Community Child Minder Training

A Toolkit for Communities and Service Providers

2015

A partnership of:
Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood and Community Health Centre, The Four Villages Community Health Centre, Parkdale Community Health Centre and Parkdale Intercultural Association
Acknowledgements

This toolkit is dedicated to all the staff and caregivers who participated in this initiative. Their effort to improve the well-being of women and children is tremendous. We would like to thank those who contributed to the development and training of the Community Child Minder Training:

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The production of this toolkit was made possible with the financial assistance of Toronto Foundation.

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Thank you for your support.

You are welcome to use this information, any or all portions of the toolkit provided to support your communities.
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Introduction and Training Overview

Where it All Began

In 1997, the Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood Community Health Centre (DPNCHC) began offering a Child Care Training program to support women living with low income, young mothers and newcomers to Canada who were interested in learning about child care. The program started small and was offered only once a year for two weeks. At the same time, similar programs were being offered across community agencies in West Toronto, specifically at The Four Villages Community Health Centre, Parkdale Community Health Centre and Parkdale Intercultural Association for a number of years. Each program had many similar goals and objectives and was being offered in different capacities.

In 2010, these organizations started working together to pool resources and avoid duplication of service. The agencies merged their programs to create one model of service—The Community Child Minder Training program which brought together the best practices of each location.

That merge resulted in a partnership program that now offers a 15-week health promotion/educational workshop series. It also includes an Emergency First Aid Certificate, Food Handlers Certificate and Criminal Reference check. The Child Minder Training runs several times a year across various locations in our communities.
Goals of the Child Minder Training

The goals of the Community Child Minder Training have developed and evolved over time; they include both interpersonal and skill development goals as well as work-related goals:

- Enhance skills and knowledge in child development;
- To build connections within the community, make friends, and reduce isolation;
- Develop knowledge in effective practices;
- Support participants’ own parenting skills;
- Empower women to develop personal goals;
- Encourage pursuing post-secondary education;
- Encourage participation in community and skills training programs;
- Assist participants in the development of an employment strategy;
- Develop Canadian experience for newcomers; and
- Open up new opportunities for personal growth and development.

As shown above, the goals are not just to develop skills to work as childminders, they are more far reaching than that. This training was developed in response to the needs of our specific communities. However, in other communities the goals may be different. Our communities have a high number of newcomers so the focus of the training was to reduce isolation, build knowledge and gain Canadian experience. Other communities may want to simply improve parents’ knowledge of child development or increase child minding capacity within their centres.

Child Minder Training: Workshops

The Child Minder training begins with an initial two-hour orientation session, followed by a 15-week workshop series and then a practicum placement of 15 hours. Once all the sessions and practicum placements are completed, there is a graduation ceremony where participants are awarded a certificate of completion.

The workshops included in the training are:

1. Child development;
2. Child guidance;
3. Child safety;
4. Child abuse;
5. Child health;
6. Child nutrition;
7. Working with children with special needs;
8. Child care regulations in Ontario: Understanding Licensed Home Child Care;
9. Planning a child minding/home child care program (we divide this workshop into two sessions: 1. Introduction to Program Planning—Child Development & 2. The Importance of Language/Literacy Story Telling and Music) creating a 15-week program;
10. Communicating with parents;
11. Employment resources/employment law;
12. Child first aid/CPR;
13. Food handling; and

Each of these workshops is believed necessary in order to prepare a

Tips for developing your own program—partnerships, goals and workshop content:

- Conduct an environmental scan to determine who your potential partners might be, if a partnership model is the one you will be pursuing.
- Conduct a community needs assessment to gain a better understanding of your community and its demographics;
- The needs assessment will also help you to identify who your participants might be and what their own needs are;
- Identify potential participants, as well as potential service partners in the community;
- Work with each group to develop the goals and objectives for your own child minding training program and to identify any possible gaps that may not be covered in our list;
- Work with these key informants to develop a program model or work plan for your training program.
participant to work as a child minder. However to ensure the program is a good fit in your own community, there may be some adjustments made. This toolkit is not intended to be overly prescriptive. We encourage others to develop an approach and model that makes the most sense to their communities. But we do feel that there are critical components that need to be present when others wish to replicate the training. In this chapter we address the main requirements (based on our experience) that others may want to consider when offering Child Minder training for their community, such as:

- Getting into the program;
- Recruiting participants;
- Providing supports while in the program;
- Resources required;
- Choosing facilitators;
- Conducting the workshops;
- Practicums; and
- Graduation.

Following this chapter, each of the workshops noted above are discussed in the chapters that follow.

2 Are they able to pay the minimal fee (currently $105 in our case) to cover the cost of a criminal reference check ($20), and the Emergency First Aid/CPR training ($30) and Food Handlers workshops ($55)? Fees vary from year to year based on the course training fees.

3 Are they proficient enough in English to be able to read the materials we provide them in the workshops?

We aim to remove any barriers for participants (such as child care or transportation). We assess their language needs and ability to commit. We also discuss any issues with fees. If participants are unable to pay, we try to develop a plan for subsidizing their costs. If they are on social assistance, we send a letter to municipal offices to request assistance with fee coverage where possible.

By answering our questions in this interview, it also gives us some idea of participants' verbal English skills. We also conduct a written pre-evaluation [see Appendix A] of their current skills and knowledge with respect to child development. This is provided at the end of the interview. It helps us determine their ability to read and answer questions in English, which is critical to each person’s success in the program.

The pre-evaluation is also used as a post-evaluation that is conducted at the end of the training (see page 37). It helps us to learn what skills and knowledge were gained.

