Leading for Change

Supplement to *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide*

Government of Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education would like to extend a special
thank you to Stephan, age four, for his ladybug drawing.

This publication can be found on the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education website.
www.education.gov.sk.ca/ELCC

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OVERVIEW OF THE *PLAY AND EXPLORATION:*
EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM GUIDE

Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide was distributed to the early learning and child care sector in the spring of 2008. The *Guide* is a resource for educators to promote high quality, age-appropriate, play-based learning experiences for young children – primarily three-, four- and five-year olds.

The *Guide* focuses on the vision, principles and foundational elements of quality early childhood programs. The foundational elements include:

• Children as Competent Learners
• The Changing Role of the Educator
• How Young Children Learn
• Observation and Reflection – Critical Skills
• High Quality Programming – What Does It Look Like?

In addition, *Play and Exploration* features experiences and photographs from early learning environments across Saskatchewan.

To obtain additional copies of *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide* or to learn more about workshops and resources visit the Early Learning and Child Care section of the Ministry of Education website www.education.gov.sk.ca/ELCC

What is the Into Practice series?

The Into Practice Booklets are supplementary resources that expand upon the major components in *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide*. The Into Practice Booklets offer additional background information and ideas for implementation in early learning and child care programs.

How does this Into Practice Booklet, *Leading for Change,* connect to *Play and Exploration*?

The purpose of this booklet is to support early childhood education leaders in the implementation of the *Guide*. It provides key ideas to support adult learning and change, practical suggestions and resource sheets.

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Special appreciation is extended to those willing to share their stories and photos so others may benefit from their experiences.

We are the meaning makers – every one of us ... the responsibility is clear: to interact with those in our care in such a way as to foster and enrich their meaning making. (Wells, 1986, p. 222)

THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

The introduction of the *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide* brings exciting learning opportunities for early childhood educators. The *Guide* provides opportunities to revisit professional practice and opens new program possibilities that build high quality learning environments. It also encourages change in how educators think about children's learning, their environments and their relationships. Change is a familiar but demanding learning process that affects all educators throughout their professional careers and personal lives.

Changing beliefs and practices is challenging. Some educators will be fully engaged and eager to implement the vision and principles of the *Guide* while others will be resistant to making changes. Some emotions that educators may experience are: discomfort, denial, resistance, fear, defensiveness, excitement, affirmation, hope and enthusiasm. These are normal emotions when change is happening, and it is important to acknowledge these feelings and to encourage and support open honest communication.

In any change event, some of your biggest problems will be related to communication. So make this a very high priority throughout the initiative. (PowerPoint presentation: J. Huntington, 2007)

For directors of child care, administrators, supervisors, consultants and superintendents of education, the *Guide* represents a new resource outlining innovative approaches and refreshing ideas for early learning based on research and best practice. As in any change, leadership and support will be essential as educators explore and discover effective ways of viewing, engaging and interacting with children.

IMPLEMENTING CHANGES IN PRACTICE:

At times I have felt excited, other times frustrated and even fearful. Most of the time, I feel excited and affirmed, especially when I observe children actively involved with materials and connecting with other children in creative and positive ways. When I witness the quality of children's work, I am amazed and excited by the levels of learning that take place through their projects.

My frustration and fear occurred at times when I didn't know how to proceed. Once I realized that I could invite my colleagues to collaborate with me, I began to relax. Just as children benefit from revisiting an experience, I too gained from talking about my experiences and thoughts with my peers. There are many areas that I need to develop in my practice. Change does not happen overnight. I remind myself to take one step at a time. (Saskatchewan Early Childhood Educator, 2008)

The process of change is often characterized as a journey. The critical part is to keep moving forward in increasing the quality of early childhood education practice, one step at a time.

Change occurs best through a well-planned, collaborative process. The following chart outlines characteristics of adult learning and corresponding strategies that support positive change in beliefs and practices.

