care providers, ECE home visitors, volunteers and students are encouraged and to:

- The health, safety nutrition and well-being of the children in our programs is our primary focus. Our goal is for all children to develop a sense of self, health and well-being that they are able to bring with them into their later years. We recognise the significance of the early years in children's development and strive to provide children with a strong foundation.
- Providing nutritious snack and meals based on Canada's food guide
- Involve children and families in meal choices: respecting cultural and family preferences
- provide children opportunities to participate in meal preparation (e.g., baking activities)
- Home child care allows for a family style eating atmosphere. Portion sizes are responsive to children's cues of hunger and fullness
- We are sensitive to dietary restrictions and food allergies
- Children are encouraged to participate in physical activity in an effort to reduce the amount of time spent in sedentary activities
- incorporating opportunities and time to practise self-help and self-care skills based on each child's capabilities throughout daily routines and activities;
- providing regular daily opportunities (responsive to individual capabilities) for children to be physically active and explore the world around them with their bodies, minds, and senses;
- Create safe and stimulating outdoor spaces for intentional active play that is individualized and adapted as needed to support children's varied abilities, offering challenges that are within each child's ability to master;
- facilitating children's efforts to take reasonable risks, test their limits, and gain increasing competence and a sense of mastery through active play and social interactions
- Completing a daily health check through communication with families to understand the child's state of health entering the program and continually monitoring their health during involvement in program.

# Little Lambs Home Daycare

- Ensuring that Little Lambs health and safety practices follow guidelines set by Hastings and Prince Edward Public Health Unit.
- Providing at least 2 hours of outside time daily, weather permitting
- Providing an array of experiences throughout the day.

## Engagement

**Goal for children:** Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.

**Program expectation:** Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.

- a) Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported;
- b) Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children
- c) Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff;

*Sourced from: How Does Learning Happen*

**Approaches to accomplish this goal:** Our home child care providers, ECE home visitors, volunteers and students are encouraged and to:

- design indoor and outdoor environments and experiences that spark curiosity, invite investigation, and provide challenges that are responsive to individual capabilities to help children extend the boundaries of their learning;
- connect with families and communities and inviting their participation to ensure that environments and experiences reflect and are relevant to children's everyday lives;
- provide a wide variety of interesting objects and open-ended materials for children to explore with their senses, manipulate, and investigate;
- plan daily routines (the flow of the day) with limited interruptions and transitions to maintain a sense of calm and simplicity for infants and toddlers, and providing ample opportunities through large blocks of time for older children to engage in sustained, complex play and inquiry;
- Participate with children as a co-investigator, co-learner, and co-planner rather than as director or "keeper of knowledge" and "keeper of the plans" in a way that is separate and apart from the children;
- continuously questioning and testing their own theories and strategies and seeking new ideas to facilitate children's exploration and understanding of the world around them in meaningful ways;
- working with families and community partners to ensure that environments and experiences provide equal learning experiences for all children by making flexible

# Little Lambs Home Daycare

program adaptations and providing special equipment and/or adaptive devices (as recommended by a regulated health professional);

- ensuring that the spaces and experiences provided promote play and inquiry that will help children discover and develop an increasing awareness and understanding of key concepts, including those associated with literacy and numeracy development;
- documenting and making children's thinking, learning, and competence visible to children, families, and others.

## Expression

**Goal for children:** Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.

**Program expectation:** Early childhood programs foster communication and expression in all forms.

- a) Foster children's exploration, play and inquiry
- b) Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences

*Sourced from: How Does Learning Happen*

**Approaches to accomplish this goal:** Our home child care providers, ECE home visitors, volunteers and students are encouraged to:

- be attuned and responsive to children's varied cues and communications;
- engage in authentic, reciprocal communication with children, where children participate as both initiators and equal partners;
- facilitate successful communication between children by helping children listen to and express themselves to one another;
- document children's communication to help them revisit thoughts and ideas expressed in order to extend their understanding;
- provide time, space, and materials to encourage expression through creative materials that reflect children's capabilities as well as their social and cultural background
- engage and cultivate children's connections with stories and books in a variety of contexts (e.g., by sharing books and telling stories with individuals, small groups, and large groups), and for a variety of purposes (e.g., to foster close relationships, explore and play with language structures, recount past events, research ideas, spark conversations, and connect with cultural traditions);
- weave language- and literacy-related activities and materials into all daily experiences, routines, and physical spaces;

# Little Lambs Home Daycare

- work with families and community members to find ways to support and enrich the transmission of language and culture;
- become aware of the many “languages” children use to communicate and providing individualized support so children of all abilities can express themselves and be heard;
- reflect continuously on and seek to improve their own communication strategies and techniques for facilitating responsive, authentic conversations with children and families

## Administrative Goals:

Support Staff, home child care providers or others who interact with the children at the child care premises in relational to continuous professional learning.

**Approaches to accomplish this goal:** Our home child care providers, ECE home visitors, volunteers and students are encouraged to:

It is the policy of Little Lambs Home Daycare that all employees, ECE Home Visitors and Home Child Care Providers continue to grow as professional individuals with guidance and support. Due to the nature of early childhood education Little Lambs is committed to the practice of lifelong learning. It is our goal to be an example of what home child care can and should be.

The policies and procedures relating to the staff and provider training and development must be reviewed with home child care providers, volunteers and students, persons who are ordinarily residents of the premises or regularly at the premises, home child care visitors and employees of Little Lambs Home Daycare. These policies are implemented and monitored for compliance and contraventions in accordance with O.Reg 137/15

Please view Little Lambs Home Daycare: “Training and Development Policy for Home Visitors and Providers”, 2017.

# Little Lambs Home Daycare

Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in this Program Statement on the children and their families

At Little Lambs Home Daycare, we understand that pedagogical documentation is a way for our Providers, Home visitors and staff to learn about how children think and learn.

**Approaches to accomplish this goal:** Our home child care providers, ECE home visitors, administrative staff, volunteers and students are encouraged to:

- make daily observations of children in the program and use this information to inform their future planning. Our intention is to move beyond reporting of children's behaviour, in order to find meaning in what children do and experience.

**The purpose of our documentation is also:**

- A way to value children's experiences and help them to reflect back on those experiences and what they have been learning
- An opportunity to make children's learning and understanding of the world visible— to themselves, to other children, to their parents and other families,
- A way to reflect on developmental growth over a period of time
- A process for providers to co-plan with children about learning
- A dialogue with families about children's experience and an invitation for parents to add their own documentation about their children's learning
- A self-reflection opportunity for program staff, as they participate in continuous professional learning