## Recruiting Participants

We recruit participants through various forms of outreach (see tips for recruiting participants). We allow for 15 to 17 participants per training. At times a wait list does develop and we will draw our participants from the standing list.

Outreach strategies and group size will vary based on the needs and goals of the Child Minder Training you may want to offer to your community.

### Tips for recruiting or outreaching to participants:

- Develop an easy-to-read, clear, flyer stating the goals of the program, and expectations for participation.
- Distribute the flyer to your staff, staff from partner agencies and ask them to reach out to their clients.
- Post the flyer in local community spots: grocery stores, community centres, libraries, laundromats, faith organizations, etc.
- Post the flyer at Early Years Centres, Schools and other local service agencies.
- If you are reaching out to newcomers, post the flyer at agencies serving newcomers.
Providing Supports While in the Program

Once in the program it will be important to provide supports to participants to help increase their success. During our interview with prospective participants we ask if there are any possible barriers or challenges that might prevent or limit their participation in the program. We try to address any of those barriers as much as possible. For example, we provide child minding while the participants are in the program (we ask about this during the interview) so they do not have to arrange child care in advance. They can then concentrate on the training workshops. The child minders who watch the participants’ children have also gone through the Child Minder Training program themselves. The children are in a safe child-friendly play space and receive a healthy snack. During each workshop the participants also receive a healthy snack during break time.

Any materials required to deliver the workshops are provided, e.g., craft supplies, written information on the content or handouts and resources. We also help cover participants’ transportation costs as needed. In our program that means providing bus tokens to participants who require them when possible.

Participants also receive informal support from us such as encouragement, advice, as well referrals to other services. Often we are asked for letters for immigration or for work purposes.

We also provide letters of reference and provide their names and contact information (with their permission) to agencies requiring child minders.

From the outset we try to address any challenges they might face for them to reach their goals.

Recommended supports:

- Child minding for participants in a child-friendly, safe space.
- Subsidies to cover any costs for participants who require help when possible.
- Transportation includes covering the cost of public transportation, or other arrangements as required.
- Referrals to employment/resume services.
- Informal support as required.
- Making referrals to other services as needed.
- Providing letters of reference.
- Sharing names and contact information, with their consent, to agencies that require child minders.

For our program, it takes approximately two full days to conduct the interviews alone, which takes 30 to 45 minutes per interview. At the same time, staff also organize and book facilitators which can take from three to five hours over the course of a few weeks.

If participants need child minding to participate in the training, then child minders should be booked in advance and for the span of the training. It is important for the children to have consistent staff for their care. In our interview, we ask each participant how many children will need minding—allowing us to prepare.

When the training sessions are underway, staff will also be required to prepare the snacks for children and participants, and set up the workshop space.

Other resources include, of course, the facilitators themselves. In our program, we are a partnership between community health centres and social service providers. We are able to pool our resources to cover all of the workshops necessary. The partnership allows us to access nurses, dietitians, social workers and early childhood educators. Further information on choosing facilitators is provided below.

Other resources include funding to cover the cost of snacks and the child minders and having an appropriate, accessible classroom space for the workshops.

Choosing Facilitators

Choosing good facilitators is critical—they need to be knowledgeable, as well as engaging. In their approach to the workshop, we recommend they combine teaching, group discussion and hands-on or interactive activities. We encourage them to draw on the
Summary of required resources:

- Staff time:
  - Interviewing participants;
  - Booking facilitators;
  - Hiring the child minders;
  - Preparing the snacks for the children and participants;
  - Setting up the space for the workshops; and shutting the space down.
- Provide a four- to six-month time commitment to pilot the program.
- Facilitators to conduct the workshops.
- Money to cover the child minders’ time.
- A child-friendly space for the children of the participants who are being minded.
- Accessible classroom space with equipment (e.g., flip charts; screen and computer) for conducting the training.

Conducting the Workshops

Given the needs of your particular community, or the resources you have, you may decide that not all workshops are required. For example, perhaps participants could be encouraged to do the Emergency First Aid and the Food Handling certification on their own time. Alternatively, if child minders will be working in rural, northern, or First Nations communities, there may be additional needs or issues that should be addressed and discussed.

We do not suggest that other communities need to include all of the workshops we do, nor in the order that we complete them. The workshops we recommend as optional are those related to employment and food handling. The rest of the workshops (see page 8) are required to meet the minimum standard. As well, you might choose to combine some workshops together. For example, child health and working with children with special needs could be combined. Or, the two parts of planning a child care program (importance of music and language, and program planning and storytelling) could be combined into one workshop.

Although the order of the workshops is not prescribed, we do recommend that the training begin with child development (ages and stages), which sets the stage for much of the later material. The wrap-up session at the end of the program is also critical in that it allows participants to reflect on the material, complete the evaluation, prepare for placements, review any next steps and allow for closure.

In our experience, we have found that the training works best by having one workshop per week that lasts two to three hours (depending on the topic). There is a break during that time for a healthy snack. We find this model allows the participants to think expertise of the participants to engage them and make the content enjoyable. Any materials provided need to be simple, user-friendly and jargon-free. Facilitators should regularly update or refresh their workshop information to ensure it reflects current best practices.

Certain workshops are facilitated by specific staff for example; the nutrition and food handling workshop are conducted by dietitians. The workshop on on common illness is conducted by a nurse. Storytelling and program planning is conducted by an early childhood educator or early literacy specialist. Where certain expertise cannot be covered by our own staff, we seek out others in the community. For example, for the Emergency First Aid/CPR, Food Handling, and employment workshops, we use outside organizations.