Supporting Change through Effective Adult Learning Strategies	
Adult learners are:	**Strategies that support change:**
Self-directed and autonomous • need to feel free to direct themselves • want some control over what, when, where, why and how they learn	• involve adults in decisions about the learning plan • listen and learn from the adult learners • facilitate and guide the learning process for adults • use authentic questions such as, "Will you explain your idea to me?" "Why did you choose to ...?" • invite adults to make presentations • encourage adults to become leaders in the change process
Experienced and knowledgeable • participate in many life experiences • have various forms of previous education • understand work-related activities • carry family responsibilities • bring differing cultures, perspectives and abilities to their learning	• recognize adults' background and knowledge • connect new learning with past experiences • invite sharing of knowledge and abilities • value and respect diverse viewpoints and interpretations of content • recognize the needs of individual learners in each session • build on their past successes to encourage transfer of knowledge to the new material • ensure that staff are challenged to use all of their senses in learning
Goal and relevancy oriented • know their interests and what they want to learn • commit to goals that are relevant to their situation • value sessions that include authentic experiences • make decisions that enhance their professional growth	• invite staff to share their goals • facilitate hands-on and real-life activities that directly apply to their work • agree on activities or projects that are meaningful to the learners • suggest that staff work together on similar projects • discuss how their projects can achieve their goals.

Adult learners are:	Strategies that support change:
Goal and relevancy oriented continued	• ask questions such as, "How will you know when you have reached your goal?" • offer related experiences to illustrate new information • encourage staff to describe their authentic experiences • offer feedback when asked and debrief on a regular basis • acknowledge how staff are transferring the new ideas into their practice
Practical and focused • want to understand what the experiences will mean to them in their work • appreciate guidance in reaching their goals • grow in positive and responsive learning environments	• collaborate in planning each session • encourage staff to offer suggestions for achieving individual or group objectives • use the skills and strengths of group members to assist in facilitating learning opportunities • check in with staff regularly to find out how they are feeling about the sessions • make necessary changes to reflect their suggestions • respond to questions or suggestions using appropriate questions or statements. For example: "I notice that you plan to engage children in a new investigation. How will you go about inviting them into that experience?" • recognize their efforts
Motivated when they • feel comfortable in a safe learning environment • can try out new ways of teaching with support from peers and others • feel free to learn through trial and error • understand that reflection, action and evaluation sustain learning and change	• set a welcoming, friendly tone in all sessions • encourage exploration of new ways of thinking and acting • organize occasions when adult learners share their new understandings with examples to illustrate ideas • introduce and model the processes of reflection, action and evaluation adult learners will use in their activities or projects • offer related examples of how adults learn through trial and error as they implement sections of the Guide • reinforce efforts to try out new ways of teaching and interacting • review with staff what they have accomplished

TIME TO REFLECT...

How do I currently use these strategies?

Which strategies will work with my staff/program?

What strategy will I try first?

LEADERSHIP IN A TIME OF CHANGE

Leadership can have many definitions. John Maxwell, in his book *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership,* says, "Leadership is influence – nothing more, nothing less." Other writers use descriptive words such as motivating and inspiring. Good leaders develop through a never-ending process of self study, education, training, experience and reflection. Reflection means taking the time to think, review, gain insight and then move forward to action.

Kouzes and Posner (2007), in their bestselling book *The Leadership Challenge,* identify "Inspire a Shared Vision" as one of the five practices of exemplary leadership. They go on to say, "leaders breathe life into the hopes and dreams of others and enable them to see the exciting possibilites that the future holds."

The *Early Learning Program Guide* gives a vision for high quality early childhood education practices that can be adopted in any setting to reflect the community, families and children.

Leadership in implementing the vision and principles of the *Guide* invites commitment, creativity and thoughtful planning. A leader will develop supports for change that include a variety of opportunities for staff, family and community involvement. When images of the possibilities offered in the *Guide* are shared, others will begin to engage in considering how to put the ideas into practice. Partners will benefit from enthusiasm and mentoring as they collaborate in building a common picture of the learning opportunities and plan for children's growth and development.

Collaborative processes will involve the following groups:

- early childhood educators and staff
- families
- communities

Change is like tossing a pebble that will have ever expanding consequences that show us what is possible when we work together in deep commitment to young children.

Educator and Staff Support

A leader's role in supporting professional growth goes beyond outlining typical responsibilities. Adult learning is based on personal background, values and cultures. As a result, it is important to use appropriate strategies that reflect and respond to the needs and interests of all. Being sensitive to the various learning styles and responses to change will empower each individual to grow and develop within a caring, nurturing work environment.

The following table provides ideas and examples of how leaders can encourage change and apply adult learning principles.

Leaders can:	
Idea	**Example**
• demonstrate belief that educators and other staff members are competent and effective decision makers	• engage in collaborative discussion with staff to plan for professional development
• arrange for staff to collaborate	• organize pairing of staff members to collaborate on a particular topic of common interest or to practise a new skill. The project or skill development, including challenges, can be shared with the whole group.
• arrange team-building sessions	• brainstorm components of a common vision for the program. Ask each participant to select one component and write a brief example to describe the component. Discuss these examples and decide which components are most appropriate for the common vision. Prepare a vision statement with the group. Modify as new ideas emerge over time.
• encourage reflection, action and evaluation processes	• pose questions for the group to consider. Discuss the questions with a view to enhancing practice. Questions can be provocative and encourage deeper reflection.
• provide short mentoring/coaching sessions	• meet with individual educators to discuss professional interests or needs. Together, outline a professional development plan.

Family Connections

Engaging families in the life of the early learning program is an integral part of the vision of the *Guide*. Research tells us that family engagement in early learning strongly supports children's overall growth and development. Leaders will collaborate with educators to ensure family members feel comfortable, secure and welcome in the early learning program. Involving parents and families in developing a vision for their children's program will reflect their central role in children's learning.

Family engagement may involve family members:

- joining in regular program activities
- meeting with staff members to share children's current interests at home and in the program
- assisting with field trips
- responding to and extending children's learning
- sharing talents, skills and expertise
- presenting cultural and other information to staff members
- participating in program experiences for adults or for adults and children
- collaborating in decisions affecting the program

Community Partnerships

The wider community offers a source of support and recognition for the program, for the staff and for the children and their families. Leaders can establish partnerships within the community to communicate the importance of early learning for young children and expand venues for children's learning opportunities.

Community partnerships may include:

- organizations that support family activities
- parks and recreation services
- local businesses and service groups
- suppliers of new or recycled materials for children's projects
- venues to display documentation of children's projects and learning
- municipal services such as fire prevention, police safety and others

TIME TO REFLECT...

How do I support and encourage?

	Currently What am I doing now?	New Action What will I try?	Evaluation How will I know if it is working?
Educators to ... • reflect on current practices • move toward change			
Families to ... • be engaged in the learning • share their gifts and abilities			
Community Partnerships to ... • participate in support of young children's learning • expand venues and opportunities for children's learning			

PRACTICAL IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE *GUIDE*

Research and practice emphasize that it is essential that educators receive encouragement and support from those in leadership roles in order to more deeply understand their changing professional roles.

Viewing children as competent learners transforms educator roles in early learning programs. As a result, children and educators become co-learners who plan, review and assess the program together. Educators enhance their practice through a process of reflection, action and evaluation. This results in a responsive program based on children's ideas, interests and development. A powerful strategy for leaders is to model reflective practice by asking appropriate, thoughtful questions and allowing staff time for reflection and collaboration.

The following information offers suggestions to directors of child care, administrators, supervisors, consultants and superintendents of education who support the implementation of the *Guide*.