Tips for choosing facilitators:

- Ensure knowledge and skills in the desired areas.
- Facilitators should be engaging.
- Facilitators should build on the skills of participants and reflect on adult learning principles.
- Approach should include teaching as well as hands-on or interactive activities.
- Materials should be simple, appealing and jargon-free.
- Materials should be updated and refreshed as needed.
about the material presented for the week and bring back any questions. However, other models might work better for other communities—perhaps twice a week or every morning (or afternoon) for three weeks.

As mentioned previously, we recommend that communities develop an approach that works best for their communities.

Practicums

In addition to the workshops, the 15-hour practicum is an important component of the child minder training. The practicum takes place in a community-based setting and occurs after the workshops and the criminal reference checks have been completed. In our program, the practicums take place in drop-in programs, parenting groups and pre-school programs at our partner agencies. You can also ask other organizations to host the participants as needed such as Early Years Centres or Family Resource Programs. Participants choose the programs for their practicums based upon their preferences and location. The practicum allows trainees to gain some exposure and practical experience engaging with children and families.

In our program we wait until the workshops are completed before starting the practicum. We believe that allows the participants to put all they have learned into practice. However, in other smaller communities with fewer programs, it may be necessary to overlap the training and the practicum, to allow all participants to complete their program in a timely fashion.

During their practicums, participants are supervised by a designated on-site staff person or by the coordinator/staff of the partner agencies. Whoever conducts the supervision provides the participants with feedback, completes a volunteer evaluation at the end of the practicum, and writes a letter of completion for the participant to keep.

Tips for ensuring successful practicums:

- Work with agencies that understand the nature of the program and are willing to provide the necessary supervision.
- Ensure the agencies are able to provide the practicum placements in a timely fashion.
- Help participants choose a placement that makes the most sense—a program that they are able to access and that interests them.
- Ensure participants have the opportunity to lead an activity, during their placement, perhaps circle time, activities for children.
- Provide ongoing feedback to participants so they can learn and progress.

Graduation

After all participants have completed the workshops and the practicum, we conduct a graduation ceremony. We put a good deal of effort into the ceremony as a way to demonstrate the participants’ commitment to the training and to what they have achieved. We encourage the participants to invite their family members and friends. We invite staff and facilitators from partner agencies. We also invite a motivational speaker to give a brief speech and to end on a congratulatory note. Participants are given a certificate. Pictures are taken and a lunch or refreshments are provided.

We would encourage other communities to keep the graduation ceremony and to tailor it and make it your own.

Final Comments

We hope that this toolkit will be a resource for your organization and community. Our approach focuses on effective practices in health promotion using a social determinants of health framework. The Child Minder training was created as an early years initiative in a community health centre context. We encourage others agencies to use this information from our experience and to use the toolkit as it fits your community.
Child Development

Learning Objectives for this Workshop

1. Understand the stages of child development and milestones, for children from birth to 8 years old.
2. Understand the five domains of early childhood development: physical, social, emotional language/communication and cognitive development.
3. Learn the more common ‘red flags’ when children are not reaching developmental milestones.
4. Learn both typical and atypical child behaviour.
5. Understand the importance of play and how children learn through play, and how to interact with children at different ages and stages.

Suggested Materials to Bring

1. Flipchart, markers, nametags, television or computer (if showing a video).
2. Handouts on ages and stages in early childhood development and ‘red flags’.
3. Videos that may demonstrate how children learn through play.
4. Children’s toys and books for different ages.

All materials given to participants should be easy to read and jargon-free.

Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop

1. Suggested facilitator: Early Childhood Educator
2. Suggested resources:
   - How Does Learning Happen?
     Ministry of Education;
     Early Learning For Every Child Today (ELECT)
   - Nippissing District Developmental Screens
     www.ndds.ca
   - Toronto Public Health; Toronto Red Flags Guide
   - Canadian Child Care Federation; The Value of Play
Critical Components of this Workshop

The purpose of this workshop is for participants to understand the ages and stages of early childhood development. This workshop sets the stage for the following sessions. It is important for child minders to be able recognize developmental milestones and the role adults play in helping children reach their full potential. If child minders gain a good knowledge of child development they will be better able to set realistic expectations of children. They will also be able to prepare program plans that are age-appropriate and assist parents or service providers with appropriate information. Finally, it is important for participants to understand the value of play, early brain development and how to interact effectively with children at different ages and stages.

To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1. Introduce participants to the ages and stages of development.
2. Provide play-based experiences.
3. Provide scenarios and discuss solutions or suggestions for issues that might arise.
4. Ensure the workshop is interactive, relaxed and fun.
5. Allow participants to participate in the learning through sharing stories, asking questions and giving feedback.
6. Ensure to draw on the expertise of the group.
Suggested Materials to Bring

1. Flipchart, markers, nametags, television or computer (if showing a video).
2. Handouts related to child guidance information and tips.
3. Videos that are relevant to teaching child guidance.
4. A sheet with contact information on referral sources for early years information and child care supports.

Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop

1. Suggested facilitator: Early Years Parent Educator, Early Childhood Educator, Early Years Public Health Nurse, Early Years Social Worker/Early Parenting.
Suggested resources:
- Infant Mental Health Promotion IMHP; Help Me Grow (Social Emotional Milestones for Professionals)
- Toronto Public Health: Parenting Resources; Temper Tantrums
- Healthy Child Manitoba; Best Practices for Guiding Children's Behaviour
- Ministry of Education; ELECT: Early Learning for Every Child Today
- Positive Discipline Coalition of Durham Region: Positive Discipline is in Your Hands
- Canadian Child Care Federation: Coping with Separation Anxiety
- Parenting in Canada (pamphlet) www.socialpolicy.ca/cush/m6/pam.html

Any handouts provided to child minders should be easy to read and jargon-free.

Critical Components of this Workshop

The purpose of this workshop is to introduce positive behaviour guidance techniques to support child development. The information presented should be current and based on effective practices—perhaps those used by parent educators, or in the curriculum used in parenting groups and public health.

To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1. Review social emotional developmental domain—ages and stages.
2. Discuss the differences between punishment and discipline, and the consequences to child development that can be caused by punishment.
3. Review why some children have issues of distress that affect behaviour (e.g., speech and language, tiredness, stress, being sick).
4. Review different and positive strategies for supporting children’s behaviour, by ages and stages, and ways to support challenging behaviour.
5. Discuss the importance of adults being a role model and watching their own response or behaviour when dealing with difficult situations.
6. Review when child minders should get help when struggling with more challenging child behaviours.
Child Safety

**Learning Objectives for this Module**

1. To understand the importance of child safety.
2. To know how to prevent injury of children in their care.
3. To learn how to keep their environment safe for children.
4. Understand what an emergency plan is and how it could be used.

**Suggested Materials to Bring**

1. Flipchart, markers, nametags, television or computer (if showing a video). Home child care safety checklist for young children.
2. Any handouts showing examples of common early childhood injuries.
3. Information on child health (e.g., nutrition, food preparation, allergies, choking hazards) and a sample emergency or safety plan that helps child minders outline what to do if they have a home emergency or your agency’s policy on child safety measures.
4. Case studies or role plays of examples of child safety situations.

**Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop**

1. Suggested Facilitator: Home Child Care Provider, Early Childhood Educator, Supervisor in an Early Years Setting, Child Care Centre Supervisor.
2. Suggested resources:
   - Canadian Child Care Federation: Preventative Steps When Caring for Children in Your Home...
• Information from Canadian Paediatricians: Caring For Kids, Tips and Checklists www.caringforkids.cps.ca
• Safe Kids Canada Safekidscanada.ca

Any handouts provided to child minders should be easy to read and jargon-free.

**Critical Components of this Workshop**

The purpose of this workshop is to familiarize participants with common injuries that can occur with young children and to prevent such injuries from occurring. As well, the workshop also includes information on agency policies or how to develop an emergency safety plan specifically when providing home child care. Emergency safety plans can be found on municipal child care websites, or at agencies that provide home childcare services.

To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1. Provide information on equipment safety, ratios and capacity, and expectations of child minders when providing home child care or sample agency policies related to providing child minding in an agency.

2. Review home safety and caregiver safety checklists.

3. Review and cover all areas where injury can happen (outside, inside, and in the home).

4. Show examples of injuries.

5. Provide information on child health care and emergency planning.

6. Provide information on allergies and choking hazards.
Child Abuse

**Learning Objectives for this Module**

1. To understand all the various forms of child abuse and child protection laws in Ontario.
2. To know the difference between punishment and discipline.
3. To learn about the impact of trauma on children and their families.
4. To understand the role of the child minder and Duty to Report suspected child abuse.
5. To learn the steps to be taken to protect a child who has been abused, or is suspected of being abused.
6. To learn how to support a child who may have been abused.
7. To understand why behaviour guidance is important.
8. To learn about self-care practices, tools and resources and stress factors that may impact a family.
9. To understand cross-cultural differences to early parenting and expectations of Canadian practices/law.

**Suggested Materials to Bring**

1. Flipchart, markers, nametags, television or computer (if showing a video).
3. Handouts and/or a video on signs or indications of various forms of child abuse.
4. Handouts and video on behaviour guidance and the difference between punishment and discipline.
5. Tools to help with self-care practices—for example, a meditation CD.
Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop

1. Suggested facilitator: Child Protection Services, Toronto Children’s Aid Society—Speakers Bureau Facilitator, Early Years Social Worker

2. Suggested resources:
   - Toronto Children’s Aid Society: Online Resources
   - Toronto Catholic Children’s Aid Society
   - Native Child and Family Services
   - Jewish Child and Family Services

Any handouts provided to child minders should be easy to read and jargon-free.

Critical Components of this Workshop

The purpose of this workshop is to familiarize participants with the various forms of child abuse and the difference between punishment and discipline, to familiarize them with the Duty to Report, and to ensure they know what to do if they suspect child abuse. We also want child minders to also be aware of how to practice self-care and deal with the stress of the job.

To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1. Highlight all forms of abuse; provide examples and written material.
2. Discuss how to identify abuse.
3. Discuss what steps to take if abuse is suspected.
4. Review the law and the importance of the Duty to Report.
5. Provide examples of the experiences of other child minders with respect to abuse or suspected abuse.
6. Discuss self-care and practice the use of a self-care tool (e.g., meditation).
7. Talk about when to get help, when they or others may need it.
Child Health

**Learning Objectives for this Workshop**

1. Know about basic common illnesses in children.

2. Know how to assess a child’s illness, including:
   a. if a child is ill or not,
   b. when to not accept a child in care because of illness,
   c. when an illness is an emergency or not,
   d. when it is contagious, and
   e. when it is reportable.

3. Understand the importance of having a thermometer at home and know how to use this in assessing a child’s illness.

4. Learn about safe, basic health practices to perform while awaiting parents, including how to deal with emergency and non-emergency situations.

5. Learn about over-the-counter medications and their ingredients.

6. Understand limitations in providing health practices and/or medications of children in your care and how to communicate limitations to parents. (Review agency policies if needed).

**Suggested Materials to Bring**

1. Flipchart, markers, nametags, television or computer (if showing a video).

2. Handouts/resources related to common childhood illnesses, how to assess them, and how to identify common emergency and non-emergency childhood illnesses. Pictures/handouts of different skin illnesses/diseases/rashes.