Professional Growth Opportunities

1. Workshops or Focused Sessions

Workshops based on various topics presented in the *Guide* can serve as a way to focus on specific ideas or approaches. These workshops can be delivered in a variety of ways:

- short staff sessions approximately 30 minutes in length that focus on specific topics in the *Guide*
- workshop series developed by the staff members with each member taking a turn to plan, present and engage the group in hands-on activities focused on a particular topic in the *Guide*
- local community discussion session or series of workshops focused on common interests relevant to high quality learning environments
- regional or provincial workshops or conferences with follow-up sessions to share the experiences and understandings with other educators who were not able to attend
- regular meetings in which educators share their experiences and activities with each other to demonstrate their changing approaches

2. Internet Access for Individual Study

Many early childhood educators have access to the internet and its resources. The Ministry of Education provides on line resources related to the *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide* at www.education.gov.sk.ca/ELCC.

Providing access to these resources may encourage individual educators to learn more about the vision and principles described in the *Guide*. There is an opportunity to review PowerPoint presentations and study the Into Practice booklets also located on the Ministry's website.

Many national and international organizations, institutes and governments also provide information on the practices described in the *Guide*. Some of these website addresses can be found in Resource Sheet G on page 24 of this booklet.

3. Professional Resources

Building a collection of quality early childhood resources and materials will help to promote the vision and principles of the *Guide*. The list of Key Recommended Resources in the *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide* found on page 72, links directly to the core ideas and practices described in the *Guide*. Other resources can be found in the References (pp. 73-75) as well as on the Ministry of Education's website www.education.gov.sk.ca in the Early Learning and Child Care section.

Many educators use these resources to form a book club. The group reads one of the assigned books or articles and meets to discuss the implications for practice. This networking can build relationships, encourage discussion and deepen understanding.

4. Work Environment

Creating a work environment that values collaboration, reflection and continuous improvement should be an important focus for leaders. Support for a positive work environment can be shown by providing:

- opportunities for collaborative discussions with other educators
- resources on child development and the specific cultural and linguistic makeup of children and their families
- time to study and reflect on practices
- opportunities to attend workshops and conferences
- opportunities to visit other programs
- tools, equipment and resources required to implement the *Early Learning Program Guide* in the learning environment

Prioritize with educators what they need to feel supported.

5. Celebrate Success

Celebrating personal growth and successes is an important step in any change process and in creating a positive work environment. As early childhood educators begin to make changes in their practice, encourage them to celebrate the steps that they take on the journey. Some ways to do this include:

- creating an experience journal highlighting the challenges and successes
- capturing changes to the program with pictures, videos, writings and drawings
- displaying this documentation for families and the community
- sharing experiences and ideas with colleagues

Summary

As you take time, you will discover a deep desire for meaningful work that makes a difference in the world – time for joy and laughter; a community where you feel safe, have history and enjoy a sense of belonging. (Carter & Curtis, 1998)

Most educators who choose to work in early childhood education do so because it is work that has real meaning for them. They work with real children and families. This work offers the possibility of making a difference in the world. Yet all too quickly external pressures and demands of the work can cause them to lose sight of this primary motivation. At times it can be hard to hope or plan for change.

The implementation of the *Guide* with its vision and principles is a tool to assist in recapturing the delight of working with young children and their families. There is an opportunity for greater professional pride as educators embrace enhanced practice opportunities.

RESOURCE SHEETS

A: Ideas for Workshops or Focused Sessions

DISCUSSION GROUP - 30 minutes

1. Choose a specific topic in the *Guide*. Let participants know in advance and ask them to read specific pages.
2. Offer a brief overview of the content from the *Guide*.
3. Facilitate discussions, reflections and questions.

Participants can take turns leading these sessions.

Example:

Topic: Part II: Children as Competent Learners (*Guide*, p. 14-21)

Overview: Emphasize the related Principles (*Guide* p.5) and the description of what children demonstrate that they are able to do (*Guide,* p. 10).

Discussion: Lead discussion around questions such as, "How do we recognize these abilities in our practice?" "Do we use practices that do not recognize children as competent learners?"

ACTIVITY WORKSHOP - 60 minutes

1. Choose a specific topic from the *Guide*.
2. Invite an educator to plan a hands-on exploration for participants that focuses on the topic.
3. Present the exploration to the group; explain why it is important.
4. Encourage everyone to get involved.
5. Conclude with reflective questions about the exploration.