3. Public Health list of reportable and non-reportable diseases. Videos that are relevant to childhood illnesses.

4. Several examples of different types of thermometers.

5. A few different over-the-counter medications, any risks (e.g., different medications for cough, fever, diarrhoea, vomiting).
Examples of some home remedy items that may be more accessible to participants (e.g., hot and cold compress, sponge/face cloth).

At least one example of a book or resource on childhood health and illnesses or a list of resources.

**Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop**


2. Suggested resources:
   - Canadian Pediatric Society: [caringforkids.cps.ca](http://caringforkids.cps.ca)
   - Hospital for Sick Kids: About Kids Health—online resources
   - Tele-Health Ontario: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care

All materials given to participants should be easy to read and jargon-free.

**Critical Components of this Workshop**

The purpose of this workshop is for participants to gain practical information on everyday evidence-based child health care needs. Facilitators can draw from participants’ personal experiences and should be mindful of different cultures and their ways of handling their own illnesses during childhood. When facilitating the workshop the goal is to provide them with enough information that hopefully they may adapt in case a situation arises, and if they do not know what to do, they have resources they can access. Finally, this workshop is a guide and not meant to supersede any agency/daycare policy on how to act when encountering common childhood illnesses.

To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1. Allow participants to share stories, ask questions and give feedback.
2. Review and discuss various common illnesses among children.
3. Review pictures of different skin illnesses/diseases/rashes so participants know what they look like.
4. Discuss different medications and ingredients in them and explain the importance of knowing this in order to lower the risk of overmedicating.
5. Present scenarios and solutions/suggestions on what they can do in case of illness.
6. Discuss the different types of thermometers and provide directions on how to use them.
7. Discuss and explore each participant’s comfort in providing medication and dealing with illness and how to communicate to children’s parents that one is comfortable with.
8. Discuss how to identify non-emergency and emergency situations (i.e., signs and symptoms) from a layperson’s perspective and how to proceed when encountering emergency and non-emergency situations, including information on home remedies, when to give medication, calling parents, calling 911 and other emergency services.
9. Discuss how to identify and initiate agency/childcare policies on how to proceed when emergency and non-emergency situations arise.
Child Nutrition

**Learning Objectives for this Workshop**

1. Know standards for healthy feeding of children birth to age 12 based on the *Canada Food Guide for Children*.

2. Understand the importance of feeding and the ages and stages—infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-aged children and food restrictions.

3. Understand and know about deferring appetites and picky eaters and how to deal with this.

4. Know about portions, variety and balance, healthy snacks, and the importance of hydration.

5. Know how to select and prepare healthy food choices for children.

6. Understand factors in healthy eating such as the importance of role modelling healthy eating, of not using food as punishment (i.e., withholding food, force feeding) and of the factors that contribute to child obesity.

7. Understand the importance of a healthy feeding relationship—not just what we feed but how we feed (which includes allowing children to signal their limits or ‘satiety’).

**Suggested Materials to Bring**

1. Flipchart, markers, nametags, television or computer (if showing a video).

2. Handouts/resources on ages and stages and food restrictions.

3. Canada Food Guides [Videos or other handouts that are relevant to childhood nutrition] e.g., common nutrition issues in children (low iron, high sugar, picky eating).

4. Handout on healthy feeding relationship and the importance of positive meal time (e.g., resources from the Ellyn Satter Institute).

5. Recipes and snack ideas. A sample daily food schedule/menu for children by ages and stages.
Critical Components of this Workshop

The purpose of the workshop is to give a general overview of the importance of child nutrition. We recommend this workshop be conducted by a dietitian, nutritionist or public health nurse. The facilitator should take into account the different cultural backgrounds of the participants and build on their experiences with healthy nutrition.

To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1. Allow participants to participate in the learning through sharing stories, asking questions and giving feedback.
2. Ensure to draw on the expertise of the group.
3. Discuss ideas on how to create a positive food environment and why it is important (e.g., how to feed/offer food without criticism, expectations, threats, bribes, pushing, forcing).
4. Discuss ideas on how to role model healthy eating.
5. Review the importance of food in healthy child development.
6. Discuss the less healthy components of food (e.g., sugar, salt) as well as highlight the key nutrients in food (e.g., protein, iron, and fibre).
7. Emphasize the importance of “real” food and placing minimal reliance on processed food—and discuss how to distinguish the difference between the two.
8. Share ideas on how to plan fun and easy healthy snacks and meals, and review different recipes.
9. Review a variety of food guides approved by nutrition specialists that take into account cross-cultural perspectives on nutrition.

Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop

1. Suggested facilitator: Dietitian, Nutritionist, Public Health Nurse

2. Suggested resources:
   - Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide (Infant—Preschool/ Children and Youth)  
   - How to Build A Healthy Toddler  
     [Link](http://www.nutristep.ca/en/pdfs/HealthyToddler(E)-June2012-final.pdf)
   - How to Build a Healthy Preschooler  
     [Link](http://www.nutristep.ca/pdf/nutristep_build-healthy-preschooler-eng-4pg.pdf)
   - Eat Right Ontario  
     [Link](http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Children.aspx)

All materials given to participants should be easy to read and jargon-free.
Learning Objectives for this Module

1. Understand the different types of special needs, abilities, and exceptionalities.
2. Learn about some common diagnoses that participants may have experience with, or will come to know in their work (e.g., speech and language delays, motor delays, Autism, ADHD, learning disabilities).
3. Learn about myths and misconceptions about children with special needs.
4. Understand and appreciate what Inclusion means, and why it’s important.
5. Learn what to do if you suspect a child is struggling developmentally and how to speak to parents about concerns you might have about their children.
6. Know about different referral sources for the most common child development concerns.
7. Understand and appreciate your role as caregiver.
8. Learn about local community resources and developmental service providers

Suggested Materials to Bring

1. Flipchart, markers, nametags, television or computer (if showing a video).
2. Checklists and tools used to support, understand, or screen a child (at different ages and stages such as the Nipissing).
3. Handouts on common childhood concerns (e.g., speech and language, vision, hearing, attachment, motor skills).
4. Books on special needs for adults, as well as for children, to learn about special needs children, and how to care for them.
5. Any videos or handouts you might find helpful to educate participants on special needs children.
6 A sample policy of inclusive practice from an organization.