Example:

Topic: Holistic Learning and Development (*Guide,* p. 28-34)

Activity: Set out clay or playdough in a variety of natural tones or colours. Engage participants in active learning. Encourage exploration and experimentation. Add tools to the playdough/clay.

Discussion: Give each participant a copy of Reflecting on Holistic Learning and Development Resource Sheet B (*Guide,* p. 59). Have the group reflect on the activity and the areas of development. Ask, "How could this play experience be enhanced?"

B: Organizing a Book Club

Participants in a book club have the benefit of gaining knowledge and information with the bonus of building a sense of community and common understandings.

The book club can have different formats and participants need to make it work for their individual needs.

Getting Started:

1. Choose a leader. After the first meeting leadership can be rotated among participants if the group chooses.
2. In consultation with the group, choose an early childhood related book to read.
3. Choose a time, date and location for initial meeting.
4. Set an agenda
5. Invite participants.

Groups often enjoy meeting in each others homes where there is a relaxed atmosphere. This can facilitate deeper discussions and put people at ease.

Organizational Meeting:

1. Take time to become better acquainted.
2. Provide a brief synopsis of the book and its applicability to early childhood education and current practice.
3. Divide the book into sections that should be read for each meeting.
4. Decide on the format of future meetings; for example, participants could prepare reflective questions based on their reading or a sharing circle could be used. The format of the agenda should reflect the group's priorities.
5. Set meeting dates for the next two or three months.

Using the sharing circle idea to share "aha" and "hmmmm" moments changed the dynamics of our group. I think everyone felt that it was okay to question what they were reading and were more willing to share their thoughts; and everyone also found moments of discovery and a "yes, I can do that and it will work" attitude shift resulted. (Saskatoon book club organizer, 2008)

Subsequent Meetings—Ideas to Guide Discussion:

As a leader it is important to encourage and guide discussion to support reflection and curiosity. You may wish to ask participants to share:

- initial thoughts about the section that was read
- opportunities and challenges presented by the material
- how the information read might apply to current practice and children's learning
- questions and clarification about particular ideas
- parts that really spoke to them as professionals working with children and families

B: Organizing a Book Club ... Continued

Book Suggestions

A selection from the *Early Learning Program Guide* key resource list is a good starting place; for example:

1. Carter, M., & Curtis, D. (2000). *The art of awareness: How observation can transform your teaching*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

2. Fraser, S. (2006). *Authentic childhood: Experiencing Reggio Emilia in the classroom* (2nd ed.). Toronto, ON: Nelson, Thomson Canada.

Books that book clubs have read or are currently reading:

1. Carter, M., & Curtis, D. (2008). *Learning together with young children*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

2. Paley, V. (2004). *A child's work: The importance of fantasy play*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

3. Kempton, S. (2007). *The literate kindergarten: Where wonder and discovery thrive*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Reading and sharing thoughts on a mutually chosen book can build trust and cohesiveness for a group. As a sense of trust builds, participants are able to reflect more deeply and challenge each other towards improved, reflective practice.

C: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OUTLINE

To make the most of attendance at a conference:

1. Encourage educators to do a self-evaluation on areas of strength and areas where growth is required. This can be done in consultation with peers or on their own.

2. Have educators set one or two learning goals based on the self-evaluation and outline the supports needed to achieve these goals.

3. Suggest educators select workshops that will relate to these goals. Encourage them to choose workshops that offer hands-on practice and group discussion as well as content and resources.

4. Have educators attend workshops and reflect on the content.

5. Organize times and places for educators to report back to others on their learning, inspirations and reflections.

6. Support educators to implement new ideas and try out new strategies and techniques.

The form on the following page is an example that could be used by educators to plan attendance at a conference.