7 A list of community resources, service providers and developmental services.

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**Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop**

1 Suggested facilitator: Early Childhood Educator, Special Needs Resource Teacher or Consultant, Developmental Services Provider.

2 Suggested resources:
   - Connectability
     www.ConnectABILITY.ca
   - Healthy Kids Toronto: Toronto Child and Family Resource System: Referral document (PDF)
   - Local Municipal Child Care definitions for working with children with special needs—this will vary from community to community.
   - Nippissing Developmental Screens
     www.ndds.ca

All materials given to participants should be easy to read and jargon-free.

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**Critical Components of this Workshop**

The purpose of this workshop is to develop an understanding of working with children with special needs and the practice of inclusion. To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1 Introduce special needs terms, definitions and references.

2 Review common diagnoses—e.g., speech and language concerns, Autism Spectrum Disorder, ADHD, low vision, hearing, and motor delays.

3 Define inclusion and inclusive practice for participants, and inform them of the expectations of the current sector. Review a sample policy from an organization.

4 Review checklists that support child development and milestones (e.g., Nipissing District Developmental Screen and Toronto Preschool Speech and Language Checklist).

5 Discuss how they can communicate and be sensitive with families.

6 Review referral sources to support children for whom they may have concerns.
Child Care Regulations in Ontario: Understanding Licensed Home Child Care

**Learning Objectives for this Workshop**

1. To understand that Child Care Regulations in Ontario and licensed home child care exist and to introduce basic expectations, documents and guidelines used in early childhood.

2. To understand the difference between licensed and unlicensed daycare.

3. To be aware of the responsibilities of child care practices/law in Ontario with a focus on home child care.

**Suggested Materials to Bring**

1. Flipchart, markers, nametags, television or computer (if showing a video).

2. Handouts related to local municipal child care expectations, and or Child Care in Ontario and the latest legislation. (Handouts on samples of practices—program plans, food/menus, and forms for record keeping.

**Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop**

1. Suggested facilitator: Child Care Consultant or Child Care Supervisor, Home Based Child Care Consultants.

2. Suggested resources:
   - Information pertaining to the Day Nursery Act, Child Care Legislation and Municipal childcare expectations and operating criteria
All materials given to participants should be easy to read and jargon-free.

**Critical Components of this Workshop**

The purpose of this workshop is to learn about Ontario legislation related to the provision of child care/home childcare. Currently that means we are guided by the Day Nursery Act; however, that Act is expected to be replaced by the Child Care and Early Years Act, in the near future. When conducting this workshop, you will need to tailor it to your community and local needs. As well, have a discussion with your local home child care agency/municipality to stay current on policy and practice. Ensure that the workshop is delivered by appropriate child care consultants.

To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1. **Provide participants with information on regulations, standard policy, procedures, and practices when providing home childcare.**
2. **Discuss the difference between licensed and unlicensed child care.**
3. **Highlight expectations from municipal or local child care operating criteria.**
4. **Review and discuss samples of practice for home day care—recording keeping, program plans, food and menus.**
5. **Provide them with information on where to look, or go, to ensure they know how to keep up-to-date on current child care practices in Ontario.**
Planning a Child Minding/Home Care Program

Learning Objectives for this Module

1. Understand the importance of play, circle time experience, sensory/motor activities, reading to children, songs and rhymes and the linkages to child development.

2. Review the stages of development and how they relate to learning and program planning.

3. Know how to prepare and implement age-appropriate daily schedules based on stages of child development and children's interests. AND to include all the domains of development (see Workshop 1—Child Development).

4. Know some essentials when incorporating music into a child care program such as the difference between singing and playing a CD and the importance of interactions while singing.

5. Understand the importance of being inclusive and know ways to be inclusive based on the different needs of children.

6. Know how to choose age-appropriate activities and toys.

7. Understand the importance of oral interactions and how to encourage them.

8. Understand the connections between oral interaction, reading and storytelling on language development.

9. Know the appropriate way to read a story to children.

Note: Due to the number of learning objectives included in this module, the workshop is generally conducted into two sessions (or needs a minimum of 4 hours to complete). It can be separated into 1. Introduction to Program Planning—Child Development and 2. The Importance of Language/Literacy Storyelling and Music, based on the learning objective.
program planning and story-telling and one that explores the importance of music and language.

The workshop (or workshops if you decide to split this into two, as we have done) explores different types of activities and how to plan them so that they are age-appropriate. Music activities and language-based activities are explored as two essential components that promote child development. Drawing from participant’s experiences, the facilitator can create hands-on learning to demonstrate activities that will engage children at different stages of development.

To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1. Review developmental milestones and discuss how to program plan accordingly for all the developmental areas.
2. Provide practical information that will help with program planning, including examples of songs and rhymes, examples of schedules, program definitions, and information on how to run a circle.
3. Discuss the importance of storytelling and its link to language development and how to tell stories for different ages.
4. Discuss literacy and provide information on emergent literacy—that is, the gradual process that takes place from birth to when a child can read and write.
5. Include hands-on activities for demonstrating music and language development as well as planning a circle time. Practice songs and rhymes with the group.
6. Role-play to demonstrate how to explore music and language development with children.
7. Discuss the difference between a program that is planned and one that is improvised.