Conference Planning Form (adapted from Carter & Curtis, 1998)

Name of Conference: **Date:**

Skills, knowledge and practices in which I am strong:	Skills, knowledge and practices that I want to improve:

Learning Goals:

Workshop choices related to goals:

Reflections on workshops: (sample questions)

What do I already know about this topic? Does it seem consistent with my own practice? Is the information based on the most current early childhood education research? If so, how can I begin to implement it in my practice?

How to share knowledge gained from conference:

With colleagues?

With others?

Summary of ideas to implement in practice:

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D: Site Visit Observation

Observation Form for Visiting Other Programs

Sending staff members to visit other early learning programs that are on the journey to implement *Play and Exploration: The Early Learning Program Guide* is a valuable professional development activity. The sites could include a Prekindergarten classroom, child care centre, and Aboriginal Head Start program or a preschool. Consultants may offer suggestions of sites to visit.

To get the most out of a site visit, it is useful for those going to plan how they will focus their attention. An informal observation form can then be developed for data collection and reflection. What you include as questions can alert the observer to the various components of the chosen topics. The following pages give two examples that could be used.

Observation Focus: **CHILDREN AS COMPETENT AND CAPABLE**

Educator/Program Observed: ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

Observer: ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯ Date/Time: ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

1. What did you see that demonstrated a child being valued, acknowledged and encouraged by an educator?

2. What evidence did you see of children being engaged in developing the program/daily plan?

3. What did you see that demonstrated children's independence and decisions being encouraged?

4. What "risks" were children allowed in the program?

5. What capabilities did children show during your visit? Circle the capabilities that you identify and add others you observed.

Artistic	Explorer	Problem Solver
Begins a conversation	Recalls a past experience	Gentle
Requests materials and props	Investigator	Creates a plan
Curious	Decision Maker	Self-control
Language	Thinks ahead	Enthusiastic
Connects to natural world	Engaged	Observer
Shares ideas	Participates in conversation	Social

Resource Sheet

Observation Focus: **HOLISTIC EARLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Educator/Program Observed: ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

Observer: ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯ Date/Time: ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

1. What in the environment promotes social interactions, investigations and discussions?

2. What materials and equipment did you see that stimulate children's holistic development and curiosity?

3. What did you see that would demonstrate families being welcomed in the program?

4. What example did you see of children's thoughts, words and work being honoured and visible in the program?

5. What experiential centre did you find most interesting? Why?

6. How do the indoor and outdoor spaces encourage exploration and learning?

(Observation forms adapted from Carter & Curtis, 1998)

E: Assessing the Learning Program

Program Assessment Tool: This tool can be used as a self-assessment, on a site visit or both.

DESCRIPTOR	Yes	Moving Towards	Not Yet
Physical Organization The room is set up in experiential centres. Numerous materials, props, books and manipulatives are accessible to children. Displays include documentation of learning, including children's work, language and conversations.			
Active Learning Children are actively involved in real day-to-day problem solving.			
Program Planning, Scheduling and Flexibility The schedule is divided into large blocks that are flexible, involve minimal transitions and accommodate projects and investigations.			
Child-Centred Programming The room focus is child-centred, creating optimum conditions for children's learning. The educator anticipates how to support children's growth in skills, knowledge and values based on knowledge of developmentally and culturally appropriate skills and content.			
Guided Interaction The educator assists, encourages and extends, working with small and large groups and individuals. The educator circulates and scaffolds children's learning through experiential learning opportunities.			
Choice Children are free to choose, plan and make decisions. Experiences are presented and time is provided to include choice.			
Child-Initiated Learning Children often initiate activities that support play and investigation. Exploration emerges from the child's interests. Children are encouraged to be risk takers.			
Individualization Modifications to accommodate individual abilities are clearly evident.			
Language Development Children are free to talk among themselves. The educator asks many open-ended questions that follow the children's lead. The child's response is used to further learning.			
Assessment and Evaluation of Children's Learning Educator observation and holistic documentation of children's learning form the basis of assessment of child development.			
Classroom Management Rules for behaviour include child input. Adults have responsibility to model positive, supportive behaviours. Children are given responsibility for choices about their behaviour and experience logical consequences for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The relaxed classroom atmosphere is a result of cooperation and mutual respect. Focus is on the positive (good choices, fair play, meeting personal needs).			

F: CONSIDERATIONS FOR DIRECTORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Consider	Applaud	Question
Assessing Children's Learning	• Educator uses a variety of methods to collect information about children's unique qualities and develops appropriate goals	• Educator sees only the needs of the children and does not plan to provide support to overcome the needs • Unrealistic expectations for 3- & 4-year olds
Bulletin Boards	• Work displayed is created by children and is of interest to children	• Features commercial posters and crafts that look all the same (e.g., turtle pattern animals)
Learning Materials	• Experiential Centres: provide a variety of open-ended materials and props to encourage children's investigations	• Commercial toys predominate and are used for a single purpose
Family Engagement	• A place for adult family members to sit while waiting for children • Photos are displayed in the room so children can see their families throughout the day • Events are planned that support families in their learning with their children	• Lack of dialogue between the educator and the family • The same event happens each month (e.g., cookie baking)
Time	• Educator allows large blocks of time for children to engage in activities, which provides fewer and smoother transitions	• Educator changes activities too quickly and controls children's time
Interacting with Children	• Educator supports language, communication, initiative and problem solving by the children in individual, small and large groups	• Children sit at tables and chairs to complete individual worksheets • Crafts that are educator directed
Learning Environment	• Safe and healthy indoor and outdoor learning environments • Thoughtfully designed layout that encourages investigation and exploration	• Children have no access to outdoor learning experiences • Room overcrowded or unorganized
Long Range Planning	• Educator considers the ideas of the children and their interests when planning for the upcoming year. Plans may be summarized at the end of the month and submitted to administration (emergent curriculum)	• Educator has the entire year planned with themes, field trips and activities prior to meeting the children
Age-Appropriate Program	• Large blocks of time allow children to engage in play experiences • Interaction in small and large groups with ample opportunities for conversation and oral language development	• Educator tends to introduce the primary school curriculum into programming for preschool children
Build Community	• Collaboration to provide a seamless transition to Kindergarten.	• Educator works independently from other ELCC programs

G: Recommended Resources

Websites

1. www.ecetrainers.com
   This site has a list of books, videos and a toolbox of ideas and possibilities.

2. www.childcareexchange.com
   The site has many references for books, articles and Out-of-the-Box training kits. There is an excellent section on Leadership and Management.

3. www.cccf-fcsge.ca
   The Canadian Child Care Federation has excellent resource sheets on many topics avaliable through their website. The Federation has developed resources for helping families and early childhood educators to work together. These are available free of charge.

4. www.frp.ca
   The National Family Resource Program has many resources for parents as well as resources for welcoming new immigrant families.

Video/DVD/PowerPoint Format

1. The following six videos/DVDs are available from High/Scope Press. Each video/DVD includes a study guide that further explains the key experiences. A list of materials is available for suggestions of what to provide to enhance the key experience. These key experiences include:
   • Classification, Seriation and Number
   • Creative Representation
   • Initiative and Social Relations
   • Language and Literacy
   • Movement and Music
   • Space and Time

2. The following two videos from Harvest Resources are excellent resources:
   • *Side by Side: Mentoring Teachers for Reflective Practice* – this resource is helpful for leaders working with educators
   • *To See Takes Time: Growing Curriculum from Children's Theories* – this resource gives practical advice on projects and emergent curriculum