**Suggested Materials to Bring**

1. Flipchart, markers, nametags, television or computer (if showing a video).
2. Handouts/resources on program planning or ages and stages of development.
3. Videos relevant to childhood development and/or program/activity planning.
4. Examples of age-appropriate toys/learning materials.
5. Examples of age-appropriate music, circle time, and musical instruments young children can play.
6. Examples of age-appropriate books.
7. Book-making materials (e.g., paper, hole-puncher, string, crayons).
8. Parachute for parachute games and activities.

**Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop**

2. Suggested resources:
   - Ontario Ministry of Education: ELECT Framework

All materials given to participants should be easy to read and jargon-free.

**Critical Components of this Workshop**

The purpose of this workshop is to connect child development and its milestones to appropriate program planning. In our experience, we have divided this workshop into two: one that explores program planning and story-telling and one that explores the importance of music and language.
Communicating with Parents

Learning Objectives for this Workshop

1. Learn what communication is, what it means, and the different ways that people communicate.
2. Understand communication from a cross-cultural perspective.
3. Learn about developing positive relationships with parents, staff, and children.
4. Understand different forms of communication and how these affect your work.
5. Be aware of your own communication styles.
6. Be able to communicate, or relay information, clearly.
7. Know how to communicate positively with parents of the children you will be minding.
8. Learn how to resolve conflicts with parents in a positive manner.

Suggested Materials to Bring

1. Flipchart, markers, nametags, television or computer (if showing a video).
2. Handouts on definitions of different forms of communication.
3. Handouts or other resources on communicating positively with others.
4. Examples of real-life scenarios that one might encounter with respect to communicating with parents in a child minding setting:
   - A child in your care gets a bump on their head: after providing basic first aid, how would you deliver the message to a parent? or
   - A child in your care bites another child while playing with some toys: after dealing with the situation, how would you deliver that message to parents?
5. Case studies.

All materials given to participants should be easy to read and jargon-free.
Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop

1. Suggested facilitator: Early Childhood Educator, Adult Educator or Group Worker specializing in Early Years

2. Suggested resources:
   - Developing Positive Relationships: Ready for School Connects 2009
   - Canadian Child Care Federation: Building a Partnership with your Child Care Provider
   - Canadian Child Care Federation: Building Relationships with Families

Critical Components of this Workshop

The purpose of this workshop is to inform child minders about communication styles and how to communicate positively with the parents of children in their care. It will be important for the facilitator to be comfortable demonstrating different types of communication, and role-modeling positive communication with others. Discussing real-life examples, or case studies, will be essential as well. The facilitator should take into account the different cultural backgrounds of the participants when discussing different communication styles.

To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1. Discuss and review the different forms of communication (written, verbal, body language, emotion) and how it affects the work.
2. Encourage the group to reflect on their own style of communication and how this may affect how they interact with parents of the children in their care.
3. Importance of active listening.
4. Role-model positive communication with the group.
5. Review the top listening and speaking behaviours.
6. Review the type of information that needs to be communicated with parents daily.
7. Discuss and review how to address any difficult or sensitive issues with parents with regards to their child(ren).
Learning Objectives for this Workshop

1. Learn to develop a job search action plan and where to find resources for support in the community.
2. Know how to identify the steps involved in a job search action plan.
3. Learn to differentiate between tools for job searching and channels for job searching.
4. Know how to use the best job searching tools.
5. Learn to identify job searching methods such as social media, advertised jobs, networking, etc.
6. Understand basic employment standards in any organization (review of the basic Ontario Employment standards and responsibilities that organizations must follow when you are employed).

Suggested Materials to Bring

1. Flipchart, markers, and nametags.
2. Computer with access to internet and AV equipment to project onto screen in order to show different job websites and how to search for jobs.
3. Handouts on information regarding job search tools and methods.
4. Powerpoint presentation on material being presented.

Suggested Resources, References and Handouts Used to Support the Workshop

1. Suggested facilitator: Employment Resource Centre Consultant
Suggested resources:

- City of Toronto Employment Resources

All materials given to participants should be easy to read and jargon-free.

**Critical Components of this Workshop**

The purpose of this workshop is to introduce basic knowledge on employment access and standards. In our experience, we have split this workshop into two: Employment Law (or Workers’ Rights) and Employment Resources (or Readiness). When conducting this workshop you will need to tailor it to your community and local need and decide if it should be delivered as two workshops, or as one. You will need a facilitator (or facilitators) trained in the topic areas. In the past we have reached out to the community, and used facilitators outside of our organizations. In our community this had included facilitators from Job Start or City of Toronto Employment Services. You may need to do the same and reach out to other resources in your community to locate facilitators who can provide information on these topic areas.

To achieve the learning objectives, we believe the following components need to be included:

1. Discussion of clarifying employment goals.
2. Discussion of understanding the labour market.
3. Review the steps involved in being job-search ready.
4. Explain the different elements involved in conducting a job search.
5. Explain the standard rights of employees in a workplace in Ontario.
6. Understand the importance of post-secondary requirements, additional training for job development and personal growth.
Emergency First Aid/CPR and Food Handlers Certification

The last two modules are conducted by outside organizations. We recommend you connect with your local service providers to identify which companies or outside agencies would best fit the requirements of conducting these sessions.

Emergency First Aid/CPR—Suggestions:

- The Red Cross
- St. John’s Ambulance

Please note: Emergency First Aid should also include a Child Designation.

Our experience is that the workshop is one full day (six to eight hours) to complete.