3. Harvest Resources also carries PowerPoint CDs that may be viewed for ideas about early childhood programs. These high-quality PowerPoint CDs include many exemplary photos. The titles are:
   • A Study of Early Childhood Program Environments
   • Giving Children More Languages
   • Leave No Child Inside: Outdoor ECE Program Environments
   • Take Time to See Through Children's Eyes
   • Visionary Infant and Toddler Program Environments
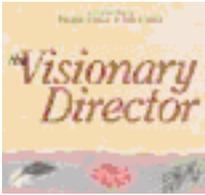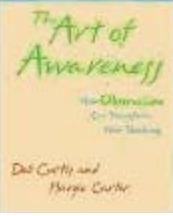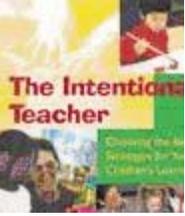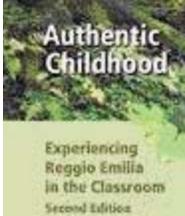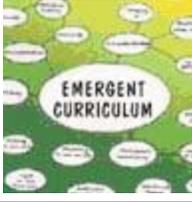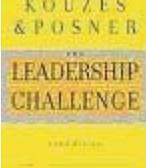
Professional Magazines/Journals

Suggestions for relevant subscriptions are:

1. **Interaction** from Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCF) www.cccf-fcsge.ca

2. **Canadian Children** from Canadian Association of Young Children (CAYC) www.cayc.ca

3. **Exchange** from Child Care Exchange www.childcareexchange.com

4. **Innovations** from North American Reggio Emilio Alliance (NAREA) www.reggioalliance.org

Books

1. Carter, M., & Curtis, D. (1998). *The visionary director*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

2. Carter, M., & Curtis, D. (2007). *Learning together with young children*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

3. Curtis, D., & Carter, M. (2000). *The art of awareness: How observation can transform your teaching.* St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

4. Epstein, A. (2006). *The intentional teacher: Choosing the best strategies for young children's learning.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

5. Fraser, S. (2006). *Authentic childhood: Experiencing Reggio Emilia in the classroom* (2nd ed.). Toronto, ON: Nelson, Thomson Canada.

6. Jones, E., & Nimmo, J. (1994). *Emergent curriculum.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

7. Kouzes, J., & Posner, B. (2007). *The leadership challenge* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.

Book Availability

Book	Title	Author	Available at
	The Visionary Director	Carter, M., & Curtis, D.	1. Chapters.Indigo.ca 2. Amazon.ca 3. Book and Brier 4. Macnallyrobinson.com 5. ecetrainers.com
	Learning Together with Young Children	Carter, M., & Curtis, D.	1. Chapters.Indigo.ca 2. Amazon.ca 3. Book and Brier 4. Macnallyrobinson.com 5. ecetrainers.com
	The Art of Awareness: How Observation Can Transform Your Teaching	Carter, M., & Curtis, D	1. Chapters.Indigo.ca 2. Amazon.ca 3. Book and Brier 4. Macnallyrobinson.com 5. ecetrainers.com
	The Intentional Teacher: Choosing the Best Strategies for Young Children's Learning	Epstein, A.	1. Amazon.ca 2. Book and Brier 3. sales.naeyc.org
	Authentic Childhood: Experiencing Reggio Emilia in the Classroom. (2nd Edition)	Fraser, S.	1. Chapters.Indigo.ca 2. Amazon.ca
	Emergent Curriculum	Jones, E., & Nimmo, J.	1. Amazon.ca 2. Book & Brier 3. sales.naeyc.org
	Leadership Challenge (4th Edition)	Kouzes, J., & Posner, B.	1. Chapters.Indigo.ca 2. Amazon.ca 3. Book and Brier

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Carter, M., & Curtis, D. (1998). *The visionary director: A handbook for dreaming, organizing, & improvising in your center.* St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

Carter, M., & Curtis, D. (2000). *The art of awareness: How observation can transform your teaching.* St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

Hammer & Company. (1999). *Business process reengineering processes for management: An executive workshop.* Cambridge, MA.

Huntington, J. (2007). *Change process model* [PowerPoint slides].

Kouzes, J., & Posner, B. (2007). *The leadership challenge.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Maxwell, J. (1998). *21 irrefutable laws of leadership.* Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

Ministry of Education. (2008). *Play and exploration: Early learning program guide.* Regina, SK: Author.