Food Handling Certification—Suggestions:

- Local Municipalities/Toronto Public Health Unit
- Certified trainers

Please note: Our experience is that this certificate take 12 hours to complete and includes a final test to be certified. Workshops are conducted over two to three days.
End of Session: Closing Workshop and Organization of Practicum

The purpose of this workshop is to review and answer any questions participants might have as the training comes to an end. We also have them complete evaluation forms (See Appendix B) and discuss their practicum placements. This session is somewhat open-ended. We review the different elements of the course and set aside time for a discussion period. We also ask for their verbal suggestions and feedback to improve future programs.

Finally, we bring a calendar to class, along with information on the programs running at our organizations that require child minding. We work with each participant to book their 15-hour practicums before they leave for the day.

The aim of the workshop allows participants to discuss their next steps, personal goals moving forward and to begin to have some closure on the program.

As described in the Introduction, once all of the participants have completed their practicums, we plan for a graduation ceremony. The ceremony is a celebration of their achievements. As explained previously, we put a good deal of effort into the ceremony. We believe it is important to award the participants with a certificate of completion and to end the course on a positive and congratulatory note.
We hope that this toolkit has provided some useful information and has been (and will continue to be) a resource for your organization and community. As mentioned in the Introduction, we did not intend to be too prescriptive in our approach to this toolkit—rather, we would encourage others to modify the model to best fit with their own communities. Our goal was to convey some of our learnings, with respect to training child minders, with the intent that it could benefit others. Some of the main learnings we would like you to take away from this toolkit include:

1. Think about the approach or model that will best fit with your own community:
   - Do you have partners or collaborators that you can help in the delivery of certain modules? Or, can you complete all workshops using only staff from your own organization?
   - Should you complete the workshops weekly or does it make sense to have the workshops occur more frequently?
   - Will you include workshops that will incur a cost—i.e., Child First Aid/CPR and Food Handling? If so, how will you deal with participants who may not be able to cover these costs?

2. Consider your resources and supports:
   - How many participants can you reasonably include in your training session?
   - How frequently can you run your training?
   - Where can you provided the training—what space makes the most sense?
   - Can you subsidize potential costs incurred (e.g., for transportation, for the Child First Aid/CPR and Food Handling workshops)?

3. Consider if you will need to modify or include additional workshops to ensure that the training is appropriate to meet the needs of your participants (e.g., if working in First Nations, rural or northern communities). Ensure that facilitators are the appropriate professionals for conducting workshops, and can work cross-culturally.

4. Review the workshops and consider if there are ones that you think it best to combine (e.g., Planning a Child Care Program; Employment Resources/Employment Law).

5. Review all hand-outs, materials, and resources used to ensure that they are reflecting the current effective practices recognized by the sector, that they jargon-free, easy to read, and are in plain language.

6. Consider where placements could occur in your community.
Appendices

Appendix A:
Child Minder Training—Pre/Post Evaluation Questions

Appendix B:
Agreement/Welcome Letter
Appendix A: Child Minder Training—Pre/Post Evaluation Questions

Location:  
Date:  

1 How confident do you feel about looking after other people’s children? Please rate and explain your answer: 

[ ] 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2 What do you know about child development? Please explain.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3 What do you think are three basic skills you need to become a good child minder? Please explain.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Appendix B: Agreement/Welcome Letter

[Date]

Welcome to Child Minder Training!

Thank you for participating in the Community Child Minder Training Program. We look forward to the coming weeks together. If you have any questions or concerns you may contact (NAME AND NUMBER) at any time over the course of the training.

The training will be offered each Wednesday, from 2:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at (NAME OF AGENCY AND ADDRESS) and will include 15 workshops.

The total cost for the training is $105.00. The fees will cover costs for an Emergency First Aid Certificate/CPR, a Criminal Reference Check offered through Toronto Police Service and a Food Handlers Certificate.

The Community Child Minder Training Program will cover workshops on the following topics:

1. Child Development
2. Child Guidance
3. Child Safety
4. Child Abuse
5. Child Health
6. Child Nutrition
7. Working with Children with Special Needs
8. Day Nursery Act/Home Based Child Care
9. Program Planning—Part 1
10. Program Planning —Part 2
11. Communicating with Parents
12. Employment Resources/Employment Law
13. Emergency First Aid/CPR ($30) (mandatory)
14. Food Handling ($55.00) (mandatory)
15. End of sessions and volunteer placements

You will also complete a 15-hour volunteer placement in the community working with children. A Criminal Reference Check is required by each training participant to complete the volunteer placement. The Criminal Reference Check is valid for one year, and can be used in other employment opportunities. If you have any issues with obtaining a Criminal Reference Check please speak with the staff. All issues are confidential.

It is very important that you attend each workshop and complete your volunteer placement. If you do not complete the training, a certificate cannot be issued to you. However we can provide a letter highlighting the workshops that you have attended.
If you miss a workshop (due to illness or an emergency) you should make arrangements with the staff to try and complete the workshop that you missed.

If you have any issues over the coming weeks, please feel free to speak with the staff at any time. They are available to support you throughout the training.

We wish you the best of luck!

NAME

Participant’s Agreement

I have participated in orientation and I understand all of the terms required to participate in the Community Child Minder Training Program at

Participant Signature

Date
For more information and to download a copy of this Toolkit, please call or visit any of the organizations below:

Davenport-Perth
Neighbourhood and Community Health Centre
416-656-8025
www.dpnchc.ca

The Four Villages
Community Health Centre
416-604-0640
www.4villageschc.ca

Parkdale Community Health Centre
416-537-0275
www.pchc.on.ca

Parkdale Intercultural Association
416 536-4420
www.piaparkdale